



Autism and
Social Communication
Differences

Helping Your Child Respond to Their Name

Children with autism or social communication differences can have difficulty responding to their name. This can be especially important when the child's safety may be in danger. Teaching a child to **respond to their name** can be done during daily routines, fun activities, and games. Try playing the name game to increase opportunities for your child to respond when they hear their name.



A Name Game during a Family Routine

- 1 Engage your child in a family routine (for example, dishwashing at the sink). Use a playful voice and gestures and allow your child to do the parts they enjoy.
- 2 When your child turns away, pause your interaction.
- 3 Say your child's name and wait a few moments for a response. If needed, you can gently touch or tap your child or move your body so that you are in their line of sight.
- 4 When your child responds by pausing what they are doing, turning towards you, or looking at you continue the parts of the activity your child likes the most (for example, turning on the water, pouring bubbles on their hand, handing them dishes, etc.).
- 5 Continue the game throughout the rest of the routine.
- 6 Try the same steps in other routines and let other family members try it.

More ideas for name games to play:

- peek-a-boo
- tickle game
- chase
- bouncing in your lap
- swinging in your arms
- spinning together



Family, Infant and Preschool Program
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