



## Reminders from Sign Language for Budding Babies I

### Things to remember:

Make signing part of your daily routine!

Repetition is the key to learning! Repeat, repeat, repeat!

Be consistent with your signs even when your child makes approximation – they will get it.

Be patient, it may take some time before they sign back. They will express themselves when they are ready – you are providing them with the tools to do so.

### Natural opportunities to introduce signs:

- Let signing be **natural and enjoyable**, not a chore or a lesson.
- Children are very **attracted to movement**, when they see your hands moving, they'll be engaged – that's a perfect time to teach signs.
- When introducing a new sign, be sure that you're **talking about the same thing**.
  - You're looking at a sunset, but your child sees the cow in the field.
- When you're able to **connect with your child on their level of perception** will help them learn how to communicate.

**Three Gazes:** By the time your **child's gazes start connecting with yours** (about 5 – 7 months), your child will be receptive to signs.

1. Expressive Gazes – happen when your child has a need or wants to express a feeling or ask a question.
  - More – looks up at you like, come on give me more
2. Chance Mutual Gazes – happen when you and your child look at each other for at the same time by chance or for no particular reason.
  - Book – introduce sign for whatever is near you
3. Pointed Gazes – happen when you and your child look at the same thing at the same time and then look at each other.
  - Cat walks in the room, you both look at dad and look back at each other

### Three Teaching Tools of Signs:

1. Placement:
  - a. Every ASL sign will have an appropriate placement in relation to the sight line. For babies and toddlers, signs should be placed as close to the mouth as possible without sacrificing the integrity of the sign.
2. Palm Orientation:
  - a. The direction a palm(s) faces can affect the true meaning of a sign. Establishing the correct palm orientation from the beginning can prevent confusion in communication later on.
    - For example – good and bad, come and go
3. Movement:
  - a. Some ASL signs require movement to differentiate its meaning. Most signs have single or double movement to identify nouns and verbs.
    - For example – Chair (double) and Sit (single), clean up (double) and nice (single)