

## Helpful Hints on Teaching Pre-Sign Language Motor Skills

1. Pick signs that are meaningful to your child.
2. Pair the concrete sign with the actual object.
3. Speak and sign simultaneously. Teach your child to attach meaning to the motor action.
4. Pick signs that your child has the motor capability to produce. Your child should be able to imitate large arm movement before imitating hand patterns. Accept successful approximations of arm movement before worrying about the accuracy of hand shape. If the sign is too difficult to produce, then use a different sign or alter the sign.
5. When demonstrating the sign, exaggerate the movement and move deliberately.
6. Maximize the use of various sensory channels (touch, vision) as this provides extra feedback to allow the sign to be produced more accurately.
7. In sign production, some movements are developmentally easier to imitate:
  - Movement toward the body is easier to imitate than movement away.
  - Palm towards the face is easier to imitate than palm away from the face.
  - Movement towards the midline is easier for control.
  - Palm down position of forearm is easier than palm up.