



Barriers to Communication for Children



Communication is a way of telling and getting information to and from others. When we communicate with kids, we have to change how we speak and what we say in order for them to understand. Children also experience “barriers” or challenges when it comes to communicating their wants and needs. A barrier is something that gets in the way of parents and kids talking to each other.

Barriers to communication for children

1. Age:

- ◇ Young children may not be able to use their words to tell us what they want or need
- ◇ Instead they may show us before they tell us by crying, screaming, or touching your arm to tell you that they want something

2. Attention:

- ◇ Children have a shorter attention span than adults
- ◇ Try using short, clear, and specific instructions

3. Understanding:

- ◇ Kids’ vocabularies are growing every day and are not as big as adults’
- ◇ Use simpler words when talking to your kids
- ◇ When you use new words, tell them what the new words mean and help them practice using the new words



Activities to help communicate with your children

I Spy: One person begins by looking around the room and picking an object. But don’t tell what it is! Then they describe the object by saying, I spy with my little eye...something white, big, and cold. The other person has to guess...is it a refrigerator? Take turns going back and forth!

M&M game: Get a bunch of M&Ms or skittles and give each person a handful. Now, make up a rule or question for each color. For example, if you have a red M&M, tell everyone one thing that makes you happy. If you have a yellow M&M tell everyone your favorite day of the week and why. Take turns going around the table by each picking one of the M&Ms out of your handful and sharing based on the rule or question. Then eat! If you don’t have M&Ms use buttons, BINGO chips, crafting pompoms, or coins.