



# A Practical Guide to Promoting Child Learning

## INVITE + ENGAGE + TEACH

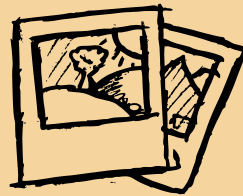
Before interacting in a daily activity or routine with a child, it is important to consider how the caregiver will invite the child into the routine or join into an activity the child is already doing. Invite strategies are ways the caregiver can show interest in what the child is doing or ways to direct the child's attention to a daily routine about to start. Here are some *invite* strategies caregivers can use to set the stage for positive and fun interactions.

### Use Body Language



Nonverbal behaviors make up over 85% of the communication that occurs during interactions. Holding arms open for a hug and smiling will typically result in a more positive response from a child than holding a phone or frowning.

### Match Communication Style



When caregivers match the child's current communication level, children are more likely to respond. Help caregivers see how the child is communicating and follow suit. This could be signing, using short phrases, vocalizing/babbling, or modeling with pictures or the communication device the child uses.

### Try Physical Touch/Movement:



If a caregiver starts playing with a preferred toy or demonstrating a favorite action during an activity, the child may start doing the same thing. Depending on how mobile the child is, caregivers might try using physical prompts such as taking the child by the hand or carrying the child to initiate new activities based on the child's cues and interests.

### Vary Voice and Tone:



Variations in the voice can indicate a variety of emotions. Caregivers can highlight sadness when a toy breaks, excitement when shown a flower a child picked, and gentleness while cuddling together. Slight changes in volume and tone of voice play a large role in directing emotions during activities and routines.

## Important to Consider

**Limited movement:** Children with limited mobility may often find themselves placed near where an activity will occur or be handed a toy. When this happens, the child is not given the opportunity to choose or move in response. Think about the environment and ways that the child can be *invited* to decide on the next activity along with the caregiver. For example, offer two different shirts when getting dressed and let the child choose.

**Playfulness:** Personality can affect how expressive caregivers are and their comfort level in showing emotions. Some caregivers may need extra time to practice or be shown strategies that do not come naturally for them. Ultimately, caregivers know themselves and their children best and can decide which *invite* strategies fit their personality and family culture best.



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