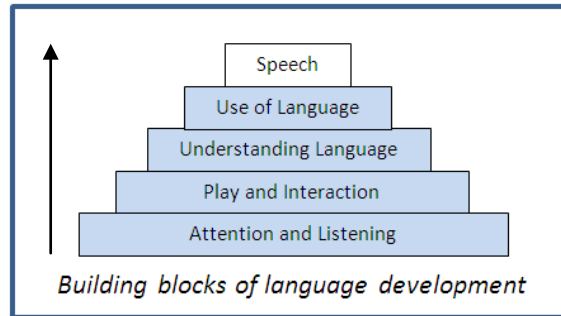


Gestures and Signs



In normal development, children learn to understand and use gestures before they talk.

We all use our hands to help us communicate

Gesture can be useful for children who find listening, understanding and using language difficult.

Your child will learn to use gestures by watching you, so be face to face with them.

☆ If your child has difficulty understanding words...

Use gestures and pointing when you are talking to help your child understand what you are saying.



Giving your child something to look at helps them to listen when you speak to them. By giving them a word and a sign this gives them two clues about what you are saying. If you are using gesture / signs you are more likely to use simple language and talk more slowly which will support your child's understanding.

☆ If your child is not talking yet...

They may use gestures before words, so encourage them to point to things that they want, need or like.

☆ If your child is not talking clearly...

They can learn to use gestures which give you extra clues about what they're telling you.

If gesture makes communication easier, then it may well encourage your child to try saying more. In this way, gesture can encourage your child to talk.



Your Speech and Language Therapist can tell you more about using formalised gestures or "signing" to support your child's speech and language development. You may have seen Mr Tumble using signing on "Something Special" on TV.