



Interacting with Young Children

(based on the Hanen Early Language Program)

Watch and Listen to Your Child:

- ◆ Be face to face/at the child's level
- ◆ Watch what the child is doing, saying and where they are looking
- ◆ Be sure the child gets a turn talking
- ◆ REALLY LISTEN (don't fill in the gaps)
- ◆ Hear the words (or noises) s/he is making
- ◆ If you're not sure, try to guess what s/he said
- ◆ Don't ask too many questions

Let the Child Lead

- ◆ Watch what s/he is doing
- ◆ Respond to what s/he is looking at and interested in
- ◆ Join in with what s/he is doing (not what you want him/her to do)

Get Involved in the Play:

- ◆ Get involved (don't just watch)
- ◆ Take turns with the toys
- ◆ Get your own toys
- ◆ Be silly; have fun and play like a child

Adjust Your Language

- ◆ Use comments to keep the conversation going
- ◆ Add on to what the child has said
- ◆ Say less and stress the key words
- ◆ Slow down
- ◆ Use gestures and show what you mean when you can
- ◆ Repeat, repeat, repeat: use key words many times in your own conversation as you play and interact together.