



MAKING CHOICES

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Choices are a great way to encourage children to say new words, using what is motivating for them, without pressure.

Parents are often intuitive to their child's needs eg they know that Freddie prefers apple juice to orange juice. However, offering both to Freddie would give him an opportunity to communicate, help him learn how to make decisions and make his voice heard.

Show the child two things or pictures of things that they would like to play with or two types of food or drink at snack time. This presents them with a choice. Can they indicate the one they want? How?

Encourage the child to **make choices** by offering them two alternative food items/toys/clothes etc. Hold up and show them two objects (eg banana and apple) and say "banana or apple?" This is better than asking a yes/no question.

To start with you could try offering a favourite object along with a non motivating item (eg a biscuit and a sock).

Wait for the child to look, reach, point, or vocalise towards the item they want. Encourage them to make a choice by saying:
"(Child's name) wants....."

Reinforce their choice, eg *"you want apple"*. You may like to take their hand and touch the object they have chosen or model the Makaton signs. Then let them have the item they have chosen. If they choose the non motivating item (eg sock), then give them the sock. They will soon let you know if this is not what they really wanted!

