Building Connections and Communication at Home

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Role of Speech and Language Therapy

- **Speech therapy** is a specialized treatment designed to help individuals improve their communication skills, including speaking, understanding language, and using voice effectively. Key aspects of speech therapy include:
- Improving articulation
- Enhancing language skills
- Addressing fluency
- Boosting comprehension

What is Communication?

- Communication is the active process of exchanging information and ideas, which involves both understanding and expression. It includes verbal communication and non verbal communication



Verbal and non verbal communication

- Communication isn’t just about talking.

- Whenever two people send messages of any kind to each other—even without words– they are communicating (by crying, smiling, making sounds, moving their bodies or reaching for something).



Pre Linguistic skills

- Non verbal communication behaviors that develop before spoken language.
- It includes;
- https://youtu.be/V9YDDpo9LWg?feature=shared
- **Eye contact** https://youtu.be/X7qv5w1clGw?si=qHelDn9JKXy39Ydq
- **Imitation skills** https://youtu.be/0tpkhavP39w?feature=shared
- **Joint attention** https://youtu.be/1Ab4vLMMAbY?si=HxHMPTO0Q4g9iOhy
- **Turn taking** https://youtu.be/6vUrweykYx0?si=Z-WA2sl0eS9Mg2zN

Eye Contact

- This is one of the first crucial skills your baby develops.

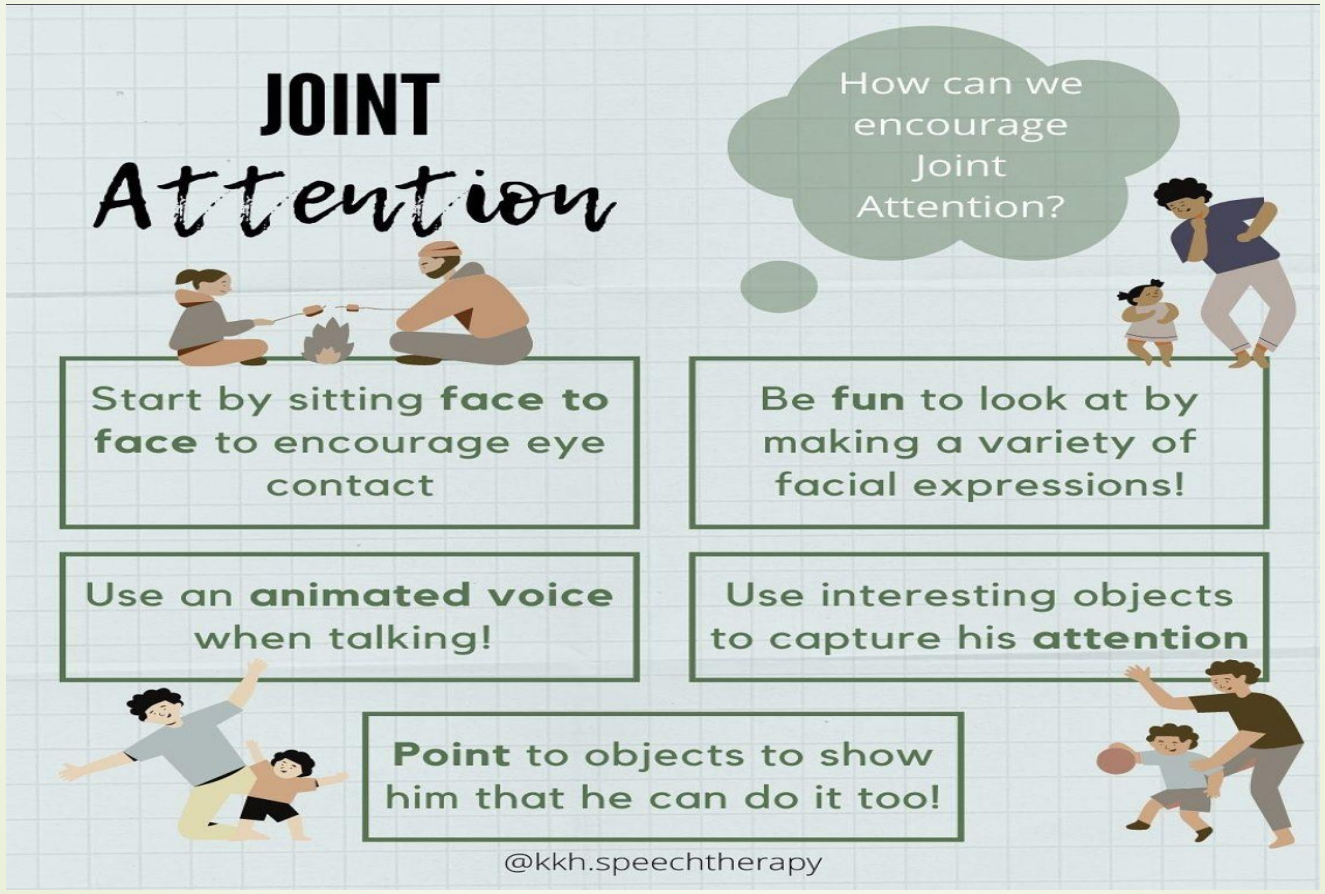
- By making eye contact, infants learn to focus on and recognize faces, setting the stage for more complex interactions.



Joint Attention

- Joint attention is the shared focus b/w a child and another person on an object or event, forming a foundational skill for language and social communication development.

Joint Attention

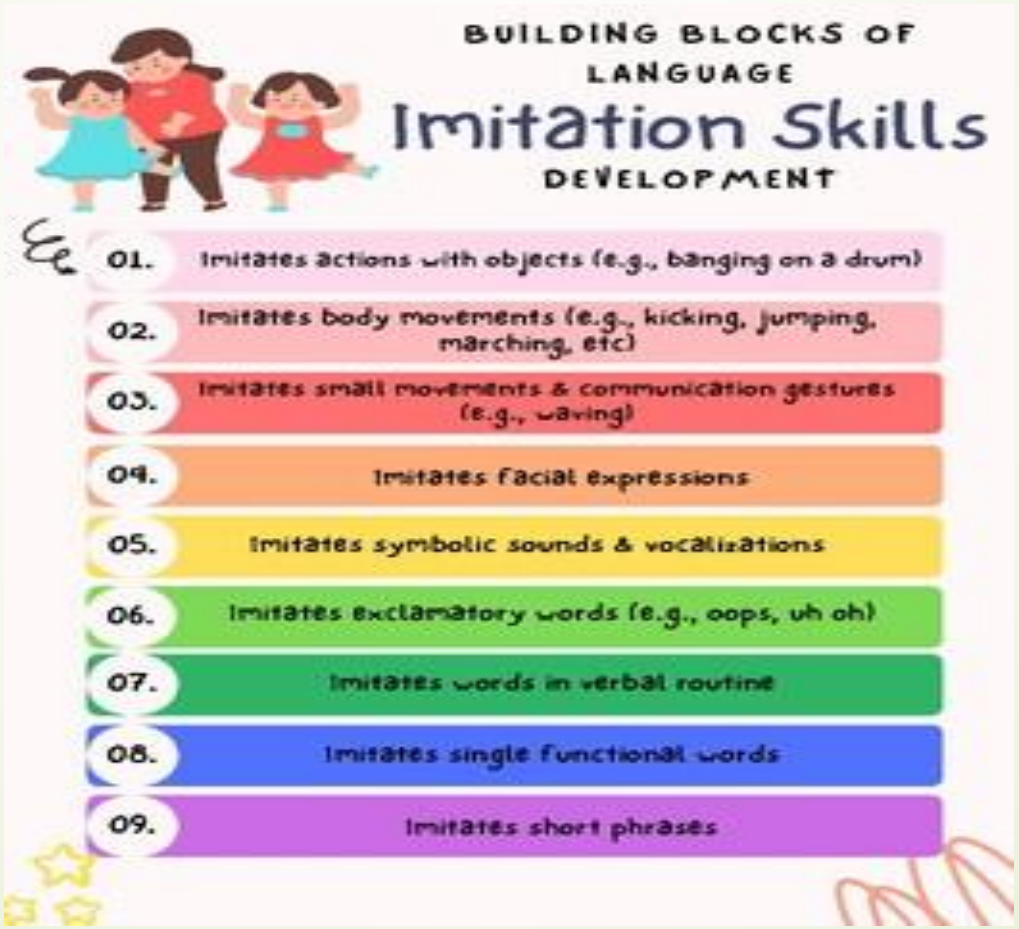


Imitation Skills

- Imitation skills are foundational abilities that allow individuals to learn by observing and copying the actions, gestures, or behaviors of others, supporting communication, social interaction, and learning.

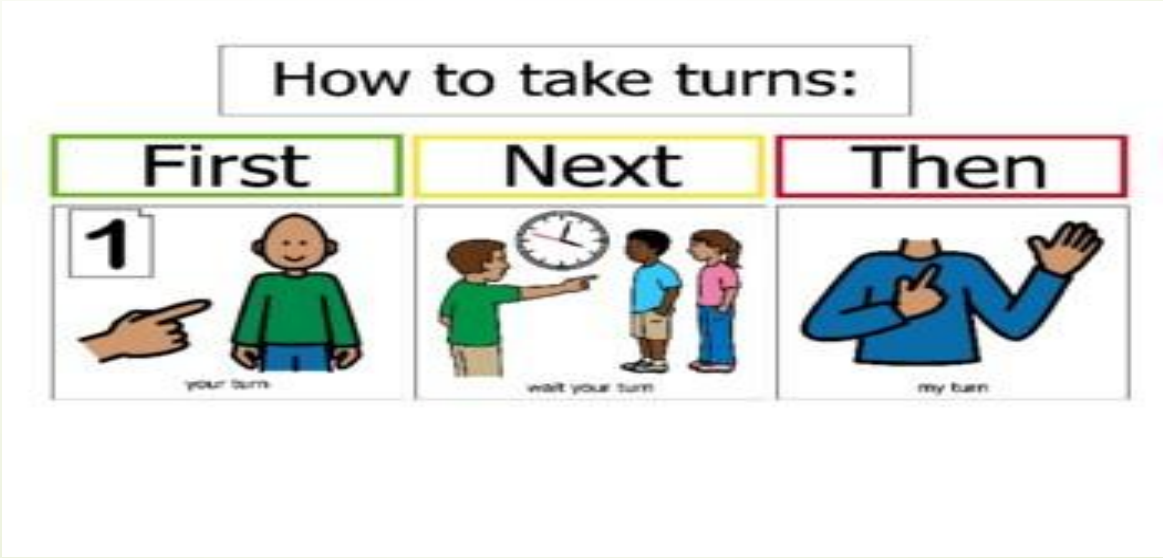


Imitation skills



Turn Taking

- Turn taking is important for:
- ✓ Developing listening skills, expressions, social interactions and understanding the rules of conversations.



The Power of Home Connection

- Home is a natural and effective environment for fostering your child's speech and language skills.

- By incorporating engaging activities, consistent routines, and positive reinforcement, parents and caregivers can significantly enhance their child's communication development



Connection strategies

- **Respond immediately:** Treat every gesture, point or vocal attempt as active communication. Validate their effort with a warm nod.
- **Expand their words:** Repeat what they say and add a single descriptive word. If they sat “Car”, you respond with “Blue Car”.
- **Model progression:** If they speak in short phrases like “want juice”, expand with a model of “want orange juice please”.
- **Avoid interrogations:** Replace quiz questions (what color is this?) with simple descriptions (“look, a bright red apple”).

What is a Langugae ?

- **It is the shared system of words, symbols, and rules that we use to understand other people and express our own thoughts, feelings, and needs.**
- **Receptive Language**
- Receptive language is your child's ability to understand and process spoken, written, or visual communication.
- **Expressive Language**
- Expressive language is how your child uses words, sounds, and gestures to share their thoughts, feelings, and needs with others.

Building Receptive Skills

- **Modelling** is a powerful technique used in language development, especially for children with language delays or disorders. It involves **demonstrating correct language use** in natural, meaningful situations without requiring the child to repeat or respond immediately.

Parallel Talk

The adult describes what *the child* is doing, seeing, or feeling.



Parallel Talk Video



Self Talk

The adult narrates what *they* are doing.



Self Talk Video



Expansion

Expansion is a language facilitation technique where an adult repeats a child's incomplete or simplified utterance, filling in the missing grammatical components



Create Need to Talk




Your hands are very dirty!
Dirty.

Low Tech AAC Communication

- Low-Tech AAC stands for "Augmentative and Alternative Communication" that doesn't use batteries, plugs, or screens.
- Simply put, it is any printed tool—like a book, a board, or a picture card—that helps your child understand language and share their thoughts without needing to rely on spoken words alone.

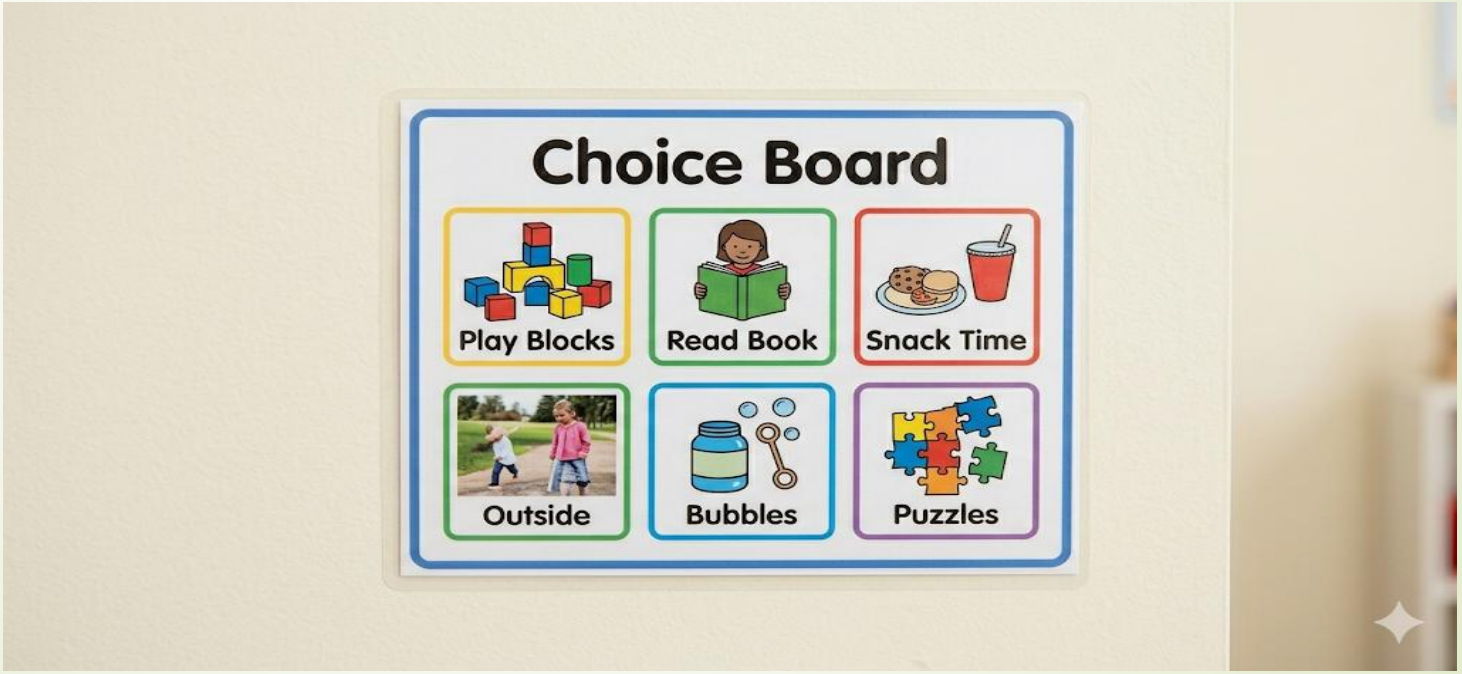
✓ Choice Boards

✓ First and Then Board

✓ Communication Board

Choice Board

A choice board is a tool that presents a limited set of options (using pictures, symbols, or text) to help an individual make a selection.



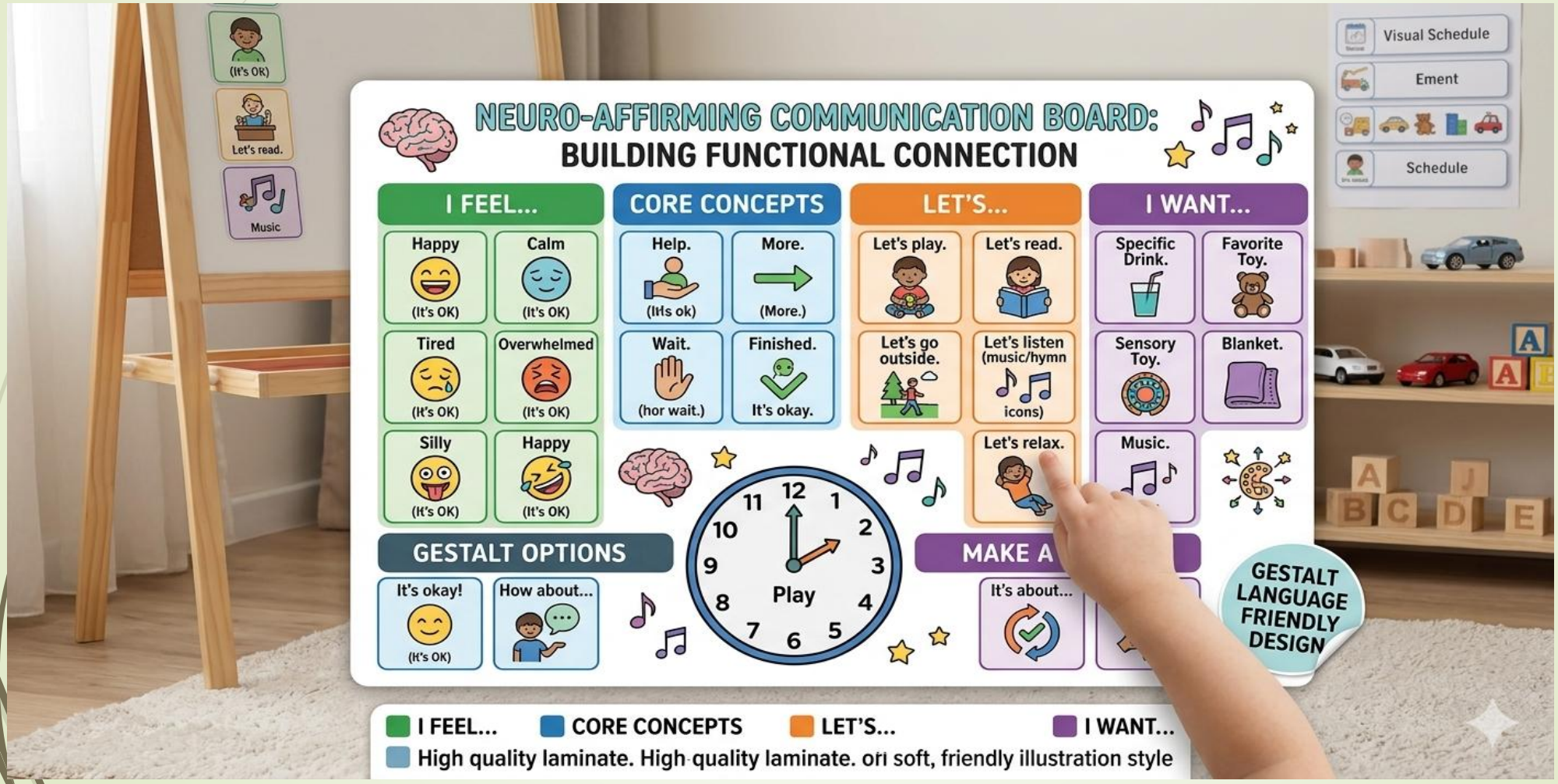
First and Then Board

- First/Then Board is one of the simplest and most effective low-tech visual support tools. The board is typically a small card divided into two columns or squares.
- The "First" Box: Contains a picture, symbol, or text representing a task, transition, or non-preferred activity (e.g., speech work, brushing teeth, wearing shoes).
- The "Then" Box: Contains a picture of a highly motivating reward or preferred activity that the child enjoys (e.g., bubbles, iPad, playground, snack).

First and Then Board



Communication Board



Reward Board



Guess What is Happening



Caring for the Caregiver

- **Celebrating every Step**:

✓ **Focus on progress**: notice and celebrate every communication attempt whether a new word, simple gesture or a brief gaze.

✓ **Prioritize your needs**: parenting a child with autism requires deep energy. Take regular breaks to rest and recharge.

✓ **Find your support**: connect with parent support networks to share experiences, strategies and understanding.

✓ **Trust the journey**: Deep, authentic, connection is built through small, consistent steps, patience and love.

Resources And Image sources

- www.familygrowth.org
- therapyworks.com
- www.ceamteam.org
- myworldaba.com
- www.istockphoto.com
- handprintstherapies.com


Thank you!