



# Helping Your Child Initiate Interactions

Children with autism or social communication differences may need help initiating interactions with others. When you and your child pay attention to the same thing at the same time, you are able to have rich interactions together.

Use these strategies to help your child practice initiating interactions with you and other family members:

- Respond to your child's non-verbal communication by saying what you think they are saying with their actions.
- Pause, be quiet, and watch for how your child is communicating with you (gestures, sounds, eye gaze, pointing, throwing).
- Avoid asking your child lots of questions.
- Build in opportunities for your child to ask for things, show interest, protest (put interesting items out of reach, acting silly by doing something unexpected).
- Play turn taking games that require you and your child to pass an object back and forth or pay attention to the same thing.

If you notice your child starting interactions with you, what you are doing is working.