



Setting Language in Motion: Family Supports and Early Intervention for Babies Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Communication Tips for Families of Children Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Offered below are tips for supporting families when they are communicating with their baby who is deaf or hard of hearing.

- Sign with your child as much as possible regardless of your signing skill level.
- Communicate at your child's eye level when signing.
- Sign in the home as much as possible, even when conversing with others. Children absorb information from incidental learning experiences (i.e., "overseeing" conversations).
- Watch for 'manual babbling' or rhythmic and imitative hand movement in your baby. This is the first step to formal signing. Babies who are deaf or hard of hearing may babble with their hands more so than with their voices.
- Demonstrate signs for your child to learn when sharing a toy, book, or experience (such as bath time).

MODULE FOUR Launching Communication and Language Through Sign

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- Use descriptors to expand language exposure for your child (e.g., *big* truck, *red* ball).
- Play with signs and incorporate them into a story (e.g., the plane flies up, the plane flies down, the plane flies all around—while using the sign for *plane* and moving it all over).

For Additional Resources

Please refer to the Module 4 video for more tips and information as well as for additional resources. Also, visit our websites at www.bostonchildrenshospital.org/dhhp and <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>.