

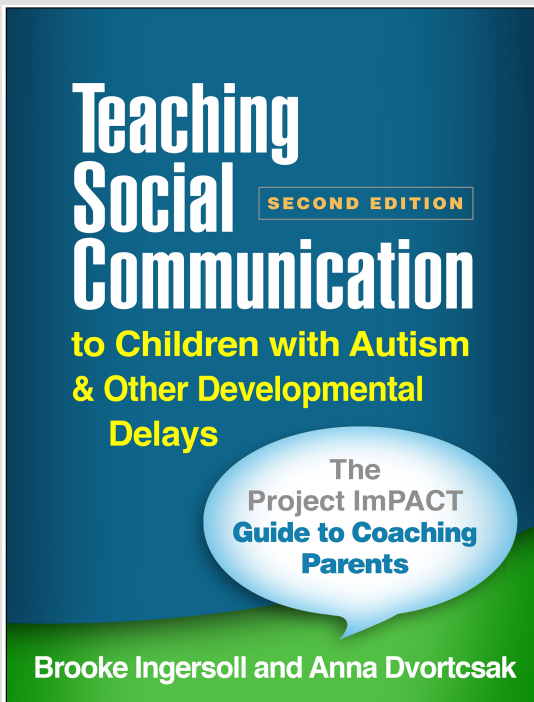
Teaching Social Communication to Children with Autism and Other Developmental Delays

SECOND EDITION

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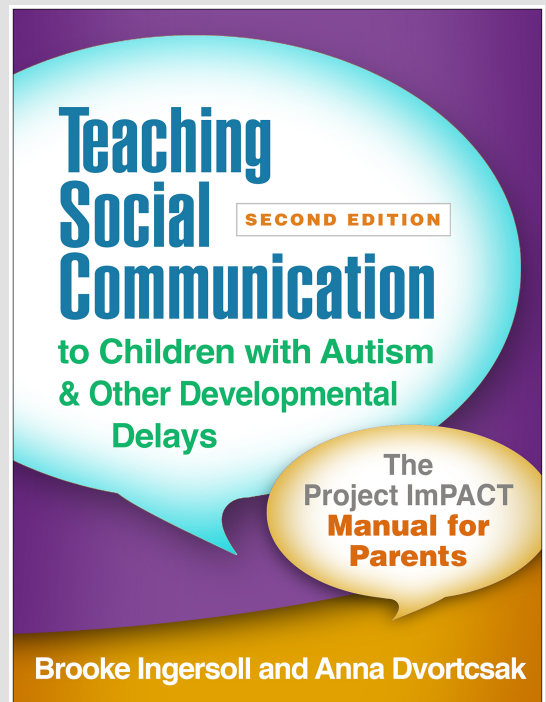
The Project ImPACT

Guide to Coaching Parents



The Project ImPACT

Manual for Parents



Brooke Ingersoll and Anna Dvortcsak

Teaching Social Communication

SECOND EDITION

to Children with Autism
& Other Developmental
Delays

The
Project ImPACT
**Guide to Coaching
Parents**

Brooke Ingersoll and Anna Dvortcsak



ebook

THE GUILFORD PRESS

TEACHING SOCIAL COMMUNICATION
TO CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND OTHER
DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS

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to Children with Autism
and Other Developmental
Delays

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to Coaching Parents

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About the Authors

Brooke Ingersoll, PhD, BCBA-D, is Associate Professor of Psychology at Michigan State University, where she is Director of the Autism Research Lab. She has published extensively on the development, evaluation, and dissemination of social communication interventions for children with autism spectrum disorder and their families, and provides training to professionals nationally and internationally. With Anna Dvortcsak, she is codeveloper of Project ImPACT (Improving Parents As Communication Teachers).

Anna Dvortcsak, MS, CCC-SLP, is a speech pathologist in private practice in Portland, Oregon. She provides consulting, training to families with children with autism spectrum disorder and social communication disorders, individualized speech and language services, and training to professionals nationally and internationally. Ms. Dvortcsak conducts research on the efficacy of interventions for children with autism spectrum disorder and has presented her findings at professional conferences and in peer-reviewed articles and book chapters.

Preface

This book and its companion materials provide a comprehensive parent-mediated intervention curriculum developed specifically for families of young children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and related social communication delays. It is designed for children from the age of earliest concern to about age 6, although it has also been used with older children (up to about age 12) who have significant language and cognitive delays. The curriculum offers providers a step-by-step guide for teaching families to use naturalistic developmental-behavioral intervention (NDBI) strategies to enhance their children's social engagement, communication, imitation, and play skills within meaningful activities and daily caregiving routines. The curriculum is designed to be used by service providers working with families whose children have social communication challenges; these providers may include early childhood professionals, speech-language pathologists, special educators, behavioral specialists, clinical psychologists, social workers, and occupational therapists. As described in more detail in Part I of this manual, the parent-mediated intervention program offered here—known as Project ImPACT (Improving Parents As Communication Teachers)—is a unique blend of intervention techniques drawn from the developmental and behavioral literatures. These intervention strategies have a strong evidence base for increasing social communication skills in young children with ASD and related disorders (see Schreibman et al., 2015).

This program is the result of over 15 years of development and implementation with hundreds of families and multiple early intervention sites across the United States. It was originally designed to be used by clinicians working with children with ASD, in a one-to-one setting with each child and parent, at the former Hearing and Speech Institute in Portland, Oregon. Through our collaborations with the Statewide Regional Programs Autism Training Sites (RPATS), sponsored by Portland State University and the Oregon Department of Education, a group coaching model was added that would allow the program to be conducted in early childhood special education classrooms. Detailed guidelines for conducting parent coaching in both individual and group models are contained in this volume.

This manual is the second edition of what was originally titled *Teaching Social Communication to Children with Autism*. It includes updates based on new research and our ongoing collaborations. In particular, these updates have focused on making this program appropriate and accessible for a wider range of children and families, including those without an ASD diagnosis who have social communication delays, as well as more flexible for use in a range of practice settings. This second edition also includes an optional behavior management unit that can be used to support families experiencing significant behavioral challenges.

The present version of the program includes the following:

1. A manual for coaches (this volume), which covers how to conduct the program in either an individual or group coaching context and includes a guide to the companion website (see the box at the end of the table of contents).
2. A parent manual, which is appropriate for use in either the individual or group model.
3. Access to the companion website, which includes downloadable parent and coach forms, as well as PowerPoint slides for group presentations.
4. Video clips of parents using techniques with their children, which are available for downloading or streaming.

Coach Manual

The coach manual (this volume) provides the necessary background information and detailed procedures for conducting a parent-mediated intervention program with parents of young children with social communication delays. It is divided into three parts, plus an Appendix. Part I presents the rationale and research support for Project ImPACT. It describes the overall program, including the core social communication skills targeted, the strategies used to teach children these skills, and the strategies used to coach parents. The practicalities of planning and implementing Project ImPACT in community settings are also covered.

Part II provides a step-by-step guide to conducting the individual coaching model. It is designed for providers working with families on a one-to-one basis in a home or clinic setting. Organized into seven basic units, it teaches parents intervention strategies that build sequentially on each other over the course of 24 sessions. After the program is complete, follow-up sessions are recommended; the step-by-step guidelines for a follow-up session can be found in Unit 7. Finally, Part II includes a five-session optional unit (Unit 8) that the coach can use at any point in the program to help parents manage a child's challenging behavior through positive behavior support strategies.

Part III provides a step-by-step guide to conducting a group parent coaching model. This model is appropriate for providers who serve children primarily in a classroom or other group setting. This version of the program teaches parents the same strategies, but is organized into six group sessions alternating with six individual sessions for one-on-one coaching. Group sessions are taught with the visual aids of PowerPoint slides and video examples showing parents using techniques with their children. Part III includes notes that highlight the important information the coach should cover during the group presentations, along with a sample script for the corresponding slides. Both the slides and the videos can be found on the companion website (see below).

In the Appendix, Table A.1 lists all the supporting forms used in both the individual and group coaching models, including assessment and other data collection materials. Table A.2 lists the video clips.

Parent Manual

The parent manual is designed for use with either the individual or group coaching model. Briefly and clearly, it describes the purpose and procedure for each of the intervention strategies. The

manual includes illustrations and practice plans. Additional copies of the parent manuals may be purchased separately.

Throughout this book and the parent manual, we use the term *parent* to refer to any adult involved in the care of a child with social communication delays. However, we recognize that other caregivers besides actual parents participate in parent-mediated intervention programs for children with autism, including stepparents, extended family members, and legal guardians. Except for the sample scripts and examples, we use the pronoun “she” to refer to the parent and practitioner, and “he” to refer to the child. This convention is used to maintain consistency and clarity throughout the text, rather than to indicate a specific gender.

Companion Website and Video Access

This second edition of Project ImPACT features a companion website with downloadable copies of all the supporting forms used in both the individual and group coaching models, including assessment and other data collection materials and PowerPoint slides for the six group sessions detailed in Part III. Program purchasers are granted permission to download and use these materials with families.

Video examples of parents using the intervention techniques with their children are available for free download or streaming; links for video access are provided at the companion website (see the box at the end of the table of contents). Again, a list of the clips, with the techniques and language levels they illustrate, is provided in this volume’s Appendix (Table A.2).

Acknowledgments

Development of the Project ImPACT program would not have been possible without the support of the many families, providers, and program administrators who participated and provided feedback to improve the quality of the program. We are particularly thankful to the families who participated in the development of the video examples. We are truly grateful for all of your help.

This program has also been influenced by the work of a number of pioneers in the field of parent-mediated intervention for children with ASD and other developmental disabilities, including Laura Schreibman, Robert Koegel, Ann Kaiser, Gerald Mahoney, and James MacDonald, as well as the Hanen Centre, Toronto, Ontario.

We would like to thank the former Hearing and Speech Institute in Portland, Oregon, and Donald Rushmer, its executive director, for supporting the development of the original program. We would also like to thank Claudia Meyer and Erica Steele, speech pathologists at the Hearing and Speech Institute, who provided feedback throughout the development of the program and helped pilot the individual parent coaching model. In addition, we would like to thank Joel Arick at Portland State University, and the Oregon Department of Education, for supporting the development of the group coaching model and helping with its dissemination; and Corey Hiskey for filming the original video examples. We are also grateful to the staff at Northwest Regional Education Service District for piloting the original group parent coaching model. A special thanks to Nancy Ford, program director; Sheila Magee, program coordinator; Karen Shepard, autism spe-

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The second edition of this manual and its companion materials would not have been possible without the tremendous effort of the members of the Michigan State University Autism Research Lab. We would like to thank Nikki Bonter, Katherine Walton, Natalie Berger, Karis Casagrande, Kyle Frost, Kate Shannon, Kathleen Berry, and Diondra Straiton for their involvement in research on Project ImPACT, feedback on the materials, and collection of and participation in the video examples. In particular, we would like to thank Katherine Pickard, whose dissertation work significantly informed many of the adaptations that appear in this second edition, and Allison Wainer, who led research on the validation of the Social Communication Checklist—Revised and our provider training model.

The second edition is also the result of the work of the BRIDGE Collaborative in San Diego, a community–academic partnership focused on assisting families of toddlers with and at risk for ASD. The BRIDGE Collaborative adapted the first edition of the Project ImPACT parent manual to better meet the needs of toddlers with and at risk for ASD. With their permission, we have incorporated some of their adaptations into the second edition of the parent manual. We are grateful for the extensive feedback and suggestions that have made the parent manual more accessible to a wider range of children and families. In particular, we would like to thank Aubyn Stahmer, Sarah Reith, Lauren Brookman-Frazer, Marilee Burgeson, Karen Searcy, and Joshua Feder for their continued feedback on this program.

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Anna Dvortcsak would like to thank her professors at the University of Redlands and the many families and professionals with whom she has worked. This program would not have been possible without their input. She would also like to thank her husband, Alexey; sisters, Carrie MacLaren and Vivian Soliz; and parents, Suzie and Erich Kuerschner, for their continued support, encouragement, and patience during the writing process. A special thanks to her wonderful daughters, Katharina and Ella, for their kind words of inspiration, patience, and editing skills.

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TEACHING SOCIAL COMMUNICATION
TO CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND OTHER
DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS

PART I

An Introduction to Project ImPACT

CHAPTER 1

Project ImPACT

An Overview

Project ImPACT (Improving Parents As Communication Teachers) is a parent-mediated intervention for young children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and related social communication delays. It was developed with the specific goal of supporting the use of best practices in parent-mediated intervention by community providers. Children with social communication delays are slow to develop early nonverbal communication skills, such as joint attention and engagement, gesture use, imitation, and functional and symbolic play. These delays not only have a negative impact on the development of social relationships and verbal language, but also contribute to behavioral difficulties, such as tantrums, aggression, and delayed adaptive and cognitive skills (Ingersoll, 2011; Paul, Chawarska, Cicchetti, & Volkmar, 2008; Rogers & Pennington, 1991; Sigafos, 2000). Social communication deficits, along with restricted and repetitive behaviors, are defining characteristics of ASD (American Psychiatric Association, 2013); thus best practices in early intervention for children with ASD are focused on promoting social communication development (Zwaigenbaum, Bauman, Choueiri, & Kasari, 2015). Social communication delays are also seen in many children with language disorders and global developmental delay, making this area an important intervention target for these children as well (Lord & Pickles, 1996).

The past 20 years have seen a dramatic increase in the number of children diagnosed with ASD (Van Naarden Braun et al., 2015). Current estimates suggest that more than 1 in 100 preschool-age children in the United States are affected by ASD (Christensen et al., 2016). Part of this increase is due to increased awareness, along with better screening and diagnostic instruments, which have reduced the average age at first diagnosis from school age to 3 years of age (Mandell, Novak, & Zubritsky, 2005). Even children as young as 2 years can be reliably diagnosed with ASD (Charman & Baird, 2002), and many more are being identified as at risk for ASD based on social communication delays before the age of 2 (Zwaigenbaum, Bauman, Choueiri, & Fein, 2015).

The Rationale for Parent-Mediated Intervention

Because the educational and behavioral needs of children with ASD are significant, several expert review panels have concluded that young children with ASD should receive a minimum of 25 hours per week of specialized intervention throughout the year (Maglione, Gans, Das, Timbie, &

Kasari, 2012; National Research Council [NRC], 2001). It is a challenge for school districts and public agencies to provide the level of intensity required for effectively treating these toddlers and preschool-age students. In response, many families seek additional private services at a substantial financial burden. Many others wish to pursue private services but are unable to do so, due to the expense or to a lack of such services in their community. Thus, even with the addition of private therapy, the majority of families report receiving fewer than 25 hours per week of intervention for their children with ASD (Hume, Bellini, & Pratt, 2005; McIntyre & Zemantic, 2017).

Parent-mediated intervention is a way to increase the intervention hours a child receives and to improve long-term outcomes for the child and family. Parent-mediated intervention involves providing systematic teaching and coaching in intervention strategies to help parents accomplish specific goals for their child, including improving the parent–child relationship, increasing specific developmental skills, and managing their child’s behavior (Bearss, Burrell, Stewart, & Scahill, 2015).

Research on Parent-Mediated Intervention

A growing body of literature demonstrates that parent-mediated intervention effectively improves outcomes for the child and the parent (Lang, Machalicek, & Rispoli, 2009; McConachie & Diggle, 2007; Patterson, Smith, & Mirenda, 2012; Roberts & Kaiser, 2011) (see Table I.1.1). Research shows that parents can learn to use developmental and behavioral intervention strategies with fidelity, and that their use of these strategies results in increased social communication skills and decreased challenging behavior in their toddlers and preschool-age children. Research also suggests that parent-mediated intervention is time- and cost-effective, and leads to better generalization and maintenance of child skills than therapist-implemented intervention models. This is because the child learns new skills across a range of natural settings in the home and community (Koegel, Schreibman, Britten, Burke, & O’Neill, 1982; Steiner & Koegel, 2012).

Parent-mediated intervention can also improve broader family functioning and family quality of life by increasing parental self-efficacy and positive family interactions, and decreasing parenting stress and depression (Coolican, Smith, & Bryson, 2010; Estes, Vismara, Mercado, & Fitzpatrick, 2014; Ingersoll, Wainer, Berger, Pickard, & Bonter, 2016; Koegel, Bimbela, & Schreibman, 1996; Turner-Brown, Hume, Boyd, & Kainz, 2016). These outcomes are particularly important for families of children with ASD, as these parents are at a high risk of experiencing stress and poor mental health (Karst & Van Hecke, 2012). Furthermore, parents who have been trained in

TABLE I.1.1. Benefits of Parent-Mediated Intervention for Children with Social-Communication Delays

-
- Parents can learn to implement strategies with a high degree of fidelity.
 - Children increase their social-communication skills and decrease their challenging behavior.
 - Such intervention is time- and cost-effective.
 - Children experience better generalization and maintenance of skills.
 - Parents experience increased self-efficacy and decreased parenting stress.
 - Parents experience greater optimism about their children’s future.
 - Parents report such intervention as the most effective practice for improving their children’s development.
-

techniques to support their children's learning report greater optimism about their own ability to influence their children's development (Koegel et al., 1982), which may help them maintain their efforts with their children over time (NRC, 2001). These benefits are recognized by parents, who report parent-mediated intervention to be the most effective practice in contributing to their children's development (Hume et al., 2005) and their number one family service priority (Mahoney & Filer, 1996).

Providing high-quality, intensive parent coaching can help parents and providers to work together to provide more intensive intervention to children with ASD and other social communication challenges. While it should not be considered an alternative to intensive services for children with ASD, parent-mediated intervention may provide an important "jump start" for families who are on waiting lists for more intensive services. More importantly, teaching parents to use these techniques maximizes their children's learning by increasing generalization and maintenance of skills over time and can improve family well-being. Indeed, there is strong expert consensus that parent-mediated intervention is a best practice in the treatment of infants and toddlers with or at risk for ASD (Zwaigenbaum et al., 2015a, 2015b). Furthermore, it is an essential component of a comprehensive intervention program for young children with ASD (Maglione et al., 2012; NRC, 2001).

Most providers who work with young children with ASD and other social communication delays recognize the importance of involving parents in their child's intervention (Stahmer, Collings, & Palinkas, 2005). Indeed, many providers have used informal strategies to help parents interact with and teach their children, such as providing information or suggestions, referring the parent to books or handouts, and/or encouraging a parent to observe while a provider works with a child. However, parent-mediated intervention, which includes sequenced, systematic teaching and coaching, is highly underutilized in community-based intervention programs (Hume et al., 2005; Stahmer, 2007; Thomas, Ellis, McLaurin, Daniels, & Morrissey, 2007). For example, in a North Carolina survey, only 7% of parents of children with ASD ages 4 and under reported receiving formal parent training (Thomas et al., 2007). Furthermore, parents from lower-socioeconomic-status backgrounds are even more likely to report parent training as an unmet service need (Pickard & Ingersoll, 2016).

There are several barriers to the use of evidence-based parent-mediated intervention models in community settings. Programs that address these barriers can help providers deliver high-quality, parent-mediated intervention in community practice settings and increase access to evidence-based intervention for families of young children with ASD and related disorders. It is with this goal in mind that we have developed Project ImPACT.

Key Components of Project ImPACT

Project ImPACT is a naturalistic developmental-behavioral intervention (NDBI). This is a newer class of interventions for young children with ASD and related concerns that has been informed by the fields of developmental and communication sciences and applied behavior analysis (Schreibman et al., 2015). Throughout the development of this program, we have worked closely with parents, providers, and administrators to identify elements that would support its use in a variety of community settings serving young children with social communication delays.

In this section, we discuss the key components of Project ImPACT and their theoretical and

empirical foundations. We first discuss the core social communication skills addressed by the program and the importance of teaching them to children with social communication challenges. We then highlight the specific evidence-based intervention strategies that parents are taught to use with their children. Next, we discuss the strategies that coaches use to teach parents. We then discuss the key aspects of this program that can support its use in a variety of community settings. This includes the option of providing coaching in either an individual or group model, and we provide more detailed descriptions of these models. We end with a brief summary of the research supporting the effectiveness of Project ImPACT to date. Table I.1.2 lists the key components of Project ImPACT.

Core Social Communication Skills

A number of early social communication skills are foundational to the development of complex social, language, and cognitive skills in typically developing children. These skills include joint attention and engagement (Bates, Benigni, Bretherton, Camaioni, & Volterra, 1979), gesture use (Özçalskan & Goldin-Meadow, 2005), imitation (Uzgiris, 1981), and symbolic play (Shore, O'Connell, & Bates, 1984). These skills are significantly delayed in children with ASD and related social communication challenges, leading to significant impairments in social-cognitive development (Ingersoll, 2011).

Research indicates that all children, regardless of their ability, learn social communication skills in a similar developmental sequence (Gerber, 2003). Indeed, children with social communication delays are able to learn skills that are appropriate for their developmental level more quickly than skills that are above their developmental level (Lifter, Sulzer-Azaroff, Anderson, & Cowdery, 1993). Furthermore, teaching early social communication skills can lead to increased development of more complex communication skills in children with ASD and related disorders (Ingersoll & Schreibman, 2006; Kasari, Gulsrud, Freeman, Paparella, & Hellemann, 2012; Kasari, Paparella, Freeman, & Jahromi, 2008; Whalen, Schreibman, & Ingersoll, 2006).

Based on this research, Project ImPACT targets four core sets of social communication skills within a developmental framework: social engagement, communication, imitation, and play. Below, we describe these skills and their developmental significance.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Social engagement involves the ability to maintain interactions by responding to and initiating social bids with others. Children with social communication delays usually have significant difficulty maintaining interactions with others (Schreibman, 1988). A key aspect of social engagement is the use of joint attention. *Joint attention* is the ability to coordinate attention between an object and another person for social purposes and includes showing, sharing, and pointing. Joint attention is a particularly important skill because it is believed to be involved in the development of language skills (Bates et al., 1979). Children with social communication challenges have difficulty both initiating and responding to joint attention bids from others, and it is thought that these deficits may lead to impaired language learning (Loveland & Landry, 1986).

The starting point of this program is to teach the parent to increase her child's social engagement, as it underlies all other social communication skills. Furthermore, all children are more likely to learn when they are actively engaged. In addition, increasing joint attention and engage-

TABLE I.1.2. Key Components of Project ImPACT

-
- Targets core social-communication skills within a developmental framework.
 - Uses a blend of evidence-based developmental and behavioral intervention techniques within play and daily routines.
 - Includes effective parent coaching and engagement strategies to help parents learn and use the intervention.
 - Includes elements to support community use: compatibility with families' lives, ease of learning, high-quality technical supports, flexible delivery model.
-

ment has been shown to improve other social communication skills, including language, play, and imitation, in children with ASD (Kasari, Freeman, & Paparella, 2006; Kasari et al., 2008; Siller & Sigman, 2002; Whalen et al., 2006).

COMMUNICATION

Language involves three components: *content*, *form*, and *use* (Bloom & Lahey, 1978). Each of these components includes both receptive and expressive abilities. *Content* refers to vocabulary or the understanding of words and their meanings. *Form* consists of the grammar and sounds of language, as well as syntax (i.e., the rules that govern how we put words in order to make a sentence). *Use* or *pragmatics* refers to reasons why we communicate (e.g., protest, request, gain attention, maintain attention, label, describe, respond to a question, greet, give a direction, solve a problem, share experiences, and express feelings and interests). Use also involves the social rules that surround our communication (e.g., taking turns, maintaining a topic, the ability to read and use nonverbal cues, physical proximity, and the ability to vary aspects of language according to the situation as well as the listener's response and needs).

Children with social communication delays often have difficulty with all three components of language, although they often show particular difficulty with the pragmatic use of language (Rogers & Pennington, 1991), as it is the most abstract. In addition, their verbal language is often characterized by unusual features such as echolalia (the nonfunctional repetition of previously heard speech), pronominal reversal, jargon, and idiosyncratic speech (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Language deficits extend to nonverbal skills, including the use of gestures (Bartak, Rutter, & Cox, 1975); thus, throughout this program, we use the term *communication* to refer to verbal and nonverbal language skills.

This program places a heavy emphasis on teaching expressive language skills, including nonverbal communication (gestures); to a lesser extent, it also involves teaching receptive language. It teaches the parent strategies to improve how the child communicates (content and form) and why the child communicates (use). It is focused on teaching spontaneous communication skills; thus it teaches the parent how to adjust the support she provides to avoid prompt dependence.

IMITATION

Children with social communication delays also demonstrate difficulty with the imitation of various actions, including actions on objects, gestures, facial expressions, vocalizations, and verbal language (Smith & Bryson, 1994; Williams, Whiten, & Singh, 2004). Imitation is an early-emerging

social communication strategy (Meltzoff & Moore, 1977) that plays a critical role in the development of other, more complex social communication skills, including language (e.g., Bates, Bretherton, & Snyder, 1988), play (Fiese, 1990; Uzgiris, 1991), and joint attention (Carpenter, Nagell, & Tomasello, 1998). Studies have found imitation ability to be strongly correlated with other social communication skills in children with social communication delays (Curcio, 1978; Dawson & Adams, 1984; Stone, Ousley, & Littleford, 1997; Stone & Yoder, 2001). These studies suggest that children with ASD may rely on imitation as a means to learn language even more than typically developing children do (Carpenter et al., 1998). Thus targeting imitation in young children with social communication delays is important for teaching new skills and may assist in the development of other social communication behaviors, such as language and joint attention (Carpenter, Pennington, & Rogers, 2002; Rogers & Bennetto, 2000). Indeed, most teaching strategies used with young children rely on imitation to teach new behaviors.

Imitation serves two functions: a learning function, through which infants and young children acquire new skills and knowledge; and a social function, through which they engage in social and emotional exchanges with others (Uzgiris, 1981). Although children with social communication challenges often have significant difficulty with imitation in general (Smith & Bryson, 1994), research suggests that the social function of imitation may be particularly impaired (Ingersoll, 2008). Thus this program focuses on teaching the parent to increase the child's social use of imitation during play interactions as a means of promoting overall social communication development (Ingersoll & Schreibman, 2006).

PLAY

Children with social communication delays also have significant deficits in the development of functional and pretend or symbolic play (Jarrold, Boucher, & Smith, 1993). Many children with ASD engage in nonfunctional play (e.g., lining up toys, spinning wheels) and repetitive play (Lewis & Boucher, 1988), while others do not express interest in toys. Although some of these children are able to engage in functional and symbolic play in highly structured environments, their spontaneous play is quite restricted (Lewis & Boucher, 1988).

Play is an important social communication skill for several reasons. Play skills are closely related to language skills, in that symbolic thinking (i.e., understanding that one thing can represent another) is necessary for both pretend play and language (Piaget, 1962). Therefore, teaching pretend or symbolic play skills can help children with social communication delays develop more sophisticated language skills (Kasari et al., 2006; Stahmer, 1995). In addition, play is an excellent place to work on problem-solving skills (Sylva, Bruner, & Genova, 1976), conceptual and imaginative abilities (Saltz, Dixon, & Johnson, 1977), perspective-taking skills (Berk, 2002), and fine and gross motor skills. Play also serves an important role in social development (Pelligrini & Smith, 1998). Since early peer interactions revolve around play activities (Piaget, 1962), children with social communication challenges who possess better play skills are more likely to engage appropriately with their peers. This program helps a parent teach a child play skills in a natural environment, with a focus on building flexible, spontaneous object and social play.

Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies

Research indicates the importance of both parent responsiveness and environmental contingencies in the development of social communication in young children (Bornstein, Tamis-LeMonda,

& Haynes, 1999; Petursdottir & Mellor, 2017). *Responsiveness* is a complex behavior that involves a variety of interactive components, including sensitivity, reciprocity, affect, and matching the child's developmental level, interests, and behavioral style to support behaviors currently within the child's repertoire (Mahoney, Finger, & Powell, 1985). Research has shown a consistent relationship between parents' level of responsiveness and their child's social communication development (Bornstein et al., 1999; Hoff-Ginsberg & Shatz, 1982; Siller & Sigman, 2002). Furthermore, several studies of developmental interventions have demonstrated that teaching parents to increase their responsiveness to their child's behavior can promote social engagement and communication in children with social communication disorders (Karaaslan & Mahoney, 2015; Mahoney & Solomon, 2016).

Research also indicates that the development of social communication skills can be facilitated through the use of behavioral teaching strategies or *applied behavior analysis* (ABA). ABA involves the systematic manipulation of environmental contingencies (antecedents and consequences), and includes the use of *prompting* (presenting a cue that increases the likelihood of specific response), *chaining* (linking two or more complex behaviors together), and *fading* (gradually decreasing prompts over time to encourage spontaneous responding) to teach skills currently outside a child's behavioral repertoire (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). ABA has the strongest evidence base to date for the treatment of children with ASD (Wong, Odom, Hume, Cox, & Fetting, 2015).

ABA can vary considerably in its level of structure and adult-directedness, from highly structured and adult-directed to naturalistic and child-led. Project ImPACT uses naturalistic ABA, which is conducted within the context of meaningful activities, such as play and daily caregiving routines, and involves child-initiated teaching episodes and natural reinforcement. This means that the parent can use these strategies throughout the day without having to set aside significant time to conduct teaching drills. There is strong empirical support for the use of naturalistic ABA in teaching social communication skills to children with social-communication delays (Wong et al., 2015). Research also indicates that naturalistic behavioral strategies often lead to better generalization and maintenance of skills than more structured ABA approaches do (Charlop-Christy & Carpenter, 2000; Delprato, 2001; McGee, Krantz, & McClannahan, 1985; Miranda-Linné & Melin, 1992), and they may be superior for teaching spontaneous social communication skills (Schwartz, Anderson, & Halle, 1989). In addition, these approaches are similar to natural adult-child interactions, which makes them more acceptable to parents, easier for parents to implement, and more enjoyable for parents and children (Schreibman, Kaneko, & Koegel, 1991).

Project ImPACT uses a unique blend of developmental and behavioral intervention techniques. They are designed to increase the parent's responsiveness to the child's behavior and teach the child to use new communication, imitation, and play skills within ongoing interactions in daily routines. The parent is first taught strategies for setting up her home to promote successful interactions. She is then taught the Project ImPACT intervention strategies, referred to as the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. F.A.C.T.S. is an acronym standing for the five sets of strategies: **Focus on Your Child, Adjust Your Communication, Create Opportunities, Teach New Skills, and Shape the Interaction**. These intervention strategies build on each other, as shown in Figure I.1.1, which illustrates the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. Each strategy set includes several individual techniques that can be used to achieve its aim. These techniques can be found in a number of other evidence-based developmental, naturalistic, and behavioral interventions (Schreibman et al., 2015). Below, we describe the intervention strategies, techniques, and their evidence base in technical language. In the parent manual, and in the session guidelines in this manual, we use



FIGURE I.1.1. The F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, showing how the five strategy sets relate to each other.

simplified and jargon-free terminology to represent many of these concepts in order to facilitate parent learning.

Note that the names of the five F.A.C.T.S. strategy sets are capitalized and given in boldface throughout this book. The names of the specific techniques that make up the F.A.C.T.S., such as *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child* for **Focus on Your Child**, are capitalized and given in italics.

FOCUS ON YOUR CHILD

The first strategy set is designed to promote child engagement by increasing the parent's sensitivity to her child's interests and behavior. The specific techniques and the suggested sequence in which they are taught are as follows:

- *Follow Your Child's Lead*. The parent is taught to engage with her child around his interests and to respond to the child's actions in a meaningful way. The parent is taught to respond to her child's changing interests, to assist her child in his play, and to respond appropriately to any meaningful attempts to communicate. This technique is used in all naturalistic interventions and has been shown to increase social engagement and motivation (e.g., Kaiser, Yoder, & Keetz, 1992).
- *Imitate Your Child*. The parent is taught to imitate her child's vocalizations, gestures, body movements, and actions with objects. This strategy is used to increase social engagement and has been shown to increase child responsiveness (Klinger & Dawson, 1992) and coordinated joint attention (Ingersoll & Schreibman, 2006).

ADJUST YOUR COMMUNICATION

The second strategy set is used to encourage the child's engagement and nonverbal and verbal language by teaching the parent to emphasize affect and match the communication level of her child. The specific techniques and the suggested sequence in which they are taught are these:

- *Use Animation.* The parent is taught to exaggerate her gestures, facial expressions, and vocal qualities in order to increase her child's interest and to model appropriate non-verbal communication (Elder, Valcante, Yarandi, White, & Elder, 2005).
- *Model and Expand Communication.* The parent is taught to use a variety of indirect language stimulation techniques (e.g., descriptive talk, expansions) to talk about the child's focus of interest. These techniques have been shown to be effective at increasing the rate and complexity of children's language skills (e.g., Camarata, Nelson, & Camarata, 1994; Kaiser et al., 1996).

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES

The third strategy set is used to encourage back-and-forth or reciprocal interactions. It helps the child to initiate and provides opportunities for the child to communicate for various functions. It is also used to gain the child's attention when needed. The specific techniques and the suggested sequence in which they are taught are as follows:

- *Playful Obstruction.* The parent is taught to playfully interrupt her child's activity in order to increase his reciprocity, to encourage him to request and protest, and to gain his attention when needed (Greenspan, Wieder, & Simons, 1998).
- *Balanced Turns.* The parent is taught to take turns with her child to increase his reciprocity and to provide opportunities for him to initiate requests and observe new play models (Wetherby & Woods, 2006).
- *Communicative Temptations.* The parent is taught to use a variety of communicative temptations (e.g., in sight, out of reach; control access, assistance; small portions; missing items/sabotage, silly situations) to encourage her child to initiate communication for a range of functions (e.g., Kaiser, Ostrosky, & Alpert, 1993).

TEACH NEW SKILLS

The fourth strategy set helps the child use new social communication skills by teaching the parent to use prompting, fading, shaping, and reinforcement in natural contexts to target specific communication acts, language structures, imitation, and play behaviors. This strategy builds on the previous strategies. For example, the parent focuses on the child and creates opportunities for him to initiate. The parent then uses a series of prompts and natural reinforcement to increase the complexity of the child's social communication behavior. The specific techniques and the sequence in which they are taught are these:

- *Prompts and Rewards.* The parent is first taught the basics of how to use prompting, fading, shaping, and reinforcement effectively. This includes ensuring motivation, providing clear and appropriate prompts, waiting after a prompt, moving from less to more supportive prompts to help the child respond correctly (least-to-most prompting), and providing immediate, natural reinforcement contingent on appropriate behavior (e.g., Kaiser et al., 1992; Koegel, O'Dell, & Koegel, 1987). Specific prompts are then taught to parents for increasing expressive and receptive language, imitation, and play skills as described below.
- *Prompts for Using Communication.* The parent is taught to use a variety of prompts (time

delay, questions, fill-in-the-blank/cloze, choices, verbal model, verbal routine, gesture model, and physical guidance) to teach her child new expressive language forms (e.g., Kaiser et al., 1993).

- *Projects for Understanding Communication.* The parent is taught to use verbal instructions, gesture prompts, modeling, and physical guidance to teach her child to understand and follow directions and increase receptive language (e.g., Kaiser et al., 1992).
- *Prompts for Imitation.* The parent is taught to use modeling and physical guidance to encourage her child to imitate her play with toys and gestures in a reciprocal fashion (Ingersoll & Gergans, 2007).
- *Prompts for Expanding Play.* The parent is taught to use a variety of prompts (leading comments, questions, choices, verbal instructions, play models, and physical guidance) to teach her child more varied and complex play skills (Stahmer, 1995).

SHAPE THE INTERACTION

In the fifth and final strategy set, the parent is taught how to use all of the strategies together, including when to emphasize the different strategies, how to move between them within an interaction, and how to use the strategies in community settings.

Effective Parent Coaching and Engagement Strategies

According to adult learning theory, adults benefit most from learning experiences that are practical and goal-focused, allow for choice and self-direction, capitalize on their experience, and are internally motivating (Merriam, 2001). Research on parent-mediated intervention has identified a number of coaching strategies based on these principles that are important for effective parent learning. These coaching strategies include parent-selected goals for the child (Brookman-Fraze, 2004); the use of sequenced, systematic instruction in intervention strategies (Mahoney et al., 1999); practice and feedback (Kaiser, Hemmeter, Ostrosky, Alpert, & Hancock, 1995); and ongoing support and problem solving (NRC, 2001). In addition, research on parent engagement in child treatment more broadly has identified a number of additional strategies that can increase parents' ability to engage in therapy, and to implement and maintain parenting changes over time (Ingoldsby, 2010). These strategies include early discussions of parent expectations for treatment, enhancing family support, problem-solving concrete barriers to participation, and developing a strong collaborative relationship. These strategies have also been associated with increased parent empowerment (Brookman-Fraze, 2004), and they increase engagement and retention in parenting interventions, particularly among vulnerable families (Ingoldsby, 2010).

These parent coaching and engagement strategies enhance parent empowerment and teach the parent new ways to interact and teach the child. When used in combination, they can lead to effective, long-term positive changes in parent–child interactions.

Elements to Support Community Use

A number of barriers can impede the use of parent-mediated intervention in community settings. First, many programs place traditional therapist-delivered interventions into a parent-mediated delivery model. That is, parents use the same strategies, within the same kinds of interactions,

targeting the same goals as a therapist would. However, this approach does not consider the unique context of families of young children with social communication delays. The misalignment between the values, needs, and daily lives of families and the demands of many parent training approaches can make these programs less acceptable to parents. We have worked closely with parents to ensure that the goals of Project ImPACT are important to parents and that the intervention strategies are compatible with families' daily lives. In addition, we have developed family-friendly intervention terminology, a sequence of instruction, and simple written materials that make the intervention easy to learn.

Another major barrier is that providers working with young children with social communication delays are rarely trained how to teach parents (Mahoney et al., 1999; McCollum, 1999). For example, preservice training is focused on preparing providers to work directly with children; yet knowledge of adult learning principles and effective coaching strategies are necessary foundations for parent-mediated intervention models (Mahoney et al., 1999; McCollum, 1999). Additionally, a lack of technical supports, such as user-friendly manuals and other coaching materials, can make the delivery of parent-mediated interventions in community settings difficult (Carroll et al., 2007). To address this barrier, we have worked closely with providers to identify needed technical supports for working with families. Project ImPACT includes session-by-session guidelines that describe not just *what* but also *how* to teach parents. In addition, this program includes all the necessary materials needed to implement Project ImPACT effectively in the community (e.g., a parent manual, slides and sample scripts, video examples, and forms), as well as strategies for engaging and empowering vulnerable families.

A final barrier is the lack of fit between the structure of parent-mediated intervention programs and the structure of existing service delivery models (Hoagwood, Bums, Kiser, Ringeisen, & Schoenwald, 2001). For example, most evidence-based parent-mediated interventions are conducted individually with the parent, child, and coach once or twice a week over many months (Beaudoin, Sebire, & Gouture, 2014). This type of service delivery may be consistent with home-based early intervention models; however, most intervention programs for children with ASD over the age of 3 are provided in classroom settings that allow very little time for teachers to meet individually with the parent and child (Bitterman, Daley, Misra, Carlson, & Markowitz, 2008). Thus it is difficult for many providers serving children in classroom settings to envision using these programs within their practice settings. To address this issue, we have developed a flexible delivery model: Project ImPACT can be delivered in either an individual or a group coaching format. We also provide suggestions for how both of these models can be adapted, so that the program can fit the structure of most community programs serving young children with social communication challenges. Below, we provide a brief overview of the individual and group coaching models.

INDIVIDUAL COACHING MODEL

In the individual model, the coach meets with a parent and child for 60–90 minutes twice a week for 12 weeks. At the end of the 24-session program, monthly follow-up sessions for support and coaching are recommended. The length of the program can be modified if needed.

The coach spends the first one to two sessions developing the parent's expectations about the program, assessing the child's social communication skills, and developing individualized social communication goals for the child with the parent. The coach then spends one to two sessions on each intervention technique. The parent is asked to read about the technique in the parent

manual prior to the coach's presentation. Every technique is then taught according to the following procedure: a description and discussion of the technique that tie it to the child's goals; the coach's demonstration of the technique with the child; and the parent's practice of the technique in session, with feedback from the coach. Between-session practice is a crucial part of the program, and a Practice Plan is developed at the end of each session. The coach helps the parent brainstorm how and when to use the technique in the home to target her child's goals. During this discussion, the coach writes down the child's goals, the home activities selected as practice opportunities, and the specific techniques the parent should use. The parent is also instructed to write down how the child responds to the techniques, and to note any challenges that come up over the week. Practice Plan forms are included in the parent manual, as well as on the parent companion website (see the webpage listed at the end of the table of contents in the parent manual).

After each level of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid (see Figure I.1.1) has been taught, there is a review session to improve the parent's ability to use the strategies across activities and to determine whether additional time should be spent on the strategies. The review sessions allow assessment of the parent's use of the strategies and practice across settings or activities. The four review sessions can be recorded and reviewed with the parent to help the parent assess her use of the strategies and the child's use of skills. An optional five-session unit, **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior**, can be added to the program as needed.

At the end of the program, the coach helps the parent update her child's goals and plan for continued success. Detailed guidelines and session-by-session instructions for the individual coaching model are presented in Part II of this book.

GROUP COACHING MODEL

The group model is designed to be conducted over 12 weeks in six 2-hour group sessions and six 1-hour individual coaching sessions. The group model is accelerated; more than one intervention technique is presented in each group session. Groups consist of six to eight parents without children present. For coaching sessions, each parent-child pair meets individually with the coach.

In the first group session, the coach develops the parents' expectations about the program, provides an overview of the intervention strategies, and discusses strategies for setting up the home for successful interactions. Subsequent group sessions begin with a discussion of the parents' use of the different intervention strategies in their homes. The coach then introduces a new intervention strategy through a lecture accompanied with PowerPoint slides, video clips of parents using the techniques with their children, group discussion, and problem solving. At the end of each group session, the coach helps the parents develop practice plans, which include their children's goals, home activities, and the intervention techniques they will use during those activities to target their children's goals. Each parent is then instructed to practice the techniques over the next week and to write down how the child responds. Reading in the parent manual is also assigned.

The individual coaching sessions are similar to sessions in the individual model. The coach helps the parent develop individual goals in the first coaching session, followed by parent practice and feedback in the following coaching sessions. However, the coach only briefly reviews the intervention techniques rather than discussing them in depth. The session moves quickly to having the parent practice with her child and receive feedback from the coach. The parent is also asked to practice more than one intervention technique at each coaching session. Detailed guidelines and session-by-session instructions for the group model are presented in Part III of this book.

Research on Project ImPACT

In addition to the evidence base supporting the components of Project ImPACT reviewed above, several studies have evaluated Project ImPACT as a parent-mediated intervention package. These studies demonstrate that both individual and group coaching models are effective for teaching parents to use the intervention strategies with fidelity, and that they lead to increased parent self-efficacy and decreased parenting stress (Ingersoll & Wainer, 2013a, 2013b; Ingersoll et al., 2016; Stadnick, Stahmer, & Brookman-Frazee, 2015). In addition, parent and teacher reports, as well as observations of parent–child interactions, indicate that children make gains in language use after participation in the program (Ingersoll & Wainer, 2013a, 2013b; Ingersoll et al., 2016). These gains are associated with increased parent responsiveness and direct teaching of social communication skills. We have also shown that community-based intervention providers can learn to implement the program with fidelity as a result of our provider training model (Wainer, Pickard, & Ingersoll, 2017).

Finally, this program is feasible and acceptable for families of toddlers at risk for ASD and families from low-socioeconomic-status backgrounds receiving intervention in community settings (Pickard, Kilgore, & Ingersoll, 2016; Stahmer et al., 2016).

The next chapter describes important considerations for planning and implementing Project ImPACT in your practice setting.

CHAPTER 2

Planning and Implementing Project ImPACT

There are a number of issues to consider in planning and implementing a Project ImPACT program. These include planning for sustainability, identifying the intervention team, identifying which families are most likely to benefit from this program, determining the logistics of the program in your practice setting, addressing barriers to parents' participation, and making any needed adaptations. This chapter discusses these issues. You can use the Implementation Plan (Form 1) to plan for implementing Project ImPACT in your practice setting. Figure I.2.1 illustrates the use of this form.

Plan for Program Sustainability

It is common for providers to begin to implement a new program or practice, only to let it go a short time later. When a practice isn't effective, it makes sense to stop using it. However, many effective practices are abandoned simply because they are hard to sustain over time, particularly in settings with limited resources. Both research and clinical experience have taught us that the following factors are important for the sustainability of Project ImPACT. Thinking about these factors early can make it easier to begin using this program in a particular practice setting and to keep using it over time.

Administrator Support

Although we have attempted to make Project ImPACT compatible with a wide range of service delivery models, it is often necessary to secure additional resources or make changes to the delivery model to support implementation. For this reason, administrator support is extremely important. Indeed, we have found that providers whose administrators support this program are much more likely to sustain their use of Project ImPACT over time. Administrator support can ensure that there are sufficient resources to support initial and ongoing provider training in the program, needed program materials and supports (e.g., manuals, toys, child care and/or food for groups), and provider time to implement the program (e.g., task shifting, flex time, release time, overtime pay).

FORM 1

Implementation Plan

<p>Plan for Program Sustainability: What resources are needed to initiate and sustain the program?</p> <p><i>We need to get Sp. Education Director on board. She can help us find a room at the district headquarters for the group meetings. Discuss how to write Project ImPACT into IFSP for new families. Send 2 teachers to Project ImPACT Intro workshop.</i></p>
<p>Identify Intervention Team: Who will be involved in delivering the program?</p> <p><i>Speech pathologist and classroom special education teacher. We will alternate who leads the group sessions. We will split up families and each coach.</i></p>
<p>Identify Families: Who will be offered the program and at what point?</p> <p><i>All new families whose children have ASD or early childhood developmental delay eligibility will be offered the program in the fall of each year.</i></p>
<p>Determine Program Logistics: How will the program be implemented?</p> <p><i>We will use the group coaching model. Group sessions will be offered Thursday evenings. Coaching will be offered during the day on Fridays. Group sessions will be in room at district headquarters. Coaching will be in the families' homes.</i></p>
<p>Address Barriers to Participation: What supports are needed for families to participate?</p> <p><i>Families will need child care during group sessions. Some families will need busing to attend group sessions. Check with Sp. Ed. Director about paraprofessional support for child care, and about busing costs.</i></p>
<p>Make Needed Adaptations: How can you make adaptations while maintaining fidelity?</p> <p><i>Some families may miss group sessions due to travel/child care. Figure out how to livestream group sessions for these families. Will add two extra sessions on Picture Exchange Communication System and toilet training at the end of the program.</i></p>

FIGURE I.2.1. A completed example of the Implementation Plan (Form 1).

Build Up Staff Expertise

It helps to build staff expertise for Project ImPACT within a practice setting. This allows providers to support each other in learning the program and maintaining their fidelity to it, as well as to share some of the workload associated with the logistics of running this program (e.g., running groups). Many providers working with young children who have special needs switch jobs; having more than one provider who is trained to implement this program within an organization can maintain the program when a trained provider leaves the organization.

Formalize Service

Finally, it is easier to sustain a program once it becomes a formalized service. When possible, we recommend that parent coaching be routinely offered to all appropriate families receiving services within a practice setting. In addition, we recommend that Project ImPACT (or parent coaching) be written into each child's service plan, such as the individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education program (IEP). Including this program in the child's service plan can also help parents appreciate parent coaching as an important component of their child's intervention program and may help increase the parents' participation.

Identify the Intervention Team

Young children with social communication challenges often receive services from a team of interventionists. If you are providing team-based services, it is important to identify which provider(s) will provide parent coaching. Below, we discuss the qualifications, skills, and training necessary to implement this program effectively with families. These are summarized in Table I.2.1.

Coach Qualifications and Skills

This program is designed to be implemented by providers working with young children who have ASD and other social communication delays, including clinical psychologists, social workers, special educators, behavioral specialists, speech–language pathologists, and occupational therapists. Given the background knowledge and clinical skills involved in coaching families effectively, we strongly recommend that coaches have graduate-level training in their respective fields. In addition, parent coaches should have a general knowledge of child development, specific knowledge of social communication development, and an understanding of behavioral principles.

A coach should be able to implement the Project ImPACT intervention techniques fluently with children before starting to coach families (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). Because many of these techniques are also used in other developmental and naturalistic behavioral interventions, it is likely that many providers working with young children with social communication delays will already be familiar with some or all of the techniques. However, familiarity is not the same as fluency. The coach needs to be able to use each of the techniques *fluently*, both in isolation and together, in order to teach parents how to do this effectively (Kaiser, Hester, Alpert, & Whiteman,

TABLE I.2.1. Coach Qualifications and Skills

-
- Graduate-level training
 - Knowledge of child development and behavioral principles
 - Fluency in implementation of the Project ImPACT intervention techniques with children
 - Familiarity with behavior management strategies
 - Ability to develop a collaborative relationship with parents
 - Ability to provide feedback to parents
 - Ability to adapt the program flexibly as needed
-

1995). Furthermore, because the number and severity of child symptoms can range from mild to severe, the coach should have an understanding of how to adapt each technique for use with different children.

The coach should meet the fidelity of implementation standard in using the intervention with several children at different ability levels prior to coaching parents (average rating of 4 or higher across the F.A.C.T.S. strategies). This takes extended practice. Thus we recommend that the coach use the intervention in direct service with children while learning the intervention. The Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4) outlines the key elements of each strategy you must use to implement the intervention with fidelity. It is important to note that each strategy has several different techniques that can be used to accomplish the same child outcome. For example, there are three techniques in the strategy set **Create Opportunities** (*Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*). Each of these techniques is effective for encouraging the child to initiate. Thus it is not important that the coach uses each technique with every child during every interaction in order to achieve fidelity of implementation, as long as she is successfully using at least one technique from each strategy set to target the child's goals.

The coach should also be familiar with basic behavior management strategies, as many young children with social communication delays exhibit challenging behaviors such as tantrums and aggression (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003), which can interfere with their parents' ability to learn and use Project ImPACT. Thus the coach should be able to manage challenging behavior within the session. We have included an optional behavior management unit in Part II that can be used to help parents address their children's behavior problems at home and in the community.

Furthermore, the coach should be able to develop collaborative relationships with parents and be able to effectively engage and empower parents through the coaching process (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). The coach should be able to listen to and respond sensitively to questions and concerns that each parent might have. In addition, she should feel comfortable engaging the parent as much as possible in decisions about goals for the child; should consider how best to implement the intervention in the family's day-to-day life; and should be sensitive to the family's strengths, preferences, and values (Brookman-Frazer, 2004). The coach should also be able to clearly present the conceptual and empirical basis of the intervention to parents. This includes describing the rationale and key elements of each technique, the ways each technique is used with the other strategies, and the social communication goals for which it may be most effective (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). When parents have this knowledge, they are better able to use the intervention to target new goals. It also increases their motivation to use the intervention strategies throughout the day.

One of the most important aspects of adult learning is receiving feedback. Thus the coach must be able to effectively analyze a parent's practice with a child and to provide positive and corrective feedback (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). Most providers we have worked with find this skill to be the most challenging aspect of coaching parents. Although providers may intuitively know how to use the intervention techniques with children, they struggle when trying to convey this information to parents in a supportive manner. This skill takes extended practice. We recommend that the coach practice giving feedback to other adults before doing so with parents. One approach for improving these skills is having colleagues take turns giving feedback as each works with a child. Analyzing and giving feedback can also be practiced while watching videos of parents or other adults working with children with social communication challenges. We have found that these strategies not only are beneficial for building parent coaching skills, but also typically improve the provider's ability to work directly with children.

Finally, it is important for the coach to be able to flexibly adapt the program as needed to meet the individualized needs of each child and parent (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). In every case, the coach must attend to the child's skill level, the parent's communication and learning styles, and the family dynamic and culture when designing the program. More information on the procedures used for working effectively with parents in Project ImPACT can be found in Chapter 3. Forms 5, 6, and 7 are fidelity forms covering the different coaching components (collaborative goal setting, coaching, running groups).

Provider Preparation

We strongly recommend that prospective coaches receive training in Project ImPACT, to ensure that they are implementing the program effectively. As noted above, it is usually helpful to have more than one provider who is trained to provide Project ImPACT within an organization, in order to sustain the program over time. Provider training can involve a combination of self-directed online learning, workshops, and consultation.

Identify Families

In deciding which families may benefit from this program, it helps to consider the following child and parent characteristics.

Child Characteristics

Project ImPACT was originally developed for children with ASD from their age at earliest diagnosis to about 6 years of age. In recent years, the program has been adapted for use with infants and toddlers at risk for ASD. These adaptations have made this program appropriate for younger children and children who are experiencing social communication delays but do not have an ASD diagnosis. The program may also be appropriate for older children (up to about age 12) who have significant language and cognitive delays.

The intervention strategies in this program are most appropriate for children who are in the early stages of language development, up to an expressive language age of about 48 months. Children with more developed language skills might benefit from using the intervention strategies to increase speech intelligibility or to learn more complex linguistic relations (e.g., past tense, prepositions, conversation skills). A coach who does not have this expertise may wish to work with a speech–language pathologist to develop specific speech and language goals, and to determine techniques to address those goals, before teaching a parent to use the techniques. Children with more developed language skills may also benefit from a program that addresses peer or sibling interaction skills. This program can be used to coach siblings and peers with some adaptations. For more discussion of this issue, see the discussion of coaching siblings under “Make Needed Adaptations” at the end of this chapter.

Many young children with social communication challenges also exhibit challenging behavior, such as noncompliance, tantrums, aggression, property destruction, sleeping or eating problems, or elopement, that can affect the quality of family life and have a negative impact on the children's learning (Schreibman, 1988). In most cases, these behaviors are mild and can be addressed while

teaching the parents to use the Project ImPACT strategies. In some cases, however, these behaviors may interfere with the parents' ability to learn the intervention. If a child exhibits significant behavior problems that will likely interfere with a parent's ability to engage in the program, a coach may wish to begin with the optional behavior management unit (see Unit 8 in Part II of this manual and Chapter 8 in the parent manual). If the child's behaviors are very severe, the family may need to be referred to a behavioral specialist, who can develop an effective behavior plan for the child that can be implemented across settings.

Parent Characteristics

Caregivers from all backgrounds and with many different relationships to children, including grandparents and other family members, can successfully learn strategies to promote their children's social communication development. Regardless of who caregivers are, it is important that they *choose* to participate in the program (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). A willing participant is much more likely to make a commitment to learning and implementing the intervention techniques. This suggests that parent-mediated intervention should always be an intervention option rather than the sole service offered.

Parents who believe that their efforts will lead to improvements in their child's development are much more likely to learn and implement the intervention strategies. This is also true for parents who consider it a priority to be involved in the intervention for their child (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). A parent is most likely to be successful if she has adequate time and energy to devote to parent coaching, and if she has sufficient family support. For example, can she clear her schedule, take time off work, and arrange for child care? If the parent is unable to attend the entire program, it may not be a good time for her to begin parent coaching; it might be better to wait until she has the ability to participate in the entire program.

Families of lower socioeconomic status and diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds are less likely to access parent-mediated intervention and more likely to terminate intervention prematurely than families from the cultural majority (Harachi, Catalano, & Hawkins, 1997). Minority and lower-income families often face a number of structural barriers to participation, including lack of child care or transportation, inflexible work schedules, low social support, language barriers, and perceptual barriers, as well as cultural or linguistic differences. Parents who experience mental health issues or learning challenges may also have difficulty engaging in this program. We have embedded a number of parent engagement strategies in this manual that can help parents from a wide range of backgrounds engage effectively in this program. Later in this chapter (see "Address Barriers to Participation"), we discuss additional supports that can make it more likely for vulnerable families to access and complete this program.

When Should Parent Coaching Begin?

After a concern is raised about a child, how soon should parent coaching be offered? There is no clear-cut answer. One approach is to offer parent coaching as soon as possible after the parent expresses a concern or the child receives a diagnosis. There are several advantages to this approach. First, teaching the parent effective strategies for promoting social communication as early as possible is likely to have an important impact on the child's development (Wetherby & Woods, 2006). Second, many parents express significant frustration at the amount of time they

must wait between their child's diagnosis and the initiation of services (Renty & Roeyers, 2006). Offering parent coaching services within several weeks of a child's receiving a diagnosis provides the parent with a low-intensity treatment option while the child is placed on a waiting list for more intensive services. This approach may alleviate some parental stress by giving information about ASD and related conditions, initiating treatment in a timely manner, and teaching the parent effective strategies for successfully engaging the child. If coaching is being conducted in a group, a parent who is new to the diagnosis will have the opportunity to meet other parents of children with social communication challenges and to receive social support.

On the other hand, some parents of newly diagnosed children may not yet be emotionally ready to process information and apply it to their children (Whitaker, 2002). These parents may need a period of grieving before they can fully benefit from a parent-mediated intervention program. For such a parent, the individual coaching model might allow the parent to come slowly to terms with the diagnosis through the guidance of the parent coach.

Given these conflicting positions, it is difficult to know the optimal point in which to offer the program to parents. Perhaps the best strategy is to provide parents with the opportunity to participate in the program as soon as possible. The program can then be offered again at a later point. Indeed, it may be necessary to revisit techniques taught in the program as the child develops more skills (NRC, 2001; Whitaker, 2002). Many of the settings we have worked with provide the group coaching program twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, and families are invited to participate at either time. When an individual model is being offered, it might be most effective to offer parent coaching when treatment is initiated. If the family is not yet ready, you can begin with direct services and then offer parent coaching again in a few months.

Determine Program Logistics

There are a number of decisions to make regarding the logistics of this program. Below, we provide a number of considerations and recommendations for determining the best way to implement Project ImPACT in a particular setting.

Choosing the Coaching Model

The choice of the individual or group model is often dictated by the practice setting. For example, early interventionists working with very young children (ages birth to 3 years) may find it easiest to implement individual parent coaching, because many IFSPs are set up for services to be conducted in the home with a parent and child. This is also true for specialists who work in a clinic setting, as individual sessions are the typical model for clinic-based services. The group model is usually more feasible for providers who serve children in a classroom setting, or who do not see children individually for at least an hour at a time. In these settings, it can be very difficult to schedule individual sessions for each child, and the information may need to be presented in a group coaching model with fewer individual coaching sessions. Finally, some parents may not be able to afford the higher cost of individual treatment, and group training may be a more affordable option in such cases.

If you are not limited to a particular model and are considering the best model to use, you may wish to consider the benefits and limitations of the two coaching models. Table I.2.2 summarizes the benefits of the two. The most obvious benefit of an individual model is that the coach can

TABLE I.2.2. Benefits of Individual versus Group Coaching Models

Individual	Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach can tailor program to individual needs of each child and family. • Parents receive more coaching. • Parents often report greater satisfaction with individual models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach can serve larger number of families. • Group format is more cost-effective for parents. • Parents receive social support from other families.

tailor the intervention to meet the needs of each family, focusing specifically on the strengths and weaknesses of each child and parent. This model allows significantly more time for the parent to practice with her child while being coached. This is likely to lead to better parent learning. Parents also tend to report greater satisfaction and behavioral improvements in their child and have better attendance in individual parent training programs (Chadwick, Momcilovic, Rossiter, Stumbles, & Taylor, 2001). However, the individual coaching model can serve fewer families, and training is considerably more expensive and labor-intensive for coaches.

Benefits of a group coaching model are that it is less time-intensive for coaches and more cost-effective for parents. These aspects make the program more accessible to a wider range of families. In addition, the parents get the opportunity to meet and share with other families and receive social support, which has been shown to have a positive impact on parents' learning and mastery of intervention techniques, as well as their well-being (Stahmer & Gist, 2001). However, it is much more difficult to tailor the program to meet the needs of parents who have different learning styles, who begin training with different levels of competence, or whose children differ significantly in their abilities. A final limitation is often the added need for child care, since the parent is not attending the group sessions with her child.

At this point, there are no data to suggest conclusively that one model is better than another. However, research suggests that parents need intensive individual coaching sessions with their children to master techniques presented in a group (Kaiser, Hemmeter, et al., 1995). Therefore, regardless of the coaching model chosen, all families should receive individual coaching sessions to practice the skills with their child while receiving coach feedback.

Choosing the Coaching Setting

Individual coaching sessions can be conducted in the family home, classroom, or clinic setting. There are benefits to providing individual coaching with a parent and child in the family home. When coaching is presented in the natural environment, it is likely to lead to better generalization and maintenance of parent skills. This model allows the coach to teach the parent to use the intervention within routines that do not typically occur in a classroom or clinic setting, such as meals, dressing, and community outings. It also allows the coach to teach skills within meaningful routines that are unique to the family. Finally, it provides the opportunity to involve more family members, such as siblings or grandparents, who are less likely to come to a coaching session held elsewhere.

One of the limitations to coaching in the home is that it may be very difficult to get the parent's undivided attention. Siblings, telephone calls, visitors, and the demands of daily life may

draw the parent away from the coaching session. The child may also be harder to engage and may exhibit more challenging behavior without the structure that a clinic or classroom can bring. Thus, if coaching is provided in the home, the coach may need to spend additional time setting up the home to optimize child engagement and parent learning and to ensure that coaching is successful.

The benefits and limitations of conducting coaching in a clinic or classroom are the opposites of those in the home. Typically, these specialized treatment settings are designed to minimize distractions and promote engagement. They include highly motivating toys and activities that a parent may not have in the home. In addition, if the child is already familiar with the setting, he is likely to associate the setting with work and may be more cooperative. Finally, when the session is conducted outside the home, the parent can avoid the hassles and disruptions of daily life that arise in the home and can devote more attention to coaching. For these reasons, the child may respond more favorably, and the parent may be more successful at implementing the techniques. This benefit may be particularly important at the beginning of the program, when the parent is first learning how to use new intervention techniques. However, as the program progresses, the parent may find that she is unable to generalize her use of the strategies to home, because of the above-described distractions.

A coach can use several techniques to try to minimize problems with generalization when training is conducted outside of the home. These include having the parent bring in toys from home or having the parent work on several family routines, such as snacktime, in the treatment setting (see the subsection on “Increasing Independence” in Chapter 3). The coach may also consider conducting the majority of the coaching in a treatment setting to build the parent’s skills and confidence, and then conducting the review and final sessions in the home to facilitate generalization.

Fitting Project IMPACT into the Existing Curriculum

One question that frequently arises with parent coaching is how to integrate it effectively into the existing service delivery model. Given that the intervention in this program includes elements from both the developmental and behavioral treatment literatures, it is compatible with many intervention approaches used for young children with social communication delays, and it can greatly enhance the child’s response to direct services.

If services are delivered in a one-to-one setting, such as a clinic- or home-based program, the individual parent coaching model can be relatively easily implemented within the existing service delivery model. Depending on the constraints of the existing program, parent coaching may be implemented in addition to or in lieu of direct services. We have found that if the existing program allows for only 1–2 hours of one-to-one intervention per week, children tend to make significantly more progress if this time is used for parent coaching rather than therapist-led intervention. In this case, the provider may consider suspending therapist-led service for several months in order to provide parent coaching, and returning to therapist-led service once the Project IMPACT program is completed. However, use of both models simultaneously is clearly preferable.

It may be more difficult to integrate parent coaching into a classroom-based service delivery model. Most classroom-based programs are designed to run several hours per day, several days per week, and this often leaves little time to schedule sessions during the school day. The group

model is likely to be the most compatible; however, even in a classroom, there may be an opportunity to use the individual coaching model. If coaching is to be conducted in the classroom, we typically suggest that the coach schedule the coaching sessions for all families on the same day, in 1-hour increments to facilitate planning. This schedule allows for 10 minutes between families to take notes and prepare for the next family. If enough staff members are available, we recommend conducting coaching and/or group sessions during the typical school day in a separate space. Staff members can provide coaching or relieve the teacher while she is coaching. Another approach is to offer coaching and/or group sessions during teacher planning days when the children would not typically be present, or in lieu of a portion of direct services for the duration of the parent program. Although many programs are concerned about the ramifications of “canceling intervention services,” we emphasize that parent-mediated intervention is intervention. The coaching sessions would account for the direct service provision from specialists that is written on the IEP.

Address Barriers to Participation

Many parents experience significant barriers to participation in parent-mediated intervention programs. These barriers are often more pronounced in culturally and linguistically diverse families, families from lower-socioeconomic-status backgrounds, and families in which the parent has mental health or learning challenges. These barriers can interfere with a parent’s ability to enroll, consistently attend sessions, and fully engage with the program. Prior to beginning the program, it is important to identify and address barriers to allow the families you serve to participate in Project ImPACT. Below we discuss a number of supports that you can use to help parents access and engage in this program (these are summarized in Table I.2.3). As discussed below, the key to overcoming these obstacles is to be flexible and resourceful.

Supports to Address Cultural Barriers

Like the majority of other parent-mediated intervention programs, Project ImPACT is derived from studies of parent–child interactions with mainly Western, middle-class, white families (Forehand & Kotchick, 1996, 2002). Yet parenting practices are influenced by cultural values, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Forehand & Kotchick, 1996). Thus the program’s intervention techniques may be less compatible with parenting practices used by families from minority cultures. For example, African American culture places a strong value on children’s obedience to authority figures (Forehand & Kotchick, 1996). This may be at odds with intervention techniques based on the premise of “following the child’s lead.” In many Asian American cultures, it is common for parents to view their role as educators of their children, but not as play partners (Forehand & Kotchick, 1996). Thus some Asian American parents may feel uncomfortable playing with their children. In Latino/Latina culture, a significant amount of parenting responsibility is placed on extended family members, particularly grandparents (Forehand & Kotchick, 1996). Thus including only parents in this program may neglect important family members.

It is important to be aware of and respect the cultural norms, values, beliefs, and practices of the families you coach. At the same time, you should recognize that there is often more vari-

TABLE I.2.3. Possible Supports to Address Barriers to Parent Participation

Cultural barriers

- Respect the family’s cultural norms, values, beliefs, and practices.
- Recognize individual variability within cultural groups.
- Offer a bilingual coach if possible.
- Provide a translator and translated materials.
- Encourage each parent to use her preferred language at home with the child.

Structural barriers

- Provide child care for group sessions.
- Offer flexible scheduling.
- Provide transportation as needed.
- Provide coaching in the home or community location near a family.
- Make adaptations to coaching delivery.

Perceptual barriers

- Develop shared expectations for the program.
- Develop a strong collaborative relationship with each parent.
- Offer incentives for attendance.

Parent mental health and learning challenges

- Combine program with support group.
- Make referral to services for parent.
- Use individual coaching model and slower pace of instruction.
- Provide limited text, more graphics/pictures.
- Increase use of videos and extended role plays.
- Provide coaching in the home to support generalization.

ability within a cultural group than between groups, and avoid stereotyping families on the basis of their cultural backgrounds (Forehand & Kotchick, 2002). Another issue is a family’s language. In many cases, the parents or grandparents may not be fluent in English. This can be a significant barrier to participation (Harachi et al., 1997). The ideal situation is to have a bilingual parent coach who conducts coaching in the family’s native language (Harachi et al., 1997). However, in many cases, this may not be feasible. An alternative is to use an interpreter. Another option is a parent-to-parent training model, in which one bilingual parent who has received coaching teaches a non-English-speaking parent with the help of the coach. We have found that for non-English-speaking families, individual coaching with an interpreter and translated parent materials can be very effective, especially when the interpreter has received an initial overview of the program before starting work with the family.

One additional consideration for bilingual families is which language a parent should use when working with her child with ASD. Many bilingual families are told to use English only with their children when their children receive a diagnosis of ASD. This recommendation is based on the concern that the use of two languages could further delay the children’s language development (Thordardottir, 2006). However, the research suggests that instruction in both languages does not

impair language acquisition for children with language delays such as ASD (Bruck, 1982). In addition, many non-native speakers of English place great value on having their children learn their native language, so that the children can communicate with family members who do not speak English. Many parents also feel more comfortable interacting with their children in their native language. Thus, while parent coaching may need to be conducted in English for logistical reasons, each parent should be encouraged to use the language she feels most comfortable with at home with her child.

Supports to Address Structural Barriers

There are many structural barriers that can affect a parent's ability to access and participate in parent-mediated intervention, including child care, work schedule, transportation, and other family responsibilities or life stressors (Harachi et al., 1997). One of the biggest barriers to parent participation is lack of child care. Although this is less of an issue with the individual coaching model, a lack of child care can be a significant structural barrier for parents who wish to participate in the group coaching model. Securing child care can be particularly difficult for parents of children with ASD and related challenges. Even parents who have the ability to pay may have difficulty finding babysitters or respite providers willing to watch their children. It may be necessary for the practice setting to arrange for child care providers capable of supervising children with ASD and related challenges. Indeed, we have worked with a number of programs that used the group coaching model, some of which provided child care and some of which did not. The programs with child care had higher attendance rates by far. Child care was provided by classroom assistants, either on a volunteer basis or for extra-duty pay. One possibility in planning group programs is to provide parents with the option of paying for low-cost child care provided by classroom assistants (e.g., \$5 per child). Since the classroom assistants will already know the children, most parents will be comfortable leaving their children in the assistants' capable hands.

Intervention services for young children are usually offered during the traditional work week. However, many working parents have difficulty attending multiple sessions during working hours. Flexible scheduling, including offering sessions during the evenings and on weekends, can greatly enhance parent participation, (especially among working parents from lower-socioeconomic-status backgrounds, who often have little flexibility in their work schedules). With the group model, we have found that offering the group sessions in the evening and the coaching sessions during the day, when the children are more alert, has allowed for the greatest level of parent participation.

A third obstacle is transportation. For some families, arranging reliable transportation to sessions may be difficult, particularly for those who must use public transit and have difficulty managing their children's behavior in public. Providing transportation or conducting coaching in the home or in a community location close to the family, such as a church or day care center, may improve participation (Harachi et al., 1997). Other families may live so far from the treatment site that transportation on a weekly basis is impractical. For these families, program providers may wish to adjust the intensity or length of the training by scheduling the coaching sessions less often over more weeks or condensing training into a shorter period of time. Another possibility is providing coaching via video conferencing. Below, we discuss these adaptations in more detail.

Supports to Address Perceptual Barriers

Perceptual barriers can also decrease a parent's willingness to engage in the program. If the program does not meet the parent's expectations for services, or she is uncomfortable with the intervention strategies, she may be less inclined to make it to sessions or practice at home. Research suggests that the quality of the relationship between a coach and a parent has a significant impact on parent satisfaction and, ultimately, on attendance and engagement (Alexander, Barton, Schiaro, & Parsons, 1976). Developing a strong collaborative relationship with the parent from the beginning, including shared expectations for the program and treatment goals, is important for increasing the parent's motivation and commitment to the program. More information on strategies for developing a collaborative relationship can be found in Chapter 3.

The coach may also consider providing incentives to increase parents' motivation to attend sessions. We have found that providing a low-cost dinner during evening parent groups is an effective reinforcer for many families. Another possibility is to offer rewards, such as a gift certificate for a toy store, for attendance and progress in the program (Forehand & Kotchick, 2002). Another approach is to ask the parent to pay a refundable deposit to register for the program and then return a portion of the deposit for each session the parent attends (Forehand & Kotchick, 2002).

Supports to Address Parents' Mental Health and Learning Challenges

Some parents may suffer from mental health issues or learning challenges that can affect their ability to benefit from the program (Forehand & Kotchick, 2002). Depression is the most common mental health issue that a provider is likely to encounter in working with families of children with ASD (Bitsika & Sharpley, 2004). These parents are often struggling with the process of accepting their children's diagnosis, and it can be helpful to combine the parent coaching program with a parent support group. Stahmer and Gist (2001) found that parents who received individual parent coaching and who also attended a support group learned the intervention techniques more effectively than the parents who only received the parent coaching did. It is not a coach's responsibility to provide therapy to a parent. However, it is useful to develop some knowledge of common mental health concerns in order to identify needs and provide referrals to appropriate services. If, at any point, there is a concern that a parent is abusive or unable to effectively care for her child, the appropriate authorities should be contacted.

In some cases, the parent may struggle to learn the intervention techniques due to her own learning challenges or low literacy. Indeed, a number of children that we have worked with have had parents who had learning disabilities or ASD themselves. When a parent has learning challenges, it may be best to provide coaching with the individual model, which allows the parent to move through the techniques at a slower pace. If a parent has low literacy, a coach may consider copying and using just the first page or two of each chapter in the parent manual rather than the full parent manual. The chapter outlines and relevant graphics may be easier to absorb. Other pictures or graphics may also be used (and perhaps displayed in the home), to help the parent understand and remember to use the intervention techniques (Feldman, Ducharme, & Case, 1999). We have worked with some parents who benefited from an increased use of videos for presenting the intervention techniques and for providing feedback, as well as extended role play with their coaches. Since many individuals with learning challenges experience difficulty with generalization, coaching sessions in the home may be more successful than at a clinic or school (Tymchuk & Andron, 1992).

Make Needed Adaptations

Project ImPACT includes both individual and group coaching models, in order to fit with the structures of most community practice settings serving young children with social communication delays. However, we recognize that not all community program structures will support one of these models. In this case, the coaching model or the community setting structure (or both) will need to be adapted to support the use of Project ImPACT.

It is important to remember that making adaptations to an evidence-based intervention may alter its effectiveness. Most evidence-based interventions, like Project ImPACT, have core components (which are indispensable elements of the intervention) and peripheral elements (which can be adapted) (Damschroder et al., 2009). Changing or eliminating the core components of an intervention can compromise its effectiveness. However, changing peripheral elements of a program can enhance the fit between the intervention and practice setting, and thus can ultimately improve outcomes. When adaptations are made to Project ImPACT, it is important to maintain the core components, and to base the adaptations on thoughtful consideration of the strengths and needs of the individual families and practice setting.

Forms 4, 5, and 6 outline the three components that are necessary for program fidelity: (1) the core intervention content (i.e., at least one technique from each set of the F.A.C.T.S. strategies); (2) collaborative goal setting; and (3) the use of the parent coaching procedure. If any of these components are not present, then the program should not be considered Project ImPACT. These components are the active ingredients in our and others' research on parent-mediated interventions. Other, more peripheral elements of the program can be potentially modified to better fit particular practice settings. We believe that the coaching models presented in this manual are optimal for parent learning. Below, we provide guidance on the types of adaptations that, based on our research and clinical experience, can be made without compromising Project ImPACT's integrity (see Table I.2.4 for a summary).

Number of Sessions

The individual coaching model is designed to be conducted in 24 sessions, meeting twice a week for 12 weeks. We have found that many parents can learn to use the strategies effectively in 12 weekly 1-hour sessions (Ingersoll & Wainer, 2013a). Part II of this manual provides a recommended guide for covering the content in 24 or 12 sessions, and each unit also includes information on how to adapt the particular strategies and techniques when there are time constraints.

TABLE I.2.4. Possible Program Adaptations

-
- Conduct individual coaching model in 12 weekly sessions.
 - Conduct sessions less or more frequently.
 - Provide intensive coaching over a short period of time.
 - Make use of video feedback.
 - Provide remote coaching.
 - Provide toddler groups.
 - Provide sibling coaching.
-

Program Length

It is possible to adjust the length of the program by conducting sessions either less or more frequently without adjusting the number of sessions. Providers who can only see clients once a week may be able to conduct the 24 individual sessions once per week over 24 weeks, or even less frequently (e.g., twice a month) over a longer period of time. Similarly, we have had some intervention programs that have opted to conduct the group model every other week over 24 weeks. We have also worked with programs that have successfully adapted the group model to be delivered more frequently over 6 weeks, by holding the group session at the beginning of the week and providing individual coaching on the same topic later the same week.

It may also be possible to adapt either model to be conducted more intensively for families who need to travel long distances to receive coaching. For example, Koegel, Symon, and Koegel (2002) developed an effective parent training model for families who lived in locations geographically distant from the training center. In their model, individual coaching in naturalistic teaching techniques was conducted several hours per day over the course of a week. Parents were able to master the intervention techniques and generalized their use with their children when they returned home. It should be noted that reducing the length of the program is likely to limit the gains that a child can make during the program, and child goals should be set accordingly.

Video Feedback

Parent coaching in Project ImPACT primarily uses live feedback with each parent while she practices with her child. The benefit of live feedback is its immediacy; the parent can correct her behavior immediately and does not practice the techniques incorrectly. The coach can also jump in and model the correct use of a technique at any time. However, live feedback may distract the parent while trying to work with her child. Thus video feedback can be used as an alternative method for giving feedback. A benefit of providing feedback while watching a video is that it reduces the amount of information the parent must attend to at one time and allows her to focus better on the interaction. The parent can also record herself using the interventions in different settings and receive feedback on interactions that take place outside the coaching sessions. The coach also has more time to discuss the parent's and child's behavior, and the video can be reviewed when the child is not present. We have found that video feedback can be especially helpful for parents who have learning difficulties or who speak English as a second language, because both the recorded interaction and the rate of verbal feedback can be slowed down. Strategies for giving feedback from video can be found in Part II's review sessions.

Remote Coaching

Recent research suggests that coaching can be effectively conducted via video conferencing (Ingersoll et al., 2016). This method can increase access to parent-mediated intervention for families who experience barriers to participating in a traditional coaching program, such as transportation difficulties, lack of child care, and/or inflexible work schedules. It also allows parents to receive feedback on their use of the intervention with their children in the home setting, and it may be more cost-effective for community programs that serve parents across a large geographic area. Video conferencing does not allow a coach to model the techniques with the child; thus we suggest that coach show the parent the video examples of the techniques that are used in the group sessions.

Toddler Groups

One additional intervention format is available within some practice settings is the toddler group. Toddler groups are designed to provide parent education while also preparing the child for participation in a classroom setting. These groups usually involve a small number of children, their parents, and two intervention providers. They last 60–90 minutes and are held once or twice a week. The groups are usually run like a preschool or early childhood special education classroom, with a number of developmentally appropriate classroom-based activities (e.g., greeting, sensory–motor activity, gross motor activity, music, free play, snack, tabletop activities, and closing circle). Activities are usually run by the intervention providers, with the parents serving as the children’s assistants.

The individual coaching model can be modified for use during these groups by having one teacher provide individual coaching to one family while a second teacher leads the other families in group activities. The classroom schedule should consist of a number of short activities (e.g., 15 minutes) through which families rotate. Each parent has the opportunity to support her child during small-group activities targeting the child’s developmental goals, as well as to receive individual coaching. Given that each parent coaching session is significantly shorter than in the other models, it is likely that the coach will need to spend more than one session on each technique in order for the parent to master it.

An example of how to divide time and rotations during a toddler group to include parent coaching is outlined in Table I.2.5. This model is used during 90-minute toddler groups with two staff members, five children, and their parents. To use this model, it is necessary to have two clearly defined spaces. During the coaching rotation, the teacher provides coaching to each parent as she works with her child. During the small-group activity rotations, the teacher takes the leading role while the parents observe and assist their children. During the full-group activities, one teacher leads the activity while the other teacher and the parents assist the children.

This adaptation allows families who enter the program at different times to begin parent training at the time of their enrollment. With this model, it is expected that different families may be at different points in the program, depending on when their children start the group. If all children begin the group at the same time, it may be more practical to present the information to

TABLE I.2.5. Sample Schedule for 90-Minute Toddler Group

Time	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
8:30–8:35	Full group—greeting (lead)	Full group—greeting (assist)
8:35–8:50	Small group—sensory–motor activity	Coaching—free play (Family 1)
8:50–9:05	Coaching—free play (Family 2)	Small group—music
9:05–9:15	Small group—snack	Coaching—snack (Family 3)
9:15–9:30	Coaching—free play (Family 4)	Small group—art activity
9:30–9:40	Full group—gross motor activity (assist)	Full group—gross motor activity (lead)
9:40–10:55	Small group—tabletop activity	Coaching—free play (Family 5)
9:55–10:00	Full group—closing circle (lead)	Full group—closing circle (assist)

the parents in the group format without the children present. The toddler group time can then be used as a place to provide the individual coaching.

Children may become distracted when more than one activity is occurring, due to the increase in auditory and visual stimuli; this can create a challenge in providing coaching in a group setting. In order to address this concern, it is important to have clear visual and physical boundaries and to limit the stimuli in the environment. The structure of the physical environment or room setup should follow the same principles that are outlined in *Set Up Your Home for Success*.

Coaching Siblings

Children with social communication challenges often have significant difficulty interacting socially with other children, including their siblings (Schreibman, 1988). Promoting positive interactions between siblings is often an important goal for parents, and sibling coaching can be an effective method for reaching this goal (Shivers & Plavnick, 2015; Tsao & Odom, 2006). Most typically developing siblings are interested in playing with a brother or sister with social communication delays, but they often do not know effective strategies for interacting (El-Ghoroury & Romanczyk, 1999). We have found that many typically developing children welcome the opportunity to be involved in a brother's or sister's therapy, and they respond very positively to the additional adult attention provided in a sibling coaching program.

Sibling coaching is usually most effective when a child with social communication delays responds to social bids and does not exhibit aggressive behavior. It is helpful when a sibling has well-developed social skills, has expressed interest in participating, and/or needs to attend coaching sessions with the parent. Although siblings as young as age 4 can be taught to use some strategies to interact successfully with a brother or sister with social communication challenges, school-age siblings (age 7 and above) are usually able to use a larger number of strategies independently after they have been taught (Shivers & Plavnick, 2015).

The strategies for coaching siblings are very similar to the strategies used to coach parents; however, children often need additional supports and practice, and coaching sessions may need to be shorter (10–15 minutes) to keep the siblings' interest. Depending on a sibling's age and skill level, the coach may teach all of the intervention strategies in the parent program or choose a limited number of strategies that are likely to have the greatest impact on increasing sibling interactions. Table I.2.6 lists the intervention techniques (with their names converted to child-friendly language) that we have found to be most effective for training siblings. Role playing with the sib-

TABLE I.2.6. Intervention Techniques for Siblings

Project ImPACT intervention technique	Child-friendly description
<i>Follow Your Child's Lead</i>	<i>Join and Help Your Brother/Sister</i>
<i>Imitate Your Child</i>	<i>Copy Your Brother/Sister</i>
<i>Model and Expand Communication</i>	<i>Talk about Play to Your Brother/Sister</i>
<i>Balanced Turns</i>	<i>Take Turns with Your Brother/Sister</i>
<i>Prompts for New Communication Skills</i>	<i>Ask Your Brother/Sister to Talk</i>
<i>Prompts for Imitation</i>	<i>Get Your Brother/Sister to Copy You</i>

ling before the sibling practices with the child is particularly helpful when working with a younger sibling. The parent and coach may also need to provide reinforcement to the sibling to maintain the sibling's use of the techniques over time.

In sum, various supports and program adaptations can be made to increase the success of this program for individual families, as well as to expand its use to a broader range of intervention settings and providers. The keys to a successful program are to be flexible and creative, and to have a strong philosophical commitment to family involvement. In the next chapter, we discuss the specific procedures involved in teaching parents to use Project ImPACT.

CHAPTER 3

Collaborating with Parents in Project ImPACT

Project ImPACT uses a number of evidence-based strategies to teach parents to use the intervention with their children. This chapter provides a rationale and overview of the key components providers use in Project ImPACT to engage and empower parents, set goals collaboratively, coach parents, and run parent group sessions. The session guidelines in Parts II and III of this manual provide detailed information on how to use these components to teach parents the intervention techniques.

Engaging and Empowering Parents

The way in which providers interact with families of children with social communication delays can enhance or impede child and family outcomes. It is not just *what* you do as a coach, but *how* you do it, that matters. The quality of the partnership between the parent and coach is a key factor in the success of any intervention program for young children, and has been shown to enhance parent engagement in the intervention and improve parent empowerment.

In this section, we discuss several strategies that will help you build a strong collaborative partnership with parents from the very beginning. These strategies, when combined with the coaching strategies used in Project ImPACT, can serve to actively engage and empower parents, particularly those who are at risk for premature termination from treatment.

Collaborative partnerships are developed via the following strategies: (1) building trust and respect, (2) developing shared goals for intervention, (3) recognizing shared expertise and decision making, (4) being culturally responsive, (5) using a strengths-based approach, and (6) engaging in collaborative problem solving. You should work toward a strong collaborative partnership throughout all of your interactions with a family.

Build Trust and Respect

A starting point for any effective working relationship with a parent is to develop trust and respect. This is done by conveying genuine interest in and empathy for the parent and child, while also setting professional boundaries.

Encourage the parent to speak openly and honestly about issues that are important to her by asking open-ended questions, listening attentively without interruption (making eye contact, nodding, saying “uh-hunh”), reflecting back key aspects of what the parent says, and building on her responses.

Demonstrate true empathy for both the parent’s and the child’s experience. The parent may need to express her feelings of guilt, sadness, or frustration, and there may be other child-related issues that are causing the parent significant stress. While it is important to remain on track, sometimes the best thing you can do for the parent is to listen and acknowledge the parent’s feelings.

As a coach, you will interact with the parent to a far greater extent than if you provided direct service to the child. The parent may begin to perceive you as a friend, confidant, or therapist, and to discuss her own personal issues. Thus it is appropriate to set professional boundaries from the beginning. If the parent shares personal issues (e.g., marital/couple difficulties, medical or mental health issues), let her know that they are beyond your scope of practice, and provide a referral if appropriate. Likewise, refrain from sharing your own personal issues.

It is wonderful when both parents can participate in this program, and both should be supported. If parents frequently disagree, avoid taking sides with one parent over the other. You may also need to structure the parents’ interactions with each other. For example, to avoid parents’ constant critiques of each other, make a policy in which only you can give feedback. To prevent one parent from dominating the parent–child interaction, have each parent work with the child independently for a set amount of time.

Develop Shared Goals for Intervention

Collaborative partnerships begin with mutually agreed-upon expectations and goals for intervention. Before treatment begins, develop shared expectations about the goals and requirements of the program, and clarify the parent’s role and your own role as the coach. The intake session (see Part I, Chapter 4) can help you understand the parent’s expectations for treatment. Tailor your explanation of the program to what the parent hopes to gain from the intervention.

Develop goals for the child that are meaningful and important to the parent. Collaborative goal setting, which is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, ensures that these goals are consistent with the parent’s own goals for the child.

Recognize Shared Expertise and Decision Making

A collaborative partnership is a shift from the provider-as-expert model to a shared-expertise model in which the coach is the “expert” in the intervention, and the parent is the “expert” on the child. The coach is responsible for teaching the parent strategies to help her achieve her goals for her child. The parent is responsible for deciding how the intervention should be incorporated into the family’s daily routines.

Recognize the parent’s expertise in her family, her strengths as a caregiver, and her efforts to speak up and participate. Given her child’s developmental challenges, she may not be receiving positive feedback from others about her caregiving efforts at this stage.

Encourage the parent to take an active role, not only in implementing the intervention with her child, but also in choosing how best to carry out the intervention at home. This will help

ensure that Project ImPACT fits into the family's daily life, and will thus increase the likelihood that the parent will implement it consistently.

Be aware of the parent's ability to engage the child, and be careful not to interact with the child significantly better than she does. This is especially important at the beginning of the program. The parent will not yet have learned techniques for engaging the child and may become discouraged if her child responds significantly better to you.

Be Culturally Responsive

Collaborative partnerships are responsive to the parent's beliefs, values, and culture. Culture can influence a family's structures, roles, and communication styles, as well as the family's beliefs about the causes of child problems, appropriate parent-child interactions, expectations for child independence, and discipline. Be aware of how your own culture has influenced your professional views.

Develop an understanding of the parent's values and assumptions, and be aware of how they may differ from your own. Make sure that your recommendations are culturally sensitive and consistent with the value system of the family.

In cases in which the parent may hold views that are inconsistent with current evidence, encourage the parent to consider the alternative view, rather than stigmatizing her beliefs or values.

Use a Strengths-Based Approach

Collaborative partnerships are facilitated by using a strengths-based approach to helping the parent and child achieve positive outcomes. Focus on what the parent is doing successfully to support her child. The parent may struggle considerably in her efforts to engage her child and may feel defeated. Providing a high rate of positive feedback and encouragement, especially in the beginning, can help the parent develop confidence in her ability to support her child.

You should also take a strengths-based approach to working with the child. Focus on the skills the child currently has and the next skills he can learn, rather than on what the child cannot do.

Engage in Collaborative Problem Solving

In a collaborative partnership, a coach supports a parent in problem-solving challenges, rather than the directly solving problems for the parent. As the coach, help the parent identify potential barriers and challenges before they arise, so that she can anticipate them and plan for how to handle them if they occur. Ask the parent to generate possible solutions before making your own suggestions.

Collaborative Goal Setting

Project ImPACT begins with setting goals for the child with the parent. Goals are important because they help the parent understand what skills to target when working with the child. They also enable you and the parent to track the child's progress to make sure the intervention is effec-

tive. In Project ImPACT, the child's goals are developed collaboratively. This means that the parent plays an active role in gathering information on the child's current skills and in selecting and writing the goals. By working with the parent in this way to set goals for the child, you can develop rapport with the parent, empower the parent, and increase the parent's motivation and engagement with the program.

This section provides an overview and rationale for each of the steps of the collaborative goal-setting process, as well as examples of specific and measurable goals in each of the four core areas. The individual and group model guidelines in Parts II and III of this manual provide more detailed information on how to implement the individual steps. The amount of time available to develop goals, and the way the information is presented, vary between the individual and group coaching formats; however, the key procedures outlined below remain consistent and should be completed in both models in order to achieve fidelity. The end of this section presents two case studies, each with a sample dialogue illustrating how to develop goals via a collaborative approach.

There are four main steps to complete in the collaborative goal-setting process: (1) Provide a description of social communication development; (2) gather information on the child's skills; (3) develop goals for the child; and (4) monitor your fidelity. Begin the process by establishing rapport with the parent and child, and then provide the parent with an understanding of how goals will be developed. This aspect is important, because goals are developed according to a different format than in the traditional assessment model. Parents are usually motivated to participate in this process. However, if a parent is hesitant, let her know that her input is important in order to develop goals that are appropriate for the child and that will have the greatest positive impact on the family. She knows her child better than you do and can provide more information about his use of skills across settings. She is also more aware of the skills the child needs in order to complete his daily routines.

By the end of this process, you and the parent should agree upon goals in the core social communication areas that (1) fit with the parent's own goals for her child, (2) follow developmentally from the child's current skills, (3) are specific and measurable, and (4) can be met within the duration of the program (see Table I.3.1).

Provide a Description of Social Communication Development

Provide an overview of the specific skills targeted in Project ImPACT (describe these as "the skills your child will learn") and their developmental sequence. This helps the parent develop a better understanding of the child's developmental needs, as well as of how social communication skills develop. It also helps the parent understand the types of goals you will be setting and become a more active partner in the process.

TABLE I.3.1. Goal Selection Criteria

-
- The goals fit with the parent's own goals for her child.
 - The goals follow developmentally from the child's current skills.
 - They are specific and measurable.
 - They can be met within the duration of the program.
-

Gather Information on the Child's Skills

Next, you will gather information on the child's current skills by using a combination of parent report, your own interaction with the child, and an observation of a parent–child interaction. By involving the parent in the information-gathering process, you can ensure that the information you gather is the most accurate. Again, it also helps the parent become an active and collaborative partner in the goal-setting process.

HAVE THE PARENT COMPLETE THE SOCIAL COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

The parent version of the Social Communication Checklist (SCC; Form 8) is a developmental checklist that contains questions about the child's skills in the four core areas of Project ImPACT: (1) social engagement, (2) communication, (3) imitation, and (4) play. These skills are listed in the order in which they usually develop. The SCC allows you to gather information on the parent's perception of her child's skills. This information will be key to determining the child's skills across settings. It can also help you learn about the parent's understanding of the child's development. The SCC can be used at the end of the program as well, to measure the child's progress.

INTERACT WITH THE CHILD

While the parent is completing the SCC, play with the child, using the Project ImPACT strategies. This allows you to keep the child occupied and to develop rapport with the child. It also allows you to gather information on the skills the child can use with various levels of support, and techniques that might be more or less effective.

OBSERVE AND RECORD A 10-MINUTE PARENT–CHILD INTERACTION

Once the parent has completed the SCC, ask her to play with the child as she does at home. Observing this interaction will help you understand the skills the child is able to use with the parent, as well as the parent's interaction style. Complete the coach version of the SCC (Form 9), based on your observations of the child's skills.

Develop Goals for the Child

Parents report more satisfaction when coaches work collaboratively with them to develop treatment goals for their children that the parents value (Brookman-Frazee, 2004). The more motivated a parent is to accomplish the goal, the more likely she will use the strategies at home. The Goal Development Form (Form 10) is used to guide the collaborative goal-setting process and make sure you attend to the Project ImPACT goal selection criteria.

IDENTIFY THE PARENT'S GOALS

Begin by discussing the goals the parent has identified on the Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3), to ensure that the goals that are developed *fit with the parent's goals for her child*. The parent's goals may be broad, such as "I want my child to talk," rather than specific and measurable.

A parent may also have unrealistic expectations for her child, such as wanting a nonverbal child to have a conversation. That is OK; your role as a coach is to help the parent learn the skills the child needs in order to achieve this goal. Discussion of the typical developmental sequence of skills can help parents see the building blocks of skills required. If a parent's goals include skills that are not targets of the program, such as self-care, preacademic, or peer interaction skills, let the parent know that Project ImPACT does not teach those skills specifically. However, you can help the parent identify social communication goals that are necessary to support these skills.

IDENTIFY LONG-TERM GOALS

Next, use the parent's goals and the parent's SCC to help the parent identify long-term goals in each of the four core areas. This process helps facilitate shared decision making with the parent and encourages parental buy-in. Solicit input from the parent on the goals she has for her child in a skill area. For example, if you are beginning with social engagement, ask the parent, "How would you like to your child to engage or interact with you?" If the parent has difficulty identifying goals, you can make suggestions. These long-term goals should relate in some way to goals the parent has identified for her child.

UNDERSTAND THE CHILD'S CURRENT SKILLS

Once you have an idea of the social communication skills that the parent would like to work on, use the parent's SCC and your SCC to help both of you understand the child's current skills in each of the areas for which you are setting goals. This process can help the parent develop appropriate expectations. It also ensures that goals follow developmentally from the child's current skill level.

It is important the parent is in agreement with the information that you have collected on the child's current skill level. Differences in reports can occur when the child has difficulty engaging and communicating in a new environment and therefore does not display skills; when the parent has a different interaction style while she and the child are being watched or recorded; or the parent is unaware of the child's level of functioning or the support she provides. Explore differences between your and the parent's perception of the child's skills by asking open-ended questions to develop a shared understanding of the child's skills. This process also allows you to help the parent develop a better understanding of her child's skills and appropriate expectations.

IDENTIFY SHORT-TERM GOALS

Once you have a clear understanding of the child's skills, you will help the parent break down her long-term goals into short-term goals. A short-term goal should be one step more complex than what the child is currently doing on his own, to ensure that the goal *can be met within the duration of the program*. It should also be *specific and measurable*, to allow you and the parent to track the child's progress to ensure that the program is working. The parent will be more likely to use the intervention strategies over time if she can see her child make progress on the goals she set for him.

Tables I.3.2 through I.3.5 provide examples of short-term goals that are specific and measurable for each of the core areas. These range across a number of developmental levels.

It is important to check in with the parent to make sure that she is in agreement with the

TABLE I.3.2. Examples of Social Engagement Goals*Maintaining interactions*

- The child will engage in simple social games (peek-a-boo, chase, pat-a-cake) for at least three turns.
- The child will remain actively engaged with an adult during social games for at least 2 minutes, as demonstrated by eye contact, facial expressions, or gestures.
- The child will engage with a play partner during toy play for at least 10 minutes, as demonstrated by eye contact, facial expressions, or watching the partner's actions.

Responding to joint attention

- The child will respond (e.g., the child will use a point, use language, or shift gaze) to an adult's attempt to draw his attention to something or someone four times in 5 minutes.
- The child will allow an adult a turn three to four times during an interaction.

Initiating joint attention

- The child will attempt to continue play with an adult after the adult pauses by using eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, or vocalizations four times during a 5-minute period.
- The child will use eye contact to reference his communication partner when initiating a request at least 50% of the time.
- The child will initiate activities or play with others by handing the adult a toy, using actions, gestures, or words four times in 5 minutes.
- The child will point or show objects to an adult for the purpose of sharing three times in 5 minutes.
- The child will offer the adult a turn during a turn-taking activity three times in 5 minutes.

goals you suggest at each step in this process. If a parent does not see a goal as necessary for her child, she will not be motivated to target the skill at home.

Monitor Fidelity

When developing goals with families, you should monitor your fidelity to the key procedures outlined above, using the Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5). This ensures that goals are developed through the use of a collaborative model, and that goals meet the Project ImPACT goal selection criteria outlined above.

The following case studies illustrate how goals are developed during a first parent coaching session for Brianna, a child who is not yet using language, and Sam, a child who is using single words spontaneously and imitating phrase speech.

Case Study 1: Brianna and Elena

Brianna is a 3-year-old girl who has recently been diagnosed with ASD. The coach has come to the family home for the first coaching session. Brianna sits on the floor in the living room holding two squishy balls while her mother, Elena, and the coach discuss the program. Brianna does not attempt to interact with her mother or the coach while they are talking. After discussing with Elena how social communication skills develop, the coach begins gathering information on Brianna's current skills.

TABLE I.3.3. Examples of Communication Goals*Preverbal communication*

- The child will communicate a clear choice between two items by pointing, eye contact, or making an appropriate vocalization four times in 5 minutes.
- The child will use a point to request objects and actions three times in 5 minutes.
- The child will use vocalizations to request or protest to his communication partner five times during a 5-minute interaction.

First words

- The child will use single words or word approximations to initiate requests for actions or objects four times in 5 minutes.
- The child will use at least five different single words in a 10-minute interaction in response to a verbal model.
- The child will use single words spontaneously to request a desired item or action five times in 5 minutes.
- The child will follow simple directions on three out of five opportunities.
- The child will appropriately protest by using single words or two word phrases (e.g., “All done,” “No,” “Stop”).

Word combinations

- The child will use two- and three-word phrases (e.g., “Pour milk”) for at least three pragmatic functions (e.g., requesting, protesting, responding, labeling, describing, and commenting) in response to a verbal prompt.
- The child will spontaneously combine at least two words to request three times in 5 minutes.
- The child will respond to simple “what” and “where” questions with 75% accuracy.
- The child will follow one- or two-step directions during daily routines on 8 out of 10 opportunities.

Sentences

- The child will use sentences prepositions, correct verb tenses, and pronouns to communicate on 7 out of 10 opportunities.
- The child will use verbal language to comment, ask for help, or share ideas at least three times in a 5-minute period.
- The child will respond to “who,” “why,” and “how” questions on 6 out of 10 opportunities.
- The child will ask questions to gain information if he does not know where or what something is on 7 out of 10 opportunities.
- The child will follow two-step directions during daily routines on 8 out of 10 opportunities.
- The child will retell one past event from the day.

Complex language

- The child will tell a simple story with a beginning, middle, and end on 8 out of 10 opportunities.
 - The child will participate in a conversation initiated by an adult for at least three turns.
 - The child will follow multiple-step directions during daily routines.
-

TABLE I.3.4. Examples of Imitation Goals*Immediate imitation*

- The child will imitate actions or body movements within songs or familiar routines on three out of five opportunities.
- The child will imitate familiar conventional gestures (e.g., wave, clap, blow kisses) on 7 out of 10 opportunities.
- The child will spontaneously imitate familiar play actions on 8 out of 10 opportunities.

Delayed imitation

- The child will imitate at least three novel play actions without a verbal direction within a 5-minute interaction.
- The child will imitate complex play actions (requiring two or more steps) with toys four times during a 5-minute interaction.

Reciprocal imitation

- The child will engage in back-and-forth object imitation with a play partner for at least five turns.
- The child will spontaneously imitate novel gestures and pantomimed play actions (e.g., pretend to drive car, pretend to talk on phone) at least five times within a play interaction.

TABLE I.3.5. Examples of Play Goals*Exploratory play*

- The child will show interest in at least five toys by looking at them and touching them within a 5-minute interaction.

Combinatorial play

- The child will put toys and objects together, nest or stack toys, or put objects in containers four times in during a 5-minute interaction.

Cause-and-effect play

- The child will play with pop-up toys or activate toys with buttons on three out of five opportunities.

Functional play

- The child will use miniature toys for their intended purpose four times during a 5-minute interaction (e.g., push car, put phone to ear).
- The child will use at least three different functional actions with a toy during an interaction.
- The child will direct pretend play actions toward toys (e.g., feed a doll, put the doll to bed) three times during a 5-minute interaction.

Pretend play

- The child will pretend that one item represents another or animate an object four out of five opportunities in response to a prompt.
- The child will link at least three actions together to tell a story in play with prompting.
- The child will use at least three different symbolic actions with toys without prompting during a play interaction.

Dramatic play

- The child will take on one or two imaginary roles during play.
- The child will tell an extended story with another person, with both partners taking on imaginary roles.
- The child will engage in play as the director and follow another's ideas when telling a story.

COACH: Let's start by getting a good idea of Brianna's current skills in each of the four areas of social communication we discussed. I'm going to have you complete a Social Communication Checklist or SCC. The SCC breaks down the four areas of social communication into specific skills that we can help Brianna work on. When you fill it out, think about how Brianna uses her skills on her own. While you fill out the SCC, I'm going to interact with Brianna and get to know her a little better.

The coach plays with Brianna while her mother completes the SCC. The coach notices that she is beginning to reach toward objects that she likes. She also notices that when Brianna is shown how to use a toy, she imitates the play action when she is engaged. This occurs infrequently, because Brianna does not stay engaged very long; she usually leaves an activity after about a minute. In terms of effective techniques, the coach notes that Brianna responds well to *Playful Obstruction* and *Use Animation* to gain her attention. She does not seem to respond to verbal or gesture prompts, but allows the coach to help her point. She also appears to make some sounds when she wants an object. When Brianna's mom finishes the SCC, she hands it to the coach. The coach then asks Brianna's mother to interact with Brianna for about 10 minutes.

The coach observes the parent-child interaction. Throughout the interaction, Brianna plays next to her mother for about 1 minute before leaving and moving to a new activity. She does not attempt to communicate with her unless she is unable to access a toy on her own. When this occurs, Brianna takes her mother's hand and leads her to the toy. On two occasions, the coach observes Brianna sign "More," although it is not clear what she wants more of. Once Brianna has the toys, she lines them up or drops them on the floor.

On the SCC for social engagement, Brianna's mother indicates that Brianna *sometimes* remains actively engaged with her during toy play for at least 2 minutes, but does *not yet* remain engaged during social games or toy play for 5 minutes. For communication, Brianna's mother indicates that she *usually* communicates by using gestures to request items or actions, primarily by leading her mother to what she wants, and *sometimes* imitates her speech sounds or language. She does *not yet* use single words spontaneously. For imitation skills, her mother indicates that Brianna *sometimes* imitates a wave for "bye-bye," but does not imitate other gestures or play. For play skills, Brianna's mother reports that Brianna *usually* plays with toys in an exploratory manner by touching, mouthing, smelling, or looking at them, and will *sometimes* combine objects together, but does *not yet* use toys for their intended purpose.

After gathering the initial information on Brianna's current skills, the coach begins developing social communication goals with Elena by reviewing the Getting Started Questionnaire and asking her about her goals for Brianna.

COACH: We want to make sure that the goals we set for Brianna are important to you. I noticed on the Getting Started Questionnaire you would like Brianna to be able to talk. Are there other goals you would like to work on with Brianna?

PARENT: Yes, I really want to be able to have a conversation with Brianna, but it seems like we never will, since she is not yet talking. I would also like to be able to play with Brianna and have her say hello and goodbye when people come over. She does not seem to even notice when others come over unless she is upset by it.

COACH: That must be difficult. These are excellent goals for Brianna. (*Writes these goals next to "Parent Goals" on Form 10, the Goal Development Form.*) We want to make sure that

Brianna can meet her goals over the 3 months of this program. So I can help you break down your goals for Brianna into specific skills that we can work on during the program to help Brianna learn to talk and play with you and other people. It helps to start small in order to measure progress. To meet these goals, Brianna will need to stay socially engaged, use and understand communication, and learn to play with toys in more creative ways. Imitation is also important, because it is a way for Brianna to show interest in others and learn new skills. Let's look at the SCC to think about skills that might help her achieve these goals. Are there any social engagement goals that you might like to work on with Brianna?

PARENT: *(Looks over the SCC she has filled out.)* Yes. I would like her to play with me longer, but she just doesn't seem to like to play.

COACH: That must be difficult. I noticed this, too, when she was playing with me. Sometimes children can have difficulty engaging with toys and people. We can address both goals in this program, and both skills will work toward helping Brianna talk and play. For social engagement, what would you think of a goal to increase the length of the interaction?

PARENT: That would be great. *(Coach writes this down under "Long-Term Goals.")*

COACH: Let's look at the SCC and see how long Brianna currently plays with you. You noted that she remains actively engaged with you for at least 2 minutes some of the time. I also noticed this while we were playing with Brianna. She usually stayed with us for about 1 minute before leaving the interaction, but sometimes a little longer. Is this pretty typical of how she plays with you at home?

PARENT: Yes.

COACH: Under "Current Skills," I will write that she currently plays for 1–2 minutes and then leaves the interaction. This will help us to make sure she is making progress. We will talk more about her current play skills as we write down play goals. The next step is to identify the new skill and to write a short-term goal to be able measure progress. What would you think of this goal?: "Brianna will engage with a play partner during social or toy play for at least 5 minutes." We will measure engagement through her eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, or vocalizations.

PARENT: That sounds great, but I would hope she could stay with us even longer.

COACH: I agree! Let's say at least 5 minutes for the time being, and we will increase the length as she makes progress toward the goal. *(Writes down the goal under "Short-Term Goals.")*

The coach continues using this collaborative style to develop goals in all core areas. She continues to explain how the goals will work toward Elena's overarching goals of improving Brianna's ability to talk and play with her. Once Elena agrees to the goals, the coach writes them on the Goal Development Form, as shown in Figure I.3.1. Notice that all goals are related to Brianna's mother's initial statement that she would like Brianna to be able to talk and play with her. Using the parent's goals in this way motivates her and increases the likelihood that she will practice the techniques at home.

Once the coach has finished, she has the parent write the short-term objectives on the Child Goals form on page 20 of the parent manual. This provides the parent with a reminder of the short-term goals as she practices the techniques at home.

FORM 10

Goal Development Form

Child: Brianna **Parent:** Elena **Date:** 4/10/17

Parent Goals: Talk/conversation, play together, have Brianna say "Hello" and "Goodbye" when people come over.

Long-Term Goals	Current Skills	Short-Term Goals
Social Engagement		
Increase the length of the interaction during play.	Engages with play partner for 1–2 minutes before leaving the interaction.	Engage with a play partner, using eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, or vocalizations, during talking or toy play for at least 5 minutes.
Communication		
Communicate needs and wants more consistently.	Sometimes uses gestures (hand leading and occasionally signing "More") and vocalizations to request.	Use point, vocalizations, or single word to request spontaneously at least 3 times during a motivating activity.
Imitation		
Imitate others during meaningful interactions.	Occasionally imitates familiar play actions with objects. Sometimes imitates a wave when leaving.	Imitate novel play actions on 3 out of 6 opportunities. Imitate a wave when greeting or leaving familiar people on 80% of opportunities.
Play		
Increase functional play with objects.	Plays with toys, exploring them (lining up, dropping, smelling, tasting, holding).	Combine toys and objects together, nest and stack toys, or put objects in containers at least 5 times in a play interaction.

FIGURE I.3.1. A completed example of the Goal Development Form (Form 10) for Case Study 1 (Brianna and Elena).

Case Study 2: Sam and Molly

Sam is a 4-year-old boy with a diagnosis of ASD. He and his mother have come to the clinic for their first parent coaching session. Sam comes into the room and begins to play with a set of cars while the coach discusses the program with his mother. Sam mumbles to himself while he is playing. His mother identifies what he is saying as lines from the movie *Cars*, which she reports is his favorite movie.

When the coach interacts with Sam, she notices that he spontaneously uses single words to request items that interest him (cars, bubbles); however, she does not observe him using phrase speech spontaneously. She also notices that Sam engages in highly repetitive play with cars, but is able to imitate some familiar pretend play actions with a stuffed bear when the cars are removed. In terms of effective techniques, she notes that Sam responds well to *Imitate Your Child with Use Animation*, via eye contact and smiling. He also responds well to several *Communicative Temptations* to gain his attention. However, he gets very frustrated when she tries to use *Balanced Turns* with him. He is able to answer direct questions with single words, and to imitate two- to three-word phrases. Again, however, he does not use phrase speech spontaneously.

The coach then asks to observe Sam and his mother play together. Throughout the interaction, Sam plays next to his mother. His play consists mainly of holding and ordering the cars, although he occasionally pushes a car around the floor in a circle. He periodically holds up one of the cars to his mother and labels it by name (all the names are from the *Cars* movie). Although it appears that these communications are directed toward his mother, he does not make eye contact with her. On several occasions, Sam's mother attempts to take a turn with one of the cars he is playing with; each time, Sam screams and pushes his mother's hands away. He does, however, respond to her questions to label the color of each car and to count the cars. Sam's mother reports that this interaction is typical of their play at home, with Sam using language (labeling colors, naming characters, and counting) centered around specific routines (involving cars).

On the SCC for social engagement, Molly indicates that Sam *usually* remains actively engaged with her during toy play for at least 10 minutes. He *sometimes* initiates activities or play with her, and *sometimes* points or shows her objects that interest him. She also reports that he *usually* takes turns with her, but the coach is curious about this, because he has resisted turns during the parent-child interaction and the coach's interaction with him. In terms of his communication skills, Molly reports that Sam *usually* can name objects and actions, combine words into simple phrases, and use words to describe objects. She indicates that he *sometimes* uses different tenses and sentences to communicate, but is *not yet* able to talk about events that have already occurred, tell simple stories, or ask questions for information. In regard to Sam's imitation skills, she indicates that he *sometimes* imitates novel play with toys, but does *not yet* engage in longer imitative interactions. She also reports that Sam *usually* uses toys for their intended purpose, and *sometimes* directs basic pretend play actions toward himself and others. He is *not yet* pretending that one action represents another.

After reviewing the Getting Started Questionnaire and the parent's SCC, the coach begins goal development by asking Sam's mother about her goals for him.

COACH: On the Getting Started Questionnaire, you indicated you would like to be able to have a conversation with Sam. Are there other goals that you have for Sam?

PARENT: I would like to be able to have a conversation with him, but I would also really like for him to be able to play with his younger brother. As you saw, Sam talks to me. But when he plays with his brother, he pushes or hits him and really does not say much. Sam's younger brother would really like to be able to play with him.

COACH: Those are great goals. It must be hard for both you and Sam's brother when he does not want to play. We can work toward these goals of Sam being able to have a conversa-

tion and play with his brother by helping him take turns and to use his words when he is frustrated. (*Writes down these next to “Parent Goals.”*) Let’s spend the next few minutes looking at what skills we can build on. We will want to think about engagement, communication, imitation, and play, as all of these skills will help Sam become able to have a conversation with you and interact with his brother. Let’s start with social engagement. In order to communicate with others, the first step is to be able to maintain an interaction. I notice that Sam plays near you and that he occasionally shows you items. He does not seem to want to take turns. Is this pretty typical of how Sam plays at home?

PARENT: No, he takes turns with me all the time. We like to throw the ball back and forth and play a fishing game.

COACH: That is great. It sounds like he can take some turns during structured activities. Today, though, I noticed he did not seem to want to take turns with the cars. Is this something that is typical?

PARENT: Well, he just doesn’t like to share toys.

COACH: Oh, I think I understand. He can take turns if it is play with a toy that has clear turns; however, if he has to share or take turns with a favorite object, then that is difficult. One way to improve Sam’s play with his sibling is to increase his ability to share and trade toys. Taking turns may also help Sam learn the back-and-forth interaction needed to take turns in conversation. Since he has difficulty sharing and trading toys with adults, we may want to start by increasing his ability to take turns with us. Then we can work on having him do it with his brother. What do you think?

PARENT: That sounds OK, but it will be hard if he has his favorite toy.

COACH: That is a good point. Let’s write down turn taking under “Long-Term Goals” and then look at the skills he currently has.

The coach uses a collaborative model and develops engagement goals. She then asks Sam’s mother what communication goals she would like to work on.

PARENT: I would like Sam to use longer sentences.

COACH: That sounds like a great goal to work toward. Would it be accurate to say that you would like Sam to increase the number of words he uses to communicate?

PARENT: That would be great, particularly with his brother.

COACH: Let’s write this down under “Long-Term Goals,” and then look at the SCC and see how Sam currently communicates. I noticed you indicated that he usually uses simple phrases with you. With me, he used primarily single words on his own. I wonder why?

PARENT: I don’t know. When I say, “Say, ‘I want more crackers,’” he’ll say, “Want more crackers.” Or if I say, “Tickle me,” he’ll say it too.

COACH: Oh, I see. If you give him the words, then he can imitate them. I noticed this, too. I was thinking of what he can say on his own without you helping him. This might help him be able to talk with others, including his brother. What do you think?

PARENT: Yes, that would be great. He only talks with me, which is frustrating.

COACH: I can imagine. Under “Current Skills,” I will write down that Sam uses single words to request and imitates two- to three-word phrases. We can work on helping him use language on his own by seeing what he can say without us telling him, and then build on it by adding one word. If we have him say longer phrases, he might not learn what each word means, and then he will have a harder time using it on his own. What would you think of this goal?: “Sam will spontaneously use two- to three-word phrases to request, protest, and share.” This could help reduce his hitting with his brother, if we can give him another way to protest (tell his brother to stop).

Sam’s mother agrees, and the coach writes this goal on Sam’s Goal Development Form, as shown in Figure I.3.2. The coach asks additional probing questions and determines that Sam’s mother would also like Sam to become more creative in his play. On the basis of his current play skills, the parent and coach decide to add an imitation goal for gestures and a play goal devoted to improving Sam’s ability to use pretend play.

In the session guidelines that follow in Parts II and III, we will return to Brianna, Sam, and their mothers to show how the coach explains the intervention techniques in terms of the individual goals for each child.

Coaching Parents

Once the child’s goals have been established, you will use coaching to teach the parent intervention strategies. Coaching is a key component of effective parent-mediated intervention, and thus coaching sessions are an integral part of both individual and group Project ImPACT formats. The goals of coaching are to recognize the parent’s strengths and effort, provide an opportunity for her to practice the strategies with her child and receive feedback, jointly identify and problem-solve barriers, and increase the parent’s independence in using the strategies during daily routines and interactions with her child.

This section provides an overview of the coaching procedures in Project ImPACT. These general procedures apply to all coaching sessions, whether they are conducted within the individual or group format. This section concludes with a case study of Brianna and her mother, to illustrate what the procedures look like across a coaching session.

After appropriate preparation, coaching sessions are conducted by (1) checking in and setting the session agenda; (2) reviewing the Practice Plan; (3) introducing the new technique to the parent and explaining how it will address the child’s goals; (4) briefly demonstrating the technique; (5) having the parent practice and giving feedback; (6) helping the parent reflect and plan for practice; and (7) monitoring fidelity and collecting data. By the end of the program, the parent should be able to use the intervention strategies throughout the family’s daily routines and in new situations, *without* your help. Thus it is also important to build in opportunities to increase the parent’s independence across sessions.

Prepare for the Coaching Session

Prior to each session, you should arrange the coaching space so that it has limited distractions; this will help the child attend to the parent. If you are coaching in the home, you will help the

FORM 10

Goal Development Form

Child: Sam **Parent:** Molly **Date:** 8/23/17
Parent Goals: Have a conversation, play with his brother.

Long-Term Goals	Current Skills	Short-Term Goals
Social Engagement		
Take turns.	Does not allow parent to take turns during play with favorite toys. Can take turns with adult during structured activities, such as games and ball play.	Take turns with a favorite toy, by allowing the play partner a turn, watching the partner's turn, and asking for his turn, 5 times in 5 minutes.
Communication		
Increase the number of words used to communicate.	Uses single words to request. Can use 2- or 3-word phrases with a verbal model.	Spontaneously use 2- to 3-word phrases (e.g., "Pour milk") to request, protest, and share 4 times in a 5-minute period.
Imitation		
Imitate play actions.	Imitates some basic pretend actions with objects. Does not yet imitate descriptive gestures.	Imitate descriptive gestures during play on 3 out of 6 opportunities.
Play		
Increase pretend play.	Uses primarily pretend play. Can use basic pretend actions in response to a model.	Spontaneously direct pretend play actions to a toy or play partner (feed doll, put man in car) 5 times in 5-minute period without a model.

FIGURE I.3.2. A completed example of the Goal Development Form (Form 10) for Case Study 2 (Sam and Molly).

parent set up a space to play during *Set Up Your Home for Success* (Part II, Unit 1, Session 3; Part III, Unit 1, Session 1).

Make sure there are highly preferred toys or other play materials available. If you are going into the home, it is better to help the parent identify materials in her home that her child likes than to bring your own, unless you are able to lend toys to the family between sessions.

Review relevant information from previous sessions. This includes the parent's Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4), the child's goals and/or session notes, and the parent's practice plan.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda (5% of Session)

Each coaching session should begin with briefly checking in with the parent about the prior week and setting the agenda for the session. This helps you connect with the family and develop a shared plan for the session. In most cases, this interaction will be brief. However, if the parent raises a significant safety concern or family crisis, you may need to adjust the session to address the family's needs. If needed, take a moment to engage the child in an activity so that you and the parent can talk.

Briefly explain the session agenda to help the parent understand the goals and structure of the session and to keep you both on track. In the beginning, you will need to remind the parent of the session structure so that she is comfortable and prepared to practice with her child: Review the Practice Plan; introduce the new technique; demonstrate the technique; have the parent practice, with feedback; and help the parent reflect and plan for practice. Over time, you may be able to skip the description of the session structure.

Ask if the parent has questions about the session or if there is another topic she would like to discuss. If she has another topic, be sure to add this to the session agenda. If the topic or concern is outside your area of expertise, provide the appropriate referral.

Review the Practice Plan (15% of Session)

With the exception of the first three sessions of the individual format, you will start by discussing how between-session practice went at home. This allows the parent to share successes and challenges, and helps you determine what additional supports the parent may need in using the technique. This should be done even if the parent has not completed the written reflection.

Begin by going over the written Practice Plan from the previous session, and then ask the parent how it worked at home. Be sure to solicit information on what the parent felt was successful, what was challenging, and how the child responded. Provide lots of positive feedback and encouragement. If the parent reports any challenges in using the technique(s), ask questions to identify the likely reason for the difficulties. You could also have the parent briefly show you what was difficult with the child or with you in a role play.

Ask questions and give suggestions to help the parent problem-solve ways to make the technique(s) more effective. Common challenges and possible solutions for each technique are described in the session guidelines for both the individual (Part II) and the group (Part III) models.

If the parent did not practice, work with her to identify any practical barriers, such as lack of time or other family care responsibilities, and problem-solve solutions. Sometime parents fail to practice because they have low self-efficacy in using a technique or have not bought into the intervention. If the parent has low self-efficacy, you can also have the parent practice the technique for short periods with your support, to build up confidence before you ask the parent to implement the technique on her own at home. If the parent has low buy-in, it can help to reiterate the rationale behind the technique and help the parent see how it can be used to address her goals for her child.

Introduce the New Technique (15% of Session)

The next step is to provide didactic instruction on the rationale and key elements of the new technique. In the individual format, the technique is introduced in a coaching session. In the

group format, the techniques will have been introduced during the prior group session. Thus the time spent on introducing the techniques can be eliminated in the coaching sessions in the group format.

Start with the rationale for why the technique is used and how it can address the child's goals. This can increase the parent's buy-in and will also help her use the technique in new situations. For many parents, the brief rationale provided in the parent manual will be sufficient. However, for some parents it can be beneficial to provide additional information, based on the individual needs of the child and parent and on the child's goals. Suggestions for how to tailor the rationale for each technique to specific family needs is provided in the session guidelines for the individual format (Part II).

Use the parent manual to guide your discussion of the key elements of the technique, while providing examples using the child's behaviors. Suggestions for how to individualize the description of the key elements based on specific family needs are provided for each technique in the session guidelines for the individual coaching model (Part II).

Ask the Think About It! questions as you go, to help the parent reflect on how she can use the technique with her child and how her child might respond. This will help you assess the parent's understanding of the technique.

If a parent is having particular difficulty understanding a technique, you can try role play. Begin by having the parent pretend to be her child while you demonstrate the technique; then switch roles.

Demonstrate the Technique (10% of Session)

After introducing the technique, provide a brief demonstration of how to use it with the child. Demonstration helps the parent see the technique in action and recognize how the child responds. It is important to keep this demonstration relatively short (i.e., no more than about 5 minutes), and only demonstrate the technique(s) that that parent will be practicing.

Before beginning, ask the parent to watch how you use the technique, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions. For example: "Now I'm going to use balanced turns. Watch what I do, and see how Brianna responds."

As you demonstrate, describe what you are doing and why. This helps the parent identify the techniques and how her child responds. For example: "Here I am taking a turn with Brianna's car. Now she is looking at me, so I'm giving her her car back for her turn."

After the demonstration, ask the parent questions to help her reflect on what she observed. Begin by asking open-ended questions, such as "What did you notice during that interaction?" If the parent is unable to identify the key points in response to an open-ended question, ask more specific questions, such as "How did I adjust my communication?" or "How did your child respond when I exaggerated my gestures?" If the parent is having difficulty noticing key elements, lead her through a review of the technique.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback (35% of Session)

The most important step in coaching a parent consists of having the parent practice and providing feedback. Feedback helps the parent identify ways to improve her use of the techniques, helps her recognize how her child responds, increases her confidence in her own ability, and motivates

long-term behavior change. Given the important role that practice with feedback plays in adult learning and behavior change, it should occur for a good portion of the session. If both parents are participating, allow time for each parent to practice and receive feedback separately. The following strategies will help ensure that the practice and feedback proceed successfully.

Begin by providing a clear transition, so that the parent is aware that it is time to practice. For example: “Now I would like you to play with Brianna while I sit back and provide feedback.” This is especially important if the parent is hesitant to interact with the child in front of you. Position yourself behind or to off to the side of the parent, so that you are out of the way but can assist if necessary.

Suggest a specific behavior for the parent to practice. For example: “Remember to follow Brianna’s lead to the activity; if she is playing with the ball, sit in front of her and join her in her play.” Remind the parent of previously learned techniques as necessary.

Manage materials and the coaching space so that the parent can focus on the interaction with the child. Hand the parent needed materials, and put away materials that are distracting. If the child attempts to engage with you instead of the parent, hand play materials to the parent to offer the child. For example: “You have a train! Your dad has one too!” Rearrange aspects of the coaching space as necessary to support successful interactions.

Positive feedback builds the parent’s confidence in her ability to effect positive change in her child. Corrective feedback provides the parent with concrete suggestions for improving her use of a technique. Both types of feedback should focus on specific aspects of the parent’s behavior and the child’s response; such feedback is more effective than general comments such as “Great!” or “You’re doing an awesome job!” Specific feedback helps the parent understand how her use of the techniques affects her child’s behavior and helps her generalize her use of the techniques to new situations.

Coaching should always involve *more* positive than corrective feedback. It is especially important to focus on positive feedback early in coaching and with parents who are anxious or lack confidence in their ability to interact with their children. It is important to continue to provide positive feedback even when a parent already uses a technique successfully, as she may not be aware of how her behavior is positively affecting her child.

There are different ways to give corrective feedback. Some strategies are more directive, such as telling or showing the parent what to do. Other types are less directive, such as asking a question or making an observation to help the parent identify how to change her behavior. Feedback that is less directive may be more difficult for the parent to follow, but it also allows her to become a better problem solver. It is usually a good idea to be more directive in the beginning and become less directive as the parent increases her skills. If the parent is having a difficult time responding to the less directive strategies, use more directive feedback.

See Table I.3.6 for suggestions of several different ways to give effective positive and corrective feedback. The corrective feedback suggestions are listed in order from more to less directive.

Provide frequent feedback on only a limited number of techniques. If you attempt to provide feedback on many things at once, the parent is likely to have difficulty knowing what to focus on. As the parent moves through the program, you can give “review” feedback on techniques the parent has already learned to keep them fresh.

Keep your comments short and try to wait for a natural pause, to avoid disrupting the interaction. Some parents can become overwhelmed when they receive feedback while they interact with

TABLE I.3.6. Feedback Examples

Type of feedback	Examples
<u>Positive feedback</u>	
Acknowledge parent's efforts.	"You are really working hard to follow Carlos's lead."
Point out what the parent did correctly.	"That was great how you got Jimmy's attention before asking him what he wanted."
Point out how the child responds to what parent is doing.	"Lucy is so engaged with you when you imitate what she is doing."
Explain why the child is responding in a certain way.	"Peter is making beautiful eye contact, now that you are holding the toy in your line of sight."
<u>Corrective feedback</u>	
Model and have the parent imitate.	"Let me show you how to prompt Jerome to follow an instruction, and then you try."
Suggest a strategy for the next opportunity.	"Next time Scott reaches for the ball, wait a few seconds before you ask him what he wants."
Remind the parent of the technique.	"Remember to use one or two words to describe what Brian is doing."
Tell the parent what to do.	"Hold the car back so Carly can't grab it from you."
Make an observation to help the parent problem-solve.	"I notice that Carson uses more words when you use shorter sentences." "Jason is playing with the car."
Point out how the child responds.	"Mark seems to look at you more when you are highly animated."
Ask a question to help the parent problem-solve.	"How could you encourage Olivia to look at you?"

their child. Others may lose confidence in their ability or become defensive when they receive corrective feedback. Be sure to observe the parent's nonverbal response to your feedback. If the parent seems to "shut down" or respond defensively to corrective feedback, you may need to focus far more on positive feedback, reduce the frequency of your feedback, or provide reflective feedback after a brief observation of the interaction.

Project ImPACT primarily uses live feedback; however, video feedback is recommended during the review sessions in the individual format and can also be used at other times, depending on the parent's learning style. When you are providing video feedback, briefly record the parent while she practices with the child (e.g., for 2–3 minutes) and then review the recording with the parent, pausing periodically to provide feedback. A benefit of providing feedback from video is that it reduces the amount of information the parent must attend to at one time and allows her to focus better on the interaction. Video also allows the parent to evaluate her own behavior, which can be a powerful behavior change tool. As noted in Chapter 2, we have found that video feedback can be

especially helpful for parents who have learning difficulties or who speak English as a second language, because both the recorded interaction and the rate of verbal feedback can be slowed down.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice (20% of Session)

The last step in the coaching process is to help the parent reflect on the in-session practice and to plan for between-session practice. This is a critical component of parent-mediated intervention and is used to help the parent develop the ability to use the techniques independently across the child's daily routines. By developing a practice plan together and problem-solving potential challenges, you can make sure that parent is "on board" and increase the likelihood that she will experience success.

Take a moment to help the parent to reflect on the in-session practice. Ask questions and provide your observations to help the parent identify what worked best for her and the child, and which things she might like to try at home. Sample questions are listed in the reflection section for each session.

Work with the parent to develop a plan for what and when to practice between sessions. Help the parent choose one or two of the child's goals, and write them on the Practice Plan form for that session. The types of goals each technique is designed to target are described in the parent manual. Help the parent choose the most appropriate goal for the technique(s) introduced during the session.

The parent should choose at least one play activity and one daily routine in which to practice. Use the Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) and your knowledge of the child, parent, and goal to help the parent select activities. Activities that the child enjoys are good to begin with, since the child is already motivated by them. If the parent is hesitant to practice during play, help her select an enjoyable daily routine. Similarly, if the parent is hesitant to practice during routines, help her select two play activities. As you move through the program, encourage the parent to practice during a variety of activities and routines to help with generalization of skills.

Use the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan form to help the parent talk through an example of how she will use the technique with her child during the routine that she has selected. The sequence graphic is used to illustrate a positive example of how the technique can be used to address the child's goals.

Begin by asking what technique the parent will use. Then ask what specific element of the technique will she use. For example, she might select getting face to face for one of the **Focus on Your Child** techniques, or questions for *Prompts for Using Communication*. Next, ask her what response she will be looking for from her child. Finally, ask the parent how she will respond to the child's behavior. Write down the parent's responses as you go.

After the parent has decided what and how she will practice, work with her to problem-solve potential challenges that might arise while she is carrying out the Practice Plan during the week. This could include concerns about the child's response, the parent's ability or willingness to use a technique, or practical barriers (such as difficulty finding time or space to practice, or lack of partner support). For any challenges the parent raises, jointly generate possible solutions. Be sure to write these down on the Practice Plan. Common challenges and potential solutions are discussed in the session guidelines for the individual and group models (Parts II and III), and are listed under the "Planning" head for each session's Practice Plan.

Ask the parent to write down how practice went between sessions in the “Reflection” section of the Practice Plan. Have the parent note what went well and any challenges she experiences while using the techniques at home. Let her know that you will review how practice went at the beginning of the next session and problem-solve any challenges that came up. Be sure to keep a copy of the plan to review the following session. When you are ready to move to the next technique, have the parent read that section of the parent manual.

Monitor Fidelity and Collect Data

In order to ensure successful implementation of Project ImPACT, you should monitor your fidelity to the coaching procedure, and collect data at the end of each session on the parent’s use of the techniques, and the child’s use of skills. Project ImPACT includes data collection forms for each of these areas.

Complete the Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6) after each coaching session to monitor your use of the coaching procedures. This process helps ensure that you implement the coaching sessions with fidelity.

Use the Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4) to score the parent’s use of the techniques during the coaching session. This information will help you tailor the pace of the program to maximize parent learning; however, we recommend that you *not* share the parent’s scores with her. The parent Intervention Fidelity Checklist uses a 5-point Likert scale to assess the parent’s use of the overall strategy and the quality indicators of the strategy. We recommend that the parent score at least 3 on a strategy before you introduce a new strategy (“Adult implements the strategy effectively up to half of the time, but misses many opportunities or is inconsistently effective”). You can record a summary of the parent’s use of techniques and reminders for the next session on the Session Data Sheet (Form 12). This can serve as a reminder for the next session if you need to make adjustments to the session agenda.

It is important to collect data often on the child’s progress toward his goals throughout the program. This documents the child’s successes, identifies areas in which the child is struggling, and allows you to modify the program to meet the child’s individual needs. You can use the Session Data Sheet (Form 12) to track the child’s progress and take session notes. If you have another data collection system that works for tracking child progress, feel free to use it instead. Be sure, however, that this system includes a place to record information on the child’s skills use, activities, and behavior; the parent’s implementation of the techniques; and any reminders for the next session.

Live, in-session data collection is very important, but it is sometimes difficult to collect good-quality data with naturalistic interventions. This is why we recommend periodically making video recordings of sessions. These videos can be scored at a later time, using the Session Data Sheet (Form 12) or a more in-depth analysis of the child’s and parent’s behavior change.

Increase the Parent’s Independence

The ultimate goal of this program is for the parent to use the intervention throughout her daily routines and interactions with her child, without your support. Thus you should work toward increasing the parent’s independent use of the intervention from the very beginning of the pro-

gram. The key to building independence is to allow time for the parent to practice the techniques and receive feedback across multiple routines and settings.

Have the parent practice from the beginning, even if she is hesitant to do so. Increase the amount of time the parent practices over the course of the program. By the end of the program, the parent should be practicing for the majority of the session, while you provide only feedback and support in gradually decreasing amounts.

At the beginning, you may need to provide the parent with more specific suggestions during the in-session practice and practice planning. Over the course of the program, gradually shift from giving suggestions to making observations and asking questions to help the parent become more independent in her problem solving.

Have the parent practice and receive feedback in different activities, such as snacktime, naptime, or playtime with a sibling. We recommend scheduling at least a few sessions in the family's home during key points in the program. If you are not able to go to the family's home, have the parents bring some toys from home or plan to do a household routine (such as dressing or snacktime) at the coaching site. You can also have the parent record herself using the interventions in different settings, and provide her with feedback on the video.

The 24-session individual coaching model uses video review during several key points in the program as a way to build the parent's independence. As the coach, you will record a brief parent-child interaction and then review it with the parent, using one of the Video Review Forms (Forms 19–22). This process helps the parent critically evaluate her use of the strategies and their effect on her child's behavior, and identify the techniques that are most effective for her child. The Part II individual session guidelines provide more detail on this process.

Try to schedule some coaching sessions in community settings that the family attends regularly (parks, preschool, play group, grocery store, etc.), particularly toward the end of the program.

Case Study 1: Brianna and Elena

The following case study illustrates a coaching session with Brianna and her mother, Elena, who have been introduced in the “Collaborative Goal Setting” section of this chapter. They enter the clinic for their 14th coaching session. The coach has laid out some of Brianna's favorite toys, and she begins to explore them. The coach says hi to Brianna and Elena, and asks Elena how the week has gone. Elena reports that Brianna had a cold earlier in the week, but that otherwise things have been fine. Since there were no significant concerns, the coach goes over the session agenda.

COACH: Today we are going to talk about how to use different prompts and rewards to increase the complexity and spontaneity of Brianna's communication skills. We will start by reviewing your Practice Plan from last week. Then we'll go over the key points of prompts for using communication and discuss any questions you have. I will briefly demonstrate *Prompts for Using Communication* with Brianna to show you what it looks like. Then you will have a chance to practice, and we can see how Brianna responds. We'll work together to understand the best ways to use prompts and rewards for using communication during your daily interactions with Brianna over the next week. Do you have questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?

PARENT: No.

COACH: Then let's get started.

The coach takes out the copy of Brianna's mother's Practice Plan from the previous week and looks it over.

COACH: Last session, you said that you were going to try to help Brianna engage with you and initiate requests to think of good times to prompt communication. How did it go?

PARENT: It went really well, actually. Brianna really likes to play with the squishy balls. So I used *Playful Obstruction* to help her communicate with me.

COACH: How did she respond?

PARENT: At first, she didn't really seem to notice me next to her. But after I used a puppet to get the ball, she would smile and then reach for the ball.

COACH: That's great! It sounds like it really kept the interaction going. This would be a great time to use a prompt for communication, which is what we will talk about today. Did you try other **Create Opportunities** techniques during any other activities?

PARENT: Yeah. I also tried it during snacktime. That was a little harder, because she did not like it when I used a puppet to get her snack.

COACH: It can be difficult to use *Playful Obstruction* when a child is eating. Is there anything you could do to create an opportunity during snack to help her request?

PARENT: I could try giving her a little of the snack at a time.

COACH: Great idea! Small portions work really well during activities like snacktime.

After talking through the Practice Plan, the coach then introduces *Prompts for Using Communication*. She presents the rationale and then goes over the key elements. As she does, she asks Elena the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help her talk through how she might use prompts for using communication with Brianna. Based on Elena's responses, the coach determines that Elena understands the key points, so she begins the demonstration.

COACH: Now I'm going to play with Brianna, and I would like you to watch how I model language for her to imitate once she reaches toward the ball. If she does not respond, I will model a gesture for her to imitate and then use physical guidance if needed. Watch to see the prompt I use and how Brianna responds. Do you have any questions?

PARENT: No.

COACH: OK. Brianna is playing with the ball. So I'm following her to that activity and staying face to face. I am going to use *Playful Obstruction* to create an opportunity for her to communicate. . . . She did not respond to my anticipatory phrase, so I took the ball with my puppet. She reached for the ball. I said the word "Ball." When she did not respond, I repeated "Ball" and modeled a point. Since she did not imitate the point, I am going to help her point. . . . I gave her the ball and again said "Ball," even though I had to help her point. This way she will learn that pointing gets her what she wants. . . . Now she's moved to the blocks. So I'm going to follow her again and control access to the blocks to give her an opportunity to communicate. She is looking toward a block, so I said the word "Block." She did not imitate the word, so I am going to model the point. She imitated my point! That was great! . . . I rewarded her by giving her the block and expanded by again saying "Block."

After a few minutes, the coach stops to check in with Elena.

COACH: What did you notice during the interaction?

PARENT: Brianna pointed one time. That was great!

COACH: What did I do when she pointed?

PARENT: You gave her the ball, and she was happy!

COACH: You're right. I also said the word "Ball," which is the skill we are working toward having her use.

PARENT: That's right. I need to remember to do that and just say one word.

COACH: Great observation. I like how you are already starting to give yourself feedback. Let's have you play with Brianna and use prompts to work toward her goal of single words. Remember, first create an opportunity, using one of the techniques you've learned. Once she initiates by looking or reaching, that is a great time to model a word for her to imitate. If Brianna doesn't respond, add support by modeling a point and then using physical guidance to help her point.

The coach hands Elena the puppet and moves off to the side. Elena joins Brianna with the blocks. During Elena's practice, Brianna moves very frequently. She picks up one toy and then drops it and moves on to another. The coach notices that Elena is having difficulty controlling Brianna's access to items. The coach helps Elena stay in the interaction by putting away most of the play materials and handing Elena one to show Brianna. She uses a lot of positive feedback, focused on Elena's persistence and her use of the techniques at the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. After a few minutes, Brianna settles down with the cars and begins to push a car back and forth. The coach offers Elena another car, and Elena begins to imitate her play.

At this point, the coach begins to introduce some corrective feedback to help Elena create an opportunity so she can use prompts.

COACH: Brianna looks pretty engaged with her car right now and is watching you imitate her. What do you think you can do to help her initiate with you?

Elena says, "My turn," and takes a brief turn with Brianna's car. Brianna reaches toward it, and Elena lets her have the car. The coach points out how Brianna initiated and how she responded by giving her the car, and Elena begins to relax a little. The coach then provides more directive feedback to help Elena use prompts.

COACH: Great use of *Playful Obstruction* to help Brianna initiate. She looked at you, and you rewarded her by moving your car. Next time, why don't you try to model the word "Car"? If she doesn't respond, model a point, and then use physical guidance to help her point.

The coach continues to provide a balance of positive and corrective feedback for the next 20 minutes, and then stops to check in with Elena.

COACH: How did that feel?

PARENT: It was really hard at first. Brianna just wasn't interested in anything, and I felt like I was just following her around.

COACH: I noticed that, too. But you were very persistent, and she eventually settled on the cars. It can be really hard when she is moving around. When she was engaged, it was much easier to create an opportunity and prompt her to use a more complex communication skill. And you did a great job adding support. What do you think was the difference?

PARENT: Removing the toys. I need to remember to put things away as she gets them out. We start with an organized room, and then it gets a bit cluttered.

COACH: I think you might be right. Going forward, let's try having fewer toys available during playtime. Can you do that at home?

PARENT: Yes. I think I need more boxes!

COACH: Great. Let's look at the Practice Plan [see Form 34 and Figure I.3.3] and talk about how you might be able to use *Prompts for Using Communication* at home over the next week. Which goal would you like to work on?

PARENT: I would like her to use words when she wants something. She often reaches or grabs toward the item, like you saw today.

Practice Plan— Teach New Skills

Date: 6/11/17




PLANNING				
Goal(s): <i>Use single words when she wants something (request).</i>		What will be hard? <i>Gets upset when she does not get all the crackers at once.</i>		
Activity/activities: <i>Snack</i>		Possible solutions: <i>Give her three at a time instead of one. Start with most supportive prompt (help her point) so she gets it right away.</i>		
 Word or prompt				
 Focus and Adjust	Create Opportunities	Wait	Prompt	Reward and Expand
Let her select snack from cupboard. Model word ("Crackers").	Control access: Small portions (one cracker at a time).	Until she communicates (usually a reach).	Model word 1. ("Cracker"). 2. Model word or point. 3. Help her point.	Give her a cracker right away even if you help her point.
				
REFLECTION				
What went well?		Possible solutions:		
What was hard?				

FIGURE I.3.3. A completed example of the Practice Plan—Teach New Skills (Form 34) for Case Study 1 (Brianna and Elena).

COACH: Great. This is a great goal to target with this technique. What activity would you like to try?

PARENT: I don't know. It worked really well during play with the cars today, but snacktime is a little easier at home, because she is sitting in her high chair and I can hold onto her snack.

COACH: How would you feel about snacktime? It sounds like it's a time when Brianna is pretty motivated and you can control access.

PARENT: Yeah. That makes sense.

COACH: Let's think about how you might use this during her snack. First, what will you do to focus on her and adjust communication?

PARENT: I could have a few items available and let her choose from the cupboard.

COACH: Great idea. I'll write this: "Let Brianna select a snack from the cupboard, and model the word down under **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication.**" What technique will you use to create an opportunity?

PARENT: I can put her in the high chair and give her a little bit of her snack at a time. She usually chooses crackers, so I can give her one at a time.

COACH: Great idea. What do you think Brianna will do?

PARENT: Well, she will probably reach, but I would like her to say a word.

COACH: I agree. That would be great! I will write down "Wait for Brianna to use a reach or another gesture or vocalization to communicate" in the "Wait" box, and "Use word or point" next to the target. You can write down how Brianna actually responds next to the child icon under the "Wait" box when you practice at home. What prompts can you use to help her use a more complex skill after she reaches?

PARENT: Well, I could say the word "Cracker," then point, and then help her point.

COACH: Excellent! I like how you are thinking through the steps. The three prompts will be just what you said: the word "Cracker," showing her a point, and physically guiding her to point. Remember to give Brianna the cracker right away, even if you have to help her.

PARENT: OK.

COACH: Great. When you practice at home, you can write down how Brianna responds to prompting under the three prompts. It can also be helpful to write down or circle the type of prompt you used that helped her respond. Do you think it might be hard to do this with Brianna at home?

PARENT: Well, sometimes Brianna gets upset and wants all the crackers, and then I don't know what to do.

COACH: You're right. That can be really hard, because you can't reward the fussing and also want to help her get the cracker. I'll write that down. What's one idea for how to handle that?

PARENT: Hmmm. I suppose I could just give her all the crackers if she calms down.

COACH: Yes, you could. I'm also wondering if you could give her a few at a time rather than one. Another idea might to start with physical guidance to help her point, so she does not

have to wait so long. You could then try to decrease support every third time. I'll write both of the suggestions here. Then if Brianna fusses, you can try to do one or both to see if it helps. After you try it out at home, be sure to write down how it goes in the "Reflection" box, so we can go over it together the next time we meet.

The coach then reminds Elena to read the section on *Prompts for Understanding Communication* in Chapter 5 of the parent manual, and says goodbye to Elena and Brianna.

Running Groups

In the Project ImPACT group model, parents learn the intervention techniques together during six group sessions. Following each group session, each parent receives an individual coaching session with her child, in order to practice and receive feedback from the coach. The goals of the group sessions are to introduce the intervention strategies; jointly identify and problem-solve barriers; and facilitate shared experience and social support among parents. Below, we describe the rationale and general procedures for running the group sessions.

A successful group begins with developing clear expectations about the program, building cohesion among group members, and facilitating supportive group discussion. The leader of the group should use a strengths-based approach throughout the group discussions and effectively manage interactions between group members. After preparation for each session, intervention techniques are then taught in the group by (1) checking in and setting the session agenda; (2) reviewing the parents' between-session practice; (3) introducing the new techniques, including showing video examples and facilitating discussion; and (4) helping the parents plan for practice and coaching. Once each session ends, it is monitored for fidelity.

Prepare for the Group Session

Before each group session, you should arrange the room to facilitate instruction and discussion, and have the appropriate materials available.

Arrange the group space so that all parents have an equally good view of you and the presentation, as well as each other, to encourage group discussion. Make sure that all parents have a surface to write on so that they can take notes. Ideally, this involves a set of rectangular tables set up in a U shape, with chairs around the perimeter.

Materials for teaching Project ImPACT in a group format are available online. (See the Appendix for more information.) These materials include PowerPoint presentations and video clips for discussion. Review the slide presentation and script for this day's session, and select the video examples you will use. Although the script contains all of the necessary information for the presentation, you are encouraged to present the information in your own words and to generate your own examples. This strategy will enrich the presentation and make it more personal.

Make sure that you have the appropriate technology to play the slides and video examples, and a whiteboard to write on. Each parent should have a copy of the parent manual. In addition, optional handouts can be created by printing out the PowerPoint slide presentation and distribut-

ing copies. Review relevant information from the previous coaching session, including the children's goals and the parents' Practice Plans.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda (5% of Session)

During the first group session, you will begin with introductions and develop shared group expectations. This part of the session is used to develop shared expectations about the program and to help the parents connect with and support each other. During subsequent sessions, you will begin by checking in with the parents and setting the session agenda to develop a shared plan for the session in order to keep it on track. Greet the parents warmly as they enter. Allow them a few minutes to check in with each other before getting started.

Briefly go over the session agenda to provide information on the goals and structure of the session. In the beginning, you will need to remind the parents of the session structure. This includes (1) reviewing everyone's Practice Plan as a group; (2) introducing new techniques via lecture, videos, and group discussion; and (3) planning for practice and coaching. You may wish to write this structure down on a whiteboard for parents to view through the session.

Review the Practice Plans (10% of Session)

With the exception of the first group session, each group session should begin with a group review of each parent's Practice Plan. This is done to support the parents' between-session practice. It also allows the parents to share successes and challenges with each other and helps you determine what additional supports individual parents may need in using the technique.

Use a whiteboard to create three columns labeled "What Went Well?", "What Was Hard?", and "Possible Solutions." Make sure that all parents can see the whiteboard. Go around the room and have each parent briefly describe her written Practice Plan from the last session and how it worked at home, including what went well and what was challenging. As each parent reports, briefly write down the information on the whiteboard in the appropriate columns. Help the parents identify commonalities across their experiences.

After each parent has reported, identify one or more common challenges that the parents experienced. Ask questions and give suggestions to help them problem-solve potential solutions as a group. Write the best potential solutions in the "Possible Solutions" column, next to the specific challenges in the "What Was Hard?" column. Common challenges and possible solutions relevant for each session are described in the Troubleshooting Tips table(s) at the end of each Part III unit.

You should encourage parents to give suggestions to each other during the practice review. However, make sure that the suggestions stay positive, remain on topic, and are consistent with best practices. If a parent becomes overly negative, moves off topic, or makes repeated suggestions that are inconsistent with proper implementation of the intervention or best practices, add more structure to the discussion. For example, you might mention that although there have been a number of good suggestions, only you will make suggestions for the rest of this session because of time limitations.

If a parent did not practice, work with her to identify any concrete barriers, such as lack of time or other family care responsibilities, and problem-solve solutions during practice planning at the end of the group session or during the following coaching session.

Introduce the New Techniques (70% of Session)

The next step is to introduce the new techniques. As noted above, this is done through a combination of lecture, video examples, and group discussion. When presenting the information, make sure to speak loudly and slowly. You should also visually check with the audience to ensure that each parent is following along, and encourage shyer members to participate. Parents may be uncomfortable speaking in the group and may take a little while to respond to your questions, especially in the beginning. Therefore, after you present a question, allow adequate time for parents to respond.

Use the PowerPoint slides to guide your discussion of the rationale and key elements of the techniques, while providing descriptive examples based on the participating families' and your own experience. The sessions in Part III contain sample scripts that you can use to present information, if needed.

Show video examples of the techniques during the relevant points in the presentation. Be sure to prescreen the video clips to determine the most appropriate clips, based on the skills of the children in the group. For example, if the group is composed exclusively of parents of infants and toddlers, you may choose to show only clips of younger or preverbal children.

Before showing each clip, ask the parents to watch for how the parent in the clip uses the techniques and how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking questions. Begin with open-ended questions, such as "What did you notice during that interaction?" If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions, such as "How did the parent adjust her communication?" or "How did the child respond when his mother exaggerated her gestures?" A guide to the key elements for each of the video clips is included in the Part III group session text.

If parents are having difficulty noticing key elements, replay the video clip, while describing what is happening and/or pausing during relevant points in the clip. This can help parents better identify the techniques and the child's response.

Have the parents respond to the Think About It! questions during the relevant points of the presentation to help them apply the material to their children and facilitate discussion. Give parents a minute or two to think about each question. Depending on the size of the group, the parents' comfort level, and the available time, have them discuss their responses as a full group or in pairs, using a format called *pair and share*. Pair and share is a strategy that works well for larger groups and for parents who are less comfortable speaking in a group setting. Ask parents to get together in pairs and discuss their responses (pair). If there is time, have some or all of the pairs then share their responses with the group (share). As they discuss, ask questions and give suggestions to help the parents think through how the technique would work best for their children.

Take brief question breaks to encourage parents to ask for clarification on points that puzzle or confuse them. When a parent asks a question, repeat it to make sure all parents have heard and understood it. If a question is slightly off topic, try to relate it to the current material. If the question is substantially off topic, offer to discuss the issue with the parent during the break or after the session.

Halfway through the presentation, take a short break to allow parents to absorb the information, meet other parents, and ask longer questions. Each group session description in Part III suggests a stopping point for the break; however, you may find it better to break at a different point in the presentation.

Plan for Practice and Coaching (15% of Session)

The last step in each group session involves helping the parents plan to practice the techniques at home and prepare for their individual coaching sessions. When practice planning is completed in a group, it allows parents to learn from and support each other. If you are running short on time, you may need to cut down the group discussion. However, at a minimum, the parents should complete the goal, routine, and sequence graph on the Practice Plan for that session before they leave.

Have the parents develop a plan for when and how they will practice between sessions. Give the parents several minutes to write down the following items on the Practice Plan (1) one or two goals they would like to target; and (2) a play activity and a daily routine in which to practice.

Ask each parent also to write down a positive example of how she will use the technique(s) during a selected routine, using the sequence graphic. This example will include (1) the technique(s) the parent will use; (2) the child response she will look for; and (3) how she will respond to the child.

It may be challenging for the parents to complete the sequence graphic on their own. Thus you may want to ask one of the parents to complete the sequence graphic with you in front of the group as an example. Ask the parent what technique she will use. Then ask her what response she will be looking for from her child. Next, ask the parent how she will respond this behavior. Write down the parent's responses as you go on the whiteboard.

After the parents have decided how and when they will practice, help them problem-solve potential challenges that might arise while they are practicing during the week. Give parents a minute to two to think about what might be hard and write it down on the Practice Plan. Depending on the remaining time, you can have them discuss possible solutions, either in the pair-and-share format or as a full group. Ask questions and make comments to help them problem-solve. Common challenges and potential solutions are discussed in the session guidelines for the group format (Part III) and can be written in the "Planning" section of the Practice Plan.

Finally, assign reflection and reading. Ask the parents to write down how practice went between sessions in the "Reflection" section of the Practice Plan. Remind them that they will review how practice went at the beginning of the next coaching session and problem-solve any challenges that came up. Be sure to keep a copy of the plan to review the following session. Remind the parents to read the relevant sections of the parent manual that you have covered in the session.

Monitor Fidelity

Complete the Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7) after each group session to monitor your use of the group procedures. This process helps ensure that you implement the group sessions with fidelity.

CHAPTER 4

Project ImPACT Intake

Before any family starts Project ImPACT, you should conduct an intake session to determine whether Project ImPACT is an appropriate treatment recommendation for the child and family, to develop shared expectations regarding treatment, and to problem-solve logistical barriers to participation. The intake process for the two coaching models, individual and group, is essentially the same. Differences are noted below.

Depending on your practice setting, the intake session may be conducted as part of ongoing services, via an initial in-person meeting, or via a phone conversation. You may also choose to discuss the information at the end of an assessment, if you feel that the child and family would benefit from this program. The child does not need to be present for this interaction.

The length of the intake session and the material you cover will depend on whether the parent is a new or existing client; on the parent's level of familiarity with and motivation for parent-mediated intervention; and on the degree to which there are significant barriers to parent participation. The key information can be exchanged in as little as 15 minutes, if necessary. Your decision about where to start will be based on the information you obtain on the child and the parent. The Intake Questionnaire (Form 2) provides information to guide the intake session. A partially filled-in version is shown in Figure I.4.1.

If you have limited information on the family, you will likely need to begin by identifying the child's and family's needs, to determine whether the program is a good fit. You may also need to schedule an initial evaluation, if reports are not available. If you are already familiar with the family, you can likely begin by developing shared expectations for the program. If the parent has expressed a strong interest in the program, you may be able to abbreviate developing shared expectations for the program and spend more time on the program's rationale, the roles of the parent and coach, and the program's format when you cover the *Overview of Project ImPACT* in the first session.

FORM 2

Intake Questionnaire

Child: Sam **Parent:** Molly **Date:** 8/1/2017

- What are you hoping to gain from services? What are your main goals for your child?
I would like to be able to have a conversation with Sam. I would also like him to be able to play with his younger brother.
- Has your child had an evaluation? If yes, did your child receive a diagnosis?
Yes – Speech evaluation at age 2 revealed delayed speech. Autism diagnosis at 2½ years from pediatrician.
- Does your child currently have any of the following challenges?

<input type="checkbox"/> Prefers to play alone <input type="checkbox"/> Repeats back what you say, or says the same thing over and over <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Difficulty making eye contact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Difficulty understanding what you say or following directions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Difficulty sharing or taking turns with you <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty imitating what you do or say	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Slow to learn gestures, words, or combine words into sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Limited interest in toys or other play materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Difficulty communicating for a variety of purposes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plays in unusual ways or in the same way over and over
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- How does your child communicate with you?
He uses words and phrases to communicate with me. He primarily talks to me and does not talk as much with his brother.

FIGURE I.4.1. A completed example of part of the Intake Questionnaire (Form 2) for Case Study 2 (Sam and Molly).

Project ImPACT Intake Session



Session Goals

- Determine whether the family is appropriate for the program.
- Develop shared expectations of the program.
- Problem-solve barriers to participation.
- Prepare for treatment.



Session Agenda

- Identify family needs.
- Develop shared expectations of the program.
- Problem-solve barriers to participation.
- Prepare for treatment.



Materials

- Previous evaluations, if available
- Intake Questionnaire (Form 2)
- Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3)
- Parent manual

Identify Family Needs

Let the parent know that you are going to ask her some questions to help understand whether Project ImPACT is likely to be a good fit for her family's needs. Use the Intake Questionnaire (Form 2) to guide your discussion. Ask follow-up questions as needed. Record the answers so that you can refer back to them as needed.

Determine Whether the Child Is Appropriate for the Program

Ask the parent Questions 1–4 on the Intake Questionnaire, and review the results of any previous evaluations, to determine whether the child's skills are appropriate for this program and whether the program can address the parent's goals. Project ImPACT is appropriate for children with challenges in the areas of social engagement, communication, imitation, and/or play who are in the early stages of language development. Additional information about children for whom this program is most appropriate can be found in Part I, Chapter 2.

If the child has well-developed expressive and receptive language (i.e., is conversational), it may be appropriate to consult with a speech pathologist about implementing the program. If the child's skills are not appropriate and/or the parent's goals cannot be addressed with Project ImPACT, make the necessary referrals.

Determine Other Significant Intervention Needs

Ask the parent Question 5 on the Intake Questionnaire to determine whether there are any behavioral concerns that should be addressed prior to or in conjunction with the program. If the child exhibits any aggressive behaviors that cause injury to self or others, or if the child has significant behavior challenges that interfere with completing important daily activities such as eating, dressing, bathing, or leaving the house, determine whether you can address the behaviors with the optional **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior** unit (Unit 8) or whether the family should be referred to a behavioral specialist.

Develop Shared Expectations of the Program

Developing shared expectations about the goals and requirements of the program sets the foundation for building a strong collaborative partnership with the parent from the beginning.

Understand the Parent's Expectations for Therapy

Ask Questions 6–8 on the Intake Questionnaire to understand the parent's past experience with intervention and current expectations about her role in the child's therapy. This understanding will help you tailor your description of the program, address any misperceptions about treatment, and provide additional information that can increase the parent's buy-



Do not make assumptions about any parent's motivation or ability to participate. Have an open dialogue about treatment options, and let the parent decide if she wants to participate in Project ImPACT.

in. If the parent indicates that someone other than herself spends the most time with the child, help her determine whether this other caregiver should participate in the program.

Explain the Rationale for Project ImPACT

Explain that the parents can help the child improve his social communication skills and decrease his challenging behavior by using the strategies in this program throughout their everyday activities. This gives the child many more hours of learning and practice, and because skills are taught at home during natural interactions and daily routines, this helps the child use skills in new situations and over time. Learning these strategies gives the parents more confidence in their ability to help their child, and leads to less parenting stress and more positive interactions with the child.

If a parent is hesitant about the use of parent-mediated intervention as opposed to direct intervention, you may wish to emphasize some of the following points as you explain the rationale for Project ImPACT: This is not a “parenting” program and does not assume that the parents are causing their child’s social communication challenges. Parents can learn and use strategies as well as professionals can. Parents are present in the child’s day for many more hours than professionals. Additional research on the benefits of parent-mediated intervention is detailed in Part I, Chapter 1.

Refer parents who would like to read more about the research behind this program to the “Further Reading” list at the end of the parent manual.

Discuss the Parent and Coach Roles

Let the parent know that her role will be to learn and use the intervention strategies during her daily routines and interactions with her child in the home and community. Your role as the coach will be to collaborate with the parent in developing goals, and to help the parent learn to use the intervention strategies with her child to help her child reach those goals.

The strategies taught in this program build upon each other; therefore, it is essential that the same parent be present for all sessions. Other family members can attend sessions with the primary parent as their schedules permit. However, attendance without the primary parent is not recommended, because other family members will not have learned previously taught techniques.

Explain the Format of the Program

Provide the parent with a brief overview of the format and structure of sessions. Again, emphasize that the goal of the program is to teach the parent intervention strategies she can use to improve her child’s social communication skills, and that your role is to provide the parent with the necessary support to learn the strategies.

FOR THE INDIVIDUAL COACHING MODEL

The individual coaching model is designed to be conducted twice a week for 12 weeks (24 sessions), but may be adapted to once a week (12 sessions) if necessary. The parent and child must be present for each session. Indicate the number and length of sessions you are recommending.

Explain that you will introduce at least one intervention technique each session through

written information, a brief description of the technique, demonstration of the technique with the child, and parental practice of the technique while you provide feedback. At the end of each session, you will help the parent develop a Practice Plan to carry out between sessions.

Let the parent know that you will work as a team to determine the pace of the sessions, and encourage her to communicate with you if she feels you are moving too fast or too slowly.

FOR THE GROUP COACHING MODEL

The group coaching model is designed to be conducted in six 2-hour group sessions and six 1-hour coaching sessions, which alternate over the course of about 12 weeks. Only the parent is present during the group sessions. The parent and child must be present for each coaching session.

Explain that you introduce one or more sets of intervention techniques in each group session through a combination of lecture, videos, and group discussion. In the coaching sessions that follow, you will demonstrate how to use the techniques with the child, and the parent will have the opportunity to practice the techniques with the child while you provide feedback. At the end of each session, you will help the parent develop a Practice Plan to carry out between sessions.

Determine the Parent's Interest in Enrollment

Ask the parent if she is interested in participating in Project ImPACT. Provide an opportunity for the parent to ask questions about the parent and coach roles and/or the format or structure of the program, and to voice any concerns. If the parent is not interested, discuss alternative services or provide an appropriate referral.

Problem-Solve Barriers to Participation

Ask Questions 9–10 on the Intake Questionnaire to determine whether there are issues that may make it hard for the parent to participate. Identify specific supports that may assist the parent and allow her to participate, such as translated materials, a translator, child care for siblings, or other scheduling and transportation needs. See Part I, Chapter 2 for a discussion of supports that can be used to help vulnerable families participate in the program.

Prepare for the Program

Schedule the First Session

Be sure to discuss any logistical issues related to enrollment, scheduling sessions, and/or payment.

Arrange for the Parent to Receive the Parent Manual

Provide the parents with information on how to obtain the parent manual. If your organization provides copies of the parent manual, give the parent a copy before she attends the first session. If the parent is expected to purchase the parent manual, provide information on how to order the book directly through The Guilford Press website (www.guilford.com).

Assign the Getting Started Questionnaire and Reading

Give, mail, or email the parent the Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3 and Figure I.4.2), and ask the parents either to send the completed form to you before the first session or to bring it to the first session. The purposes of this form are (1) to obtain information about the parent's goals for her child and for herself; and (2) to find out about other services the child may be receiving. This knowledge will help you explain the program in language familiar to the parent during the first or second session. Ask the parent to read the *Overview of Project ImPACT* section in Chapter 1 of the parent manual prior to the first session, if possible.

FORM 3 **Getting Started Questionnaire**

Child: Brianna **Parent:** Elena **Date:** 4/2/2017

Please complete and return this form prior to your first intervention session.

1. Who does your child spend time with during the week?
She spends 25-30 hours a week at an ABA clinic, with a team of 5 therapists. The other time is spent with me (her mom), dad, and grandpa.
2. Does your child have siblings? If yes, please list them and give their ages.
Robbie – age 6
3. Please describe your main goals for your child.
I want Brianna to talk
4. Please describe goals you have for yourself.
I want to be able to play with her. Other therapists have told me I need to wait until she is able to play for longer but I want to learn what to do to be able to engage and play with her.
5. Please list some activities your child enjoys.
Brianna loves all physical play: running, jumping, swinging, climbing, being tickled. She loves animals, balls, and bubbles. She loves to play with her marble run. She also of course loves the ipad. She also loves the water.

FIGURE I.4.2. A completed example of part of the Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3) for Case Study 1 (Brianna and Elena).

PART II

Individual Parent Coaching Model Guidelines

Part II of this manual provides a step-by-step guide to conducting an individual parent coaching program. This model is most appropriate for practitioners working with families on a one-to-one basis in a home or clinic setting. It is designed to be used in combination with the Project ImPACT parent manual, which describes each technique.

Read Part I of the present volume (An Introduction to Project ImPACT) before implementing Project ImPACT. Part I provides information on ways to engage and empower parents, collaborative goal setting, effective coaching strategies, and the steps to follow in conducting coaching sessions. These are critical components that must be followed to implement Project ImPACT as it was designed. Make sure to complete an intake prior to the first session (see Part I, Chapter 4), using the Intake Questionnaire (Form 2).

Program and Session Length

The individual model is designed to be implemented in 24 60- or 90-minute sessions, ideally held twice a week over a 12-week period. We strongly recommend 24 sessions to optimize parent and child learning; however, the program can be adapted to fit fewer sessions if needed (see Part I, Chapter 2).

Follow-up sessions should be scheduled with each family once a month after the completion of the program for up to 6 months, to help the parent maintain her use of the intervention strategies, address any new concerns, and show the parent how to use the techniques to address new goals.

Parent Participation Requirements

The strategies taught in this program build upon each other; therefore, it is essential that the same (primary) parent be present for all sessions. Other family members can attend sessions with the primary parent as their schedules permit. However, attendance without the primary parent is not recommended, because the other family members will not have learned previously taught techniques.

Sequence of Units

There are seven units in the individual model that build on each other, and thus should be introduced in the following order.

1. **Getting Started**
2. **Focus on Your Child**
3. **Adjust Your Communication**
4. **Create Opportunities**
5. **Teach New Skills**
6. **Shape the Interaction**
7. **Moving Forward**

Each unit contains several sessions on one or more techniques. The order of the individual techniques contained within each unit may be adjusted, depending on the needs of the family, without compromising the integrity of the program. Table II.I.1 lists the units, their techniques, and the recommended sequence for the 24-session program. If you are conducting the program in a clinic setting, we suggest that you teach Session 3, *Set Up Your Home for Success*, and the review sessions in the family's home. We further suggest that you teach Session 22, *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*, in a community setting to help with generalization.

Table II.I.2 lists the techniques and the recommended sequence for the 12-session program. Conducting the program in fewer sessions requires simplification and/or reduction of the techniques taught. The time spent on each strategy should be adapted to meet the needs of the family and the child. The introduction to each unit and the rationale under each technique provide information on what to consider when the 12-session format is used.

The pacing of the sessions can be tailored to each family. You can vary the amount of time spent on each strategy and technique, depending on the parent's style, previous training, and educational background.

Session Format

Each session begins with a session outline, which covers the goals of the session, materials needed, session agenda, and key elements of the technique. This is followed by discussion of how to teach the technique, examples of language to use with parents, and questions to facilitate discussion. Sessions end with troubleshooting tips.

Except for intake and Session 1 (and Session 2 in the 24-session program), the sessions follow a standard format, listed below with the approximate percentage of time to spend on each component:

1. Check in and set the agenda (5% of the session).
2. Review the Practice Plan (15% of the session).
3. Introduce the new technique(s) (15% of the session).
4. Demonstrate the technique(s) (10% of the session).
5. Have the parent practice, and give feedback (35% of the session).
6. Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice (20% of the session).

TABLE II.I.1. The 24-Session Individual Program, with a Follow-Up Session and Optional Unit

<u>Unit 1. Getting Started</u>	
Session 1	<i>Overview of Project ImPACT</i>
Session 2	<i>Develop Goals for Your Child and Prepare Yourself for Success</i>
Session 3	<i>Set Up Your Home for Success (Home)</i>
<u>Unit 2. Focus on Your Child</u>	
Session 4	<i>Follow Your Child's Lead</i>
Session 5	<i>Imitate Your Child</i>
<u>Unit 3. Adjust Your Communication</u>	
Session 6	<i>Use Animation</i>
Session 7	<i>Model and Expand Communication</i>
Session 8	Review of Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication (Home)
<u>Unit 4. Create Opportunities</u>	
Session 9	<i>Playful Obstruction</i>
Session 10	<i>Balanced Turns</i>
Session 11	<i>Communicative Temptations</i>
Session 12	Review of Create Opportunities (Home)
<u>Unit 5. Teach New Skills</u>	
Session 13	<i>Prompts and Rewards</i>
Session 14	<i>Prompts for Using Communication</i>
Session 15	<i>Prompts for Understanding Communication</i>
Session 16	Review of <i>Prompts for Communication</i> (Home)
Session 17	<i>Prompts for Imitation</i>
Session 18	<i>Prompts for Expanding Play</i>
Session 19	Review of <i>Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play</i> (Home)
<u>Unit 6. Shape the Interaction</u>	
Session 20	<i>Shape the Interaction</i>
Session 21	<i>Shape the Interaction</i> (Home)
Session 22	<i>Use Project ImPACT in the Community</i> (Community)
<u>Unit 7. Moving Forward</u>	
Session 23	<i>Update Your Child's Goals</i>
Session 24	<i>Plan for Continued Success</i> Follow-Up Sessions
<u>Unit 8 (Optional). Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior</u>	
Session 1	<i>Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior—Gather Information</i>
Session 2	<i>Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior—Identify Patterns</i>
Session 3	<i>Prevent the Challenging Behavior</i>
Session 4	<i>Change the Consequences</i>
Session 5	<i>Teach a Replacement Skill</i>

TABLE II.I.2. The 12-Session Individual Program

Unit 1. Getting Started	
Session 1	<i>Overview of Project ImPACT, Develop Goals for Your Child, and Prepare Yourself for Success</i>
Session 2	<i>Set Up Your Home for Success (Home)</i>
Unit 2. Focus on Your Child	
Session 3	<i>Follow Your Child's Lead and Imitate Your Child</i>
Unit 3. Adjust Your Communication	
Session 4	<i>Use Animation and Model and Expand Communication</i>
Unit 4. Create Opportunities	
Session 5	<i>Playful Obstruction and Balanced Turns</i>
Session 6	<i>Communicative Temptations</i>
Unit 5. Teach New Skills	
Session 7	<i>Prompts and Rewards</i>
Session 8	<i>Prompts for Using Communication</i>
Session 9	<i>Prompts for Understanding Communication</i>
Session 10	<i>Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play</i>
Unit 6. Shape the Interaction	
Session 11	<i>Shape the Interaction</i>
Unit 7. Moving Forward	
Session 12	<i>Update Your Child's Goals and Plan for Continued Success</i>

More details on each of these components can be found in Part I, Chapter 3. Each strategy set in the parent manual has its own Practice Plan, as do some individual techniques. Use the Practice Plan that corresponds to the strategy set or technique(s) you introduce in each session. The Practice Plans are available as forms on the Project ImPACT companion website (see the box at the end of the table of contents).

Use the *Intervention Fidelity Checklist* (Form 4) to monitor the parent's strategy use and to determine whether she is ready for you to introduce the next unit. If the parent receives less than a 3 on a strategy, you may need to spend more time having her practice with feedback prior to introducing the next unit.

You can use the Session Data Sheet (Form 12) to collect information on child progress. The Session Data Sheet is also a great place to take notes on information you should convey to the parent before you and she move to the next lesson. Use the Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6) to make sure you are implementing the Project ImPACT coaching procedures as designed.

UNIT 1

Getting Started

The purposes of Unit 1 are to provide an overview of Project ImPACT; to help the parent set individualized goals for her child and prepare herself for the program; and to help the parent set up the home for success. Parents are more likely to implement an intervention at home if they understand the program’s rationale, participate in goal development, and understand the steps used to address the goals. This is particularly important, as the strategies in Project ImPACT are taught one at a time to help a parent learn effectively. The parent will also be more successful if she is able to create an environment in the home that will help her child engage with her and is conducive to learning.

Four topics are discussed in this unit: *Overview of Project ImPACT*, *Develop Goals for Your Child*, *Prepare Yourself for Success*, and *Set Up Your Home for Success*. You will begin with providing an overview of the program and helping the parent set goals for her child and get ready for the program. Use the Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5) to monitor your implementation of the key steps in this process. Once you and the parent set goals, you will teach the parent to *Set Up the Home for Success*—to create a home environment that makes it easier to interact with and teach her child and to help her identify good daily activities and routines for using Project ImPACT.

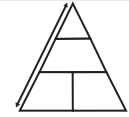
- If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, you will have 3 sessions to complete this unit. We recommend spending Sessions 1 and 2 on *Overview of Project ImPACT*, *Develop Goals for Your Child*, and *Prepare Yourself for Success*, and Session 3 on *Set Up Your Home for Success*.
- If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will have 2 sessions to complete the information in this unit. You will need to simplify the explanations without deleting any core components. It is recommended that you spend the first session on the first three topics, and the following session on *Set Up Your Home for Success*.

You are ready to introduce **Focus on Your Child** once you have developed social communication goals and the parent has learned how to set up the home for successful interactions.



SESSION 1

Overview of Project ImPACT



Session Goals

- Help the parent understand the benefits of Project ImPACT.
- Provide the parent with an overview of Project ImPACT.
- Gather information on the child's skills in each of the four core areas.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3), in case the parent does not return it
- Favorite toys
- Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8)
- Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) (Form 9)
- Parent consent forms for video recording
- Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Getting Started Questionnaire.
- Introduce *Overview of Project ImPACT*.
 - Set expectations for reading and between session practice
 - Describe how the program benefits the family
 - Discuss the parent's and coach's roles
 - Explain the format of coaching sessions
 - Introduce the skills the child will learn: Social engagement, communication, imitation, and play
- Gather information on the child's skills.
 - Have the parent complete the Social Communication Checklist
 - Interact with the child and complete the Social Communication Checklist
 - Observe and record a 10-minute parent-child interaction
- Help the parent reflect, and assign reading.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Greet the Family

Introduce yourself to the parent and child if this is your first time working with them. It is often helpful to start by spending a few minutes engaging the child in play, to establish rapport. Tell the parent that you would like to begin with a brief interaction with the child, and then you will explain the session goals and agenda. If you are in a clinic setting, have appropriate toys available to entice the child into an interaction.

If the parent begins with a concern, take time to listen and address the concern. If the concern is outside your area of expertise, provide an appropriate referral and try to get back on track to complete the session agenda.



Invite comments and questions to establish rapport.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

This session will be spent in providing an overview of Project ImPACT and gathering information on the child's skills. Make sure the parent has a copy of the parent manual.

Let the parent know that you will be using a parent-completed skill checklist, your interaction with the child, and an observation of a parent–child interaction to gather information.

Video recordings are used during several points in the program, beginning with recording the parent–child interaction in the first session. Be sure to obtain the parent’s written consent before recording the parent and child, in accordance with your own or your clinic’s confidentiality policies. If the parent is hesitant, suggest that she keep the video or that it be destroyed as soon as it is reviewed.

Let the parent know that the first few sessions will include more discussion than subsequent sessions will, because you will be setting goals together and preparing for successful implementation of the program.

Review the Getting Started Questionnaire

The parent should have completed the Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3) prior to the first session. The Getting Started Questionnaire is used to establish rapport, to understand the parent’s goals for the child and herself, and to find out about other services the child may be receiving. Review the form with the parent, to let her know that the information she provided is valuable and will be used throughout the program. Take time to clarify any answers that are not specific or may be difficult to interpret.

If the parent did not complete the form, have her respond orally to the questions while you take notes. Use this information as you discuss the elements of the program below.

Introduce *Overview of Project ImPACT*

Set Expectations for Between-Session Reading and Practice

Ask whether the parent has read the *Overview of Project ImPACT* section in Chapter 1 of the parent manual. If she has, reward her with a positive comment, like “Wonderful!” or “You’re off to a great start.” Let her know that you will discuss the information together in the session.

If the parent hasn’t done the reading, determine whether reading may be a concern. You might say something like this: “I’m going to ask you to read about the information we are going to discuss in the parent manual before each session. Do you think this would work for you?” If the parent expresses concern about being able to do this regularly, or you have questions about the parent’s literacy skills, make a note of this and be sure to add a little longer description of the technique being covered at each subsequent session.

Describe How This Program Benefits the Family

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty engaging and initiating social interactions with others, learning to communicate and use language in a meaningful way, imitating others, and playing with toys creatively. They also may repeat sounds, words, and actions repetitively and engage in challenging behaviors. Parents can help their children improve their social communication skills and decrease challenging behaviors by using the strategies and techniques in this program throughout their everyday activities. This gives the children many more

hours of learning and practice. Teaching skills during natural interactions and daily routines also helps a child use skills in new situations over time. Learning these strategies gives parents more confidence in their ability to help the child and leads to less parenting stress and more positive parent–child interactions. Parents are present in a child’s day for many more hours than professionals are; accordingly, child generalization and maintenance of skills are better for parent-mediated than for direct intervention. Parents can also teach these techniques to other family members, such as grandparents and siblings, so they can support the parents and child.

Refer parents who would like to read more about the research behind this program to the “Further Reading” list at the end of the parent manual.

Discuss the Parent’s and Coach’s Roles

The parent’s role will be to learn and use the intervention strategies during her daily routines and interactions with her child in the home and community. Your role, as the coach, will be first to collaborate with the parent to develop goals, and then to help the parent learn to use the intervention strategies with her child to help her child reach those goals. The parent should be aware of the roles from the intake session. Remind the parent that the same person should be present for all sessions, because the techniques build on each other.

If the parent anticipates barriers to being able to engage in parent-mediated intervention, it may be helpful to begin discussing some of the information in *Prepare Yourself for Success* (see Session 2).

Explain the Format of Coaching Sessions

Techniques will be introduced to the parent one at a time. The amount of time spent on each strategy or technique will vary, depending on the child’s goals and ability, the parent’s learning and confidence, and the overall number of sessions (12 or 24 or more). You and the parent will work as a team to determine the pace of each session. Each session will follow the same general structure:

1. *Review the Practice Plan.* You and the parent will begin every session by reviewing how practice went at home between sessions, including what went well and any challenges the parent experienced. You will then help the parent problem-solve solutions to the challenges.

2. *Introduce the new technique.* The parent will usually learn one or more new techniques each session. The parent will read about each new technique prior to the session in which you present it. During the session, you will discuss the technique in more detail, answer questions, and help the parent decide how and when she can use it with her child.

3. *Demonstrate the new technique.* You will then demonstrate the technique with the child for a few minutes, so that the parent can see the technique in action with her child.

4. *Have the parent practice, and provide feedback.* The parent will then practice the technique with her child while you provide her with feedback.

5. *Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.* At the end of the session, you will help the parent reflect on the in-session practice, and help her select goals and activities in which the parent can practice the technique at home with the child between sessions.

Provide an opportunity for the parent to ask questions about the parent and coach roles and/or the format or structure of the program.

Introduce the Skills the Child Will Learn

Use the parent manual to describe the skills the child will learn.



Let the parent know that it is important to inform you if something is not working at home.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Social engagement is the foundation for the development of social communication skills. It involves sharing interests and attention with others using eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and words. Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty with social engagement, which impedes their ability to learn from others. The starting point of this program is to improve the child's ability to engage with others. You will help the parent develop social engagement goals for her child, based on his current development level.

Briefly review the main stages of social engagement development, using the developmental chart in the parent manual (Table 1.1 there).

COMMUNICATION

Communication involves understanding (receptive language) and using (expressive language) nonverbal and verbal language for a variety of reasons or functions. Children begin to communicate nonverbally, using eye contact, sounds, and eventually gestures, before they begin using verbal language. Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty using both verbal and nonverbal language to express their needs, which can lead them to use problem behaviors to get their needs met. You will help the parent develop goals to increase the complexity of her child's communication and to expand the reasons why the child communicates, based on his current communication skills. This program focuses on helping the child use language spontaneously.

Briefly review the main stages of communication development, using the developmental chart in the parent manual (Table 1.2 there).

IMITATION

Imitation is important for development because children use it to learn new information (observational learning) and to communicate interest in others (social imitation). Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty imitating others, which can lead to less learning through observation and social interaction. You will help the parent develop goals to improve imitation in the natural environment for the purposes of learning and engaging.

Briefly review the main stages of imitation development, using Table 1.3 in the parent manual.

PLAY

Play involves engaging with objects and activities for enjoyment. Play skills are important because children develop and practice new language and social skills through play. Play is also an excellent way to work on problem-solving skills, perspective taking, imagination, and fine and gross motor

skills. Language and pretend play both require symbolic thinking (i.e., understanding that one thing can represent another); thus teaching pretend play skills can help children develop more sophisticated language skills. You will help the parent develop goals to increase the variety and complexity of her child's play skills, based on his current level of play development.

Briefly review the main stages of play development, using Table 1.4 in the parent manual.

Gather Information on the Child's Skills

You will gather information on the child's skills by having the parent complete the parent version of the Social Communication Checklist or SCC (Form 8), your own interaction with the child, and an observation of a parent-child interaction. Gathering information in this way enables you to develop goals that take into account the parent's perception of her child's skills, her own goals for her child, and the individualized needs of the child and family.

Have the Parent Complete the Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version)

Ask the parent to complete the parent SCC (Form 8) to gather information on her perception of her child's social engagement, communication, imitation, and play skills at home. If the parent has low literacy or difficulty understanding the content, you can use the SCC to interview. Tell the parent that the skills are listed in the order they usually develop. However, it is common for children with social communication challenges to have some later-emerging skills but to be missing some earlier-emerging skills. The SCC covers a range of developmental levels, so some skills may not be expected for the child's age.

For each skill, have the parent indicate whether the child uses it "usually (at least 75% of the time)," "sometimes, but not consistently," or "rarely or not yet." For items 32–36, if the child uses the skills "usually" or "sometimes," please have the parent indicate the type of behavior the child uses to communicate. This could be preverbal (gestures) or verbal (words and sentences). If the child used to perform a behavior, but no longer does because he is now using a more complex skill, instruct the parent to check the box for "usually."

When two parents are present, ask them whether they want to complete the SCC together or independently. It is OK for parents to have different perceptions of the child's skills, as the child may in fact use different skills with each parent. Be available to respond to any questions that may arise, and to obtain clarification of any responses that may be vague or difficult to interpret.

Interact with the Child and Complete the Social Communication Checklist

While the parent completes the SCC, interact with the child to gain a brief understanding of the skills the child can use with and without support, as well as the techniques that are likely to be most effective with the child. Say something like this to the parent:

"While you fill out the SCC, I'm going to interact with Sam and get to know him a little better. I am also going to try out some of the strategies that I will teach you. This will help me see how he uses his skills with me on his own and with more support, and will give me an idea of which techniques he may respond to best."

Begin with techniques to build rapport before you begin assessing the child's skills. These would include techniques in **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. Use **Create Opportunities** strategies if the child is not responding or initiating with the **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** techniques. These techniques will show you what the child can do without prompts to increase the complexity of skills.

Once you have determined the child's spontaneous skills, use the prompts from **Teach New Skills** to see what the child can do with support. For example, if the child cannot respond to "what" questions, can he respond if you use a fill-in-the-blank sentence, or a choice? If he cannot engage in functional play with toys, can he do so when you give him a direction or model a new skill?

Use the coach version of the SCC (Form 9) to record information on the child's use of skills with you and with the parent. This checklist has an additional column for you to indicate if the skill was not observed. It also provides information on how to score the SCC to measure progress in social communication skills over the course of the program. At the end of the program, you will complete another SCC to compare scores.

Observe and Record a 10-Minute Parent–Child Interaction

Next, tell the parent that you would like to observe her playing with her child, so that you can obtain information on her child's social communication skills with her. She should play or interact with her child as she typically would at home. Note any Project ImPACT techniques the parent may already be using and the child's responses to these. This information will be useful when you are describing the strategies in subsequent sessions. The observation will provide you with information on the child's skills with the parent, as well as the parent's interaction style with the child. Say something like this to the parent:

"Now I'd like to watch you and Brianna play together for about 10 minutes or so. This will help me see what Brianna can do with you and what you are already doing to support her social communication. This way I can help you build on what you both are already doing. Play with her the way you usually would at home, while I take some notes."

If you are not in the family home, make sure that you ask the parent for input on the types of toys or materials the child plays with at home.

When two parents are present, allow each one to interact individually with the child for 5 minutes. Clearly announce transitions between each parent's interactions with the child. A clear transition statement sets the precedent for separating parents throughout the program, so that each parent has time to practice and receive feedback:

"Molly, you can play with Sam. Jim, you can come stand with me and observe the interaction. . . . Thank you, Molly. Jim, now it is your turn to play with Sam. Molly, come stand with me to watch them play."

Video-record the parent–child interaction if the parent has given you permission to do so. This allows you to go back and review to collect additional baseline data.

After the interaction, ask the parent whether the interaction was typical of play with the

child at home. If it was different, have her explain the differences. This information is important to obtain before you and the parent begin developing goals. Suggestions for addressing common difficulties that can arise during the parent–child interaction can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 2 (page 90).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Assign Reading

First, have the parent reflect on the information you have covered in this session. Answer any questions she has, or clarify any aspects of *Overview of Project ImPACT* that she may not fully understand.

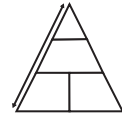
Next, explain that the next session will be spent on developing specific and measurable goals and identifying supports to make the program effective. Have the parent read Chapter 1 of the parent manual, which covers *Overview of Project ImPACT* and *Prepare Yourself for Success*.



If you finish gathering information and have extra time, you can continue with the information in Session 2.

SESSION 2

Develop Goals for Your Child and Prepare Yourself for Success



Session Goals

- Help the parent develop appropriate social communication goals for the child.
- Introduce the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.
- Help the parent identify needed supports to make the program successful.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Favorite toys
- Goal Development Form (Form 10)
- Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5)
- Completed Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8)
- Completed Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) (Form 9)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Help the parent develop goals for the child.
 - Identify long-term goals
 - Understand the child's current skills
 - Identify short-term goals
- Introduce the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.
- Introduce *Prepare Yourself for Success*.
- Help the parent reflect, and assign reading.



Key Elements:

Prepare Yourself for Success

- Make time to practice.
- Talk to your coach about your needs.
- Gather support from your team.
- Plan ahead for what will be hard.
- Recognize your family's accomplishments.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Greet the Family

Check in with the family by asking an open-ended question about how things have gone since the last session. Take a moment as well to engage the child in an activity to build rapport.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

This session will be spent in setting specific and measurable goals, providing an overview of the Project ImPACT intervention strategies, and discussing any supports that may need to be put in place to help the parent complete the program.

Let the parent know that there will be more time spent talking today, as you review the information gathered on the child's skills from last session and set goals. It is important to have specific, measurable, and accurate goals before beginning the intervention, so that you can track progress.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Help the Parent Develop Goals for the Child

You will use a collaborative approach to develop goals. Goals should (1) fit within the parent's goals for her child, (2) follow developmentally from the child's current skill level, (3) be specific and measurable, and (4) be met within the duration of the program.

Tell the parent that you will develop goals together, as she knows her child best and knows which goals will have the greatest positive impact for on family. Your role as the coach is to provide feedback on the skills necessary to achieve the broader parent goals.

You will develop social communication goals by identifying the parent's goals, identifying long-term goals, determining the child's current skills, and writing specific short-term goals that can be measured. Complete the entire process for one skill area before moving to the next.

Use the Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5) to ensure that you develop collaborative goals that are consistent with the Project ImPACT goal criteria outlined in Part I, Chapter 3.

Identify the Parent's Goals

Begin by restating the parent's goals from the Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3) or your prior discussions and asking follow-up questions as needed. This step ensures that the specific and measurable goals *fit with the parent's goals for the child*. The more motivated the parent is to accomplish the goal, the more likely she will be to use the strategies at home. You will use these goals as a starting point and then identify specific skills that are necessary to reach the parent's goals.

You might start by asking the parent a question like this: "I noticed on your Getting Started Questionnaire that you would like Brianna to be able to talk. Are there other goals you would like to work on with Brianna?"

The parent's goals may be broad, such as "I want my child to talk," rather than specific and measurable. A parent may also have unrealistic expectations for her child, such as wanting a non-verbal child to have a conversation. That is OK; your role as a coach is to help the parent learn the skills the child needs in order to achieve this long-term goal. Discussion of the typical developmental sequence of skills can help the parent see the building blocks of skills required.

After you review the child's current skills, you will help the parent make the goals specific, measurable, and developmentally appropriate.

Write the parent's goals next to "Parent Goals" on the Goal Development Form (Form 10).

Identify Long-Term Goals

Use the parent's goals and the parent's completed SCC to help the parent identify long-term goals in each of the four core areas. You might say something like this:

"Talking, playing together, and saying hello and goodbye when people come over are great goals for Brianna. We want to make sure that Brianna can meet her goals over the 3 months of the program. Let's look at the SCC to think about skills that might help her achieve these goals."

Solicit input from the parent on the goals she has for her child in each skill area. For example, if you are beginning with social engagement, ask the parent: “Are there any social engagement goals that you would like to work on with Brianna?” If the parent has difficulty identifying goals, you can make suggestions. Be sure to check with the parent to confirm that she is in agreement with the goals you suggest:

“I notice that Brianna often leaves the interaction when you join in her play. Is this something you would like to address? . . . For social engagement, what would you think of a goal to increase the length of the interaction?”

Once you and the parent agree on these goals, write them under “Long-Term Goals” on the Goal Development Form (Form 10).

Understand the Child’s Current Skills

The next step is to help the parent understand her child’s current level of functioning in each area. This step will help you both develop short-term goals that *follow developmentally from the child’s current skill level*. Use your own and the parent’s completed versions of the SCC (covering the parent’s report, your interaction with the child, and your observation of the parent–child interaction) to gain a better understanding of the child’s current skills in the areas in which you are setting goals. You might begin in this way:

“Let’s look at your SCC and see how long Brianna currently plays with you. You noted on the SCC that she usually stays actively engaged with you during toy play for at least 2 minutes. . . . Is this pretty typical of how she plays with you at home? (*Parent nods.*) Under ‘Current Skills,’ I will write that she currently plays for 1–2 minutes and then leaves the interaction.”

If you and the parent agree on the child’s current skills, write this on the Goal Development Form under “Current Skills.” If there are differences, these need to be reconciled before goals can be developed.

Explore any differences between the parent’s and your own SCC by asking open-ended and probing questions. Such questions can help clarify the parent’s responses and inform you whether the observation is typical of the child’s performance. Here are some examples:

“Did this seem to be typical of play at home with your child? If not, how was it different?”

“I noticed you reported that your child uses two to three words to communicate at home. He seemed to be fairly quiet today. Can you give me some examples of his language at home?”

“Today your child appeared to repeat language he heard. I did not hear him say anything without your saying it first. Do you see this at home?”

“Your child seems to ask questions even when he knows the answers. Do you see this at home?”

Once you agree on the child’s current skills, write them under “Current Skills” on the Goal Development Form and relate them to the parent’s goals.

Identify Short-Term Goals

Use the information you have gathered to help the parent break down her long-term goals into short-term goals that can be measured. This step will ensure that the goals *follow developmentally from the child's current skill level*, and that they *can be met within the duration of this program*. Use the parent's goals as a starting point, and restate each of them as a specific goal that can be measured:

“The next step is to write a goal so we can measure progress. You said you would like Brianna to talk. Under ‘Current Skills’ here, and on the SCC, we noted that she sometimes uses gestures and vocalizations to request. What would you think about the following goal?: ‘Brianna will use a point, vocalization, or single word to request at least three times during a motivating activity.’ This will help her communicate her needs and wants more easily, and move her toward her long-term goal of talking.”

Once you and the parent agree on the goals, write them under “Short-Term Goals” on the Goal Development Form (Form 10). The short term goals should be consistent with your current method of data collection so that you can document the child's progress.

Have the parent record her child's goals on the Child Goals form in Chapter 1 of the parent manual. Make a copy of the Child Goals form to bring with you to each session in the event the parent does not have her parent manual. You will refer to these goals when completing the practice plan. The goals should be written to meet the parent's individual learning style. Some parents may prefer specific and measurable goals as written in the example above, while other parents may prefer more general goals, such as “Brianna will request,” or “Brianna will point, make a sound, or use a word to request.” Seek input from the parent if you are unsure about her preference. Let the parent know that you will refer to these goals when you introduce each technique and when you plan for practice at the end of each section. Tables I.3.2 through I.3.5 in Part I, Chapter 3 provide examples of specific, measurable goals for each of the core areas.

Common challenges that come up while developing goals can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 90).

Introduce the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.

Project ImPACT is an evidence-based naturalistic developmental-behavioral intervention (NDBI). This means that it incorporates elements of both developmental interventions and applied behavior analysis (ABA), and that it shares many elements with other NDBI programs. If relevant, describe how Project ImPACT relates to other services the child has received.

Like other developmental programs, Project ImPACT teaches skills within a developmental framework, and focuses on increasing parent responsiveness and using child-directed activities to create learning opportunities.

Like other ABA programs, Project ImPACT uses prompting, shaping, and reinforcement to teach specific skills within child-directed activities.

Explain the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.

Use the illustration of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid in the parent manual (page 3 there) to explain the following.

The parent will learn to use five sets of strategies whose first letters form the acronym F.A.C.T.S.: **F**ocus on Your Child, **A**djust Your Communication, **C**reate Opportunities, **T**each New Skills, and **S**hape the Interaction. These build on each other to help her child achieve his goals. The F.A.C.T.S. pyramid is used throughout the program to help the parent remember how the strategies work together. The strategies are taught one at a time to ensure successful learning.

First, the parent will learn the strategies at the base of the pyramid: **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. These strategies are used to increase the child's engagement with the parent and the activity. They are the starting point for successful interactions. Next, the parent will learn the strategy set at the middle of the pyramid: **Create Opportunities**. This strategy set is used to help the child start interactions with the parent if he does not do so on his own, and to gain his attention before teaching a new skill. Then the parent will learn the strategy set at the top of the pyramid: **Teach New Skills**. This strategy set builds on the previous ones and uses prompts and rewards to teach specific language, imitation, and play skills. Last, the parent will learn to **Shape the Interaction** by moving up and down the pyramid according to how the child is responding. The goal is to keep the child optimally engaged in the interaction while also teaching him new skills.

Provide a Brief Demonstration of the F.A.C.T.S. Techniques

Help the parent see what she will be learning over the course of the program by briefly demonstrating the F.A.C.T.S. techniques. As you do, give a brief description of which strategies you are using and how they can address the child's goals. Let the parent know that by the end of the program, she will be able to use the strategies together to help her child achieve his goals.

“One of Brianna's goals is for her to engage with us for longer. Here, I'm using the strategies at the base of the pyramid to help Brianna engage with me during play. . . . She seems to be enjoying it, but she isn't really engaging with me, so I'm going to create an opportunity. . . . This helped her look at me. Now she is more actively engaged.”

Introduce *Prepare Yourself for Success*

Acknowledge the effort and time the parent is making to help her child. Help her brainstorm solutions to any barriers that may decrease the effectiveness of the program or make it challenging for her to complete.

Discuss the key elements of *Prepare Yourself for Success*, using the parent manual. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in Chapter 1 of the parent manual to help the parent apply the information.

Make Time to Practice

As the parent learns to use the strategies, they will become more natural and easy to use within daily activities. However, in the beginning, strategy use does take practice. In addition, practice allows the parent time to see what techniques are most effective and report challenges at home.

Emphasize that the parent should try to practice at least 15–20 minutes per day. If she reports that this will be difficult, talk about ways she might be able to gather support. Let her know that in the next session you will spend time looking at her daily activities, to try to find already existing ones in which to practice the techniques.

Talk to Your Coach about Your Needs

It is important to consider the parent's learning style and encourage the parent to bring up questions and concerns. Ask the parent: "How do you learn best?" If the parent is unsure, ask more specific questions, such as "Do you prefer to learn by reading, listening, or watching?"

If the parent seems hesitant to ask questions or raise concerns, remind her that she knows her child best. If something is not working, she should bring it up, as the difficulty is likely due to a poor explanation or a technique that needs to be adapted for the child.



Open communication is important for the success of the program. The parent should not feel "bad" about asking any question!

Gather Support from Your Team

Having a support system is important to allow the parent time to practice, and in some cases, to provide respite. It is also important for you, as the coach, to collaborate with other service providers so that everyone is on the same page. Ask the parent: "Who can you ask for support while completing this program?" Acknowledge that it can be difficult to ask others for support. Let the parent know that you can help her think about how best to talk to family members.

In addition, discuss the importance of collaboration with other service providers. If the parent is willing, ask her to complete any necessary consent and release forms so you can contact other providers. If the parent does not have a support system, try to determine additional services that may be able to help, such as respite care programs. It may also help to find a parent support group for the parent.

Plan Ahead for What Will Be Hard

Problem-solving potential challenges will make it easier to overcome them if they arise and can help build the parent's self-efficacy. Ask the parent: "What might make it hard to complete this program?" Help the parent brainstorm solutions for any concerns she raises. If concerns are outside your area of expertise, refer her to relevant supports. Let her know that she can bring up concerns at any point in the program.

Recognize Your Family's Accomplishments

Learning a new way to interact can be challenging. When a child has social communication difficulties, it can often be easier to notice what skills the child needs to learn than which skills the child has already learned. In order to increase the parent's motivation, it will be important to focus on the accomplishments. Encourage the parent to keep a log of successes and good things she notices about her child each day. Remind the parent to track the successes, not the failures!

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect on the Information

Answer any questions the parent has about goals, the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S., or ways to prepare for success.

Assign the Reading and the Daily Activity Schedule

Once you have finished setting social communication goals, ask the parent to read the *Set Up Your Home for Success* section in Chapter 1 of the parent manual. In addition, ask her to complete the Daily Activity Schedule, on page 21 of the parent manual (Form 11 online for coaches). Explain that the next session will be spent in setting up the home to create an optimal learning environment. If possible, try to have the next session in the home.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Develop Goals for Your Child*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Is hesitant to provide input on goals

- Be patient and avoid taking over the process. Some parents are used to deferring to expert opinion and need time to adjust.
- Emphasize the parent's expertise on the child and the family.
- Have the parent write down goals after the session in consultation with other family members.
- Have parent identify home routines that are challenging and suggest goals that can help.

Reports that the child has more or less developed skills than you observed

- Acknowledge that children use different skills in different situations.
- Provide additional description of social communication development.
- Ask the parent for concrete examples of the skills the child uses at home.
- Suggest that the parent bring in a video of the child using the skills at home.
- Ask the parent how much help she provides to get the child to use the skill.
- Suggest starting with an easier goal and setting a more challenging goal in a few weeks as the child becomes more comfortable in sessions.
- Point out skills the child used during the interaction with you or the parent.

Is not motivated for a goal you see as important

- Ask questions to understand the parent's perspective.
- Provide information on how the goal would help to address other goals the parent has for the child.
- Be willing to accept the parent's view. Remember, the parent is not likely to practice for a goal she does not see as important.
- Suggest adding the goal after a few weeks, once the parent is having some success.

Has goals that are not addressed in the program (e.g., toileting)

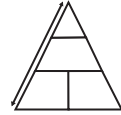
- Suggest how a social communication goal might help the child achieve other skills (e.g., the child needs to be able to initiate to use the toilet independently).
- Suggest working on other goals after the program is completed.
- Make referral for concurrent treatment.

Becomes discouraged during the parent-child interaction

- Point out positive behaviors you observed the parent using.
- Point out skills the child is using that the parent can build on.
- End the parent-child interaction early if the parent is struggling or the child is very upset.

SESSION 3

Set Up Your Home for Success



Session Goals

- Finalize the child's goals if needed.
- Teach the parent why it is important to structure the home environment and create predictable routines.
- Teach the parent how to arrange the home environment and identify activities in which to teach.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the social communication goals.
- Review the Daily Activity Schedule.
- Introduce *Set Up Your Home for Success*.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual
- Highly preferred toys to keep child occupied
- Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Practice Plan—*Set Up Your Home for Success* (Form 29)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Key Elements: *Set Up Your Home for Success*

- Make your routines predictable.
- Identify daily activities for practice.
- Make time for play.
- Set up a space to play.
- Limit distractions.
- Rotate toys and materials.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Check in with the family by asking an open-ended question about how things have gone since the last session. Take a moment as well to engage the child in an activity to build rapport.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn how to set up her home so that the child has more meaningful opportunities for learning and can more easily engage during play. You will also review the Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) and discuss which activities may work best for teaching. The format of this session differs from the standard format used in future sessions. Let the parent know that subsequent sessions will include less discussion and more interaction with the child.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Social Communication Goals

Review the goals that were developed during the previous session(s). Take time to clarify or adjust goals if needed.

Review the Daily Activity Schedule

Ask the parent if she has completed the Daily Activity Schedule (DAS). If she has, reward her with positive comments such as “You are off to a great start.” If not, fill out the DAS with the parent in the session. Explain that the completed schedule will give the parent a better understanding of the family’s daily routine and of how the child currently participates in it. You will use this information as you discuss how to make routines predictable and identify daily activities for practice. Make a copy of the completed DAS. You will use this when completing the practice plan after each session.

Ask questions to better understand how important activities are structured, how frequently they occur, and how the child engages in each routine. For example, if the parent indicates that the family sits down for dinner and that the child enjoys this activity, you might ask:

“Who sets the table for dinner? Do you serve the food before the plates are brought to the table? Who cleans the table once the meal is finished? Do you talk about particular topics during dinner, such as what everyone did that day? How does Sam usually participate?”

Introduce *Set Up Your Home for Success*

Set Expectations for Between-Session Reading and Practice

Ask whether the parent has read *Set Up Your Home for Success* in Chapter 1 of the parent manual. If she has, reward her with a positive comment, like “Wonderful!” or “You’re off to a great start.” If she hasn’t, have her read this chapter before you introduce the technique. Emphasize that reading about each technique prior to the session is important, because it decreases the amount of time required in session for the explanation.

Explain the Rationale

Today’s session teaches the parent how to set up the home environment so that the child will have more meaningful opportunities to learn and the child will be more likely to engage with the parent. Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty engaging with others for long periods of time. The timing of daily routines and the physical arrangement of the home will both have a positive impact on the child’s ability to engage with the parent and others.

Children learn best during meaningful, everyday activities, such as playtime, mealtime, bath-time, and dressing. By making small adjustments to daily routines and the home environment, the

parent can increase the number of meaningful learning opportunities the child has throughout the day, and can learn and use the Project ImPACT strategies more effectively.

Set Up Your Home for Success is particularly effective for children who are easily upset by changes in routine, who are distracted by auditory and visual stimuli, and who prefer to move rapidly from activity to activity or place to place.

Explain to the parent how this technique will address her child's individual goals. For example:

“Brianna has a goal of increasing the length of time she will interact with you during play. Making some small changes to when you sit down to play and how the play space is set up can help Brianna engage with you longer.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to explain the key elements of *Set Up Your Home for Success*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her situation and child.

MAKE YOUR ROUTINES PREDICTABLE

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty when things are unpredictable. By scheduling major household routines at about the same time each day, and conducting them the same way each time, the parent can help the child begin to anticipate what is coming next. This can lower the child's frustration level, which can improve his engagement with his parent.

Review the parent's DAS to determine how predictable the family's daily routines are. If the family does not have a consistent routine, help the parent decide how to make her child's day more consistent. This review should also provide you with more information about the child's skills in different environments.

If the child is having significant difficulty with an important daily routine, it may be beneficial to review the information in the chapter of the parent manual on the optional behavior management intervention (Chapter 8) with the parent.

IDENTIFY DAILY ACTIVITIES FOR PRACTICE

The best activities for using the Project ImPACT techniques are ones that are familiar, meaningful to the child, and manageable for the parent. By adding 5–10 minutes to existing activities to use the Project ImPACT strategies, the parent can create additional learning opportunities without having to significantly alter caregiving responsibilities.

Start by asking the parent: “What activities do you think will work best for teaching your child?” Review the DAS with the parent, and help her identify several daily activities that she does with her child in which she can practice using the intervention techniques. Activities that the parent has marked “[E]njoys” are good to begin with, since the child is already motivated by these activities.

MAKE TIME FOR PLAY

Many children with social communication challenges have a difficult time engaging and playing with others. Parents' busy schedules often make it difficult to fit play into their day. In order to have time to practice and use the strategies in this program, encourage the parent to find time to play with the child.

Ask the parent: "When can you set aside time to play with your child each day?" Review the DAS with the parent, and try to find 15–20 minutes when she can play with her child (or 5 minutes two to three times each day when she can do this). Scheduling play at a predictable time or times each day can help the child get used to playing with the parent and help the parent become more accustomed to playing with her child.

SET UP A SPACE TO PLAY

Some children with social communication challenges may have a difficult time staying in one place and may leave the space if another person enters. Creating a space that allows the parent and child to be near each other makes it easier to interact.

Ask the parent: "What space in your home can you set up to play with your child?" Then help the parent identify ways to arrange the environment to create a space that will be optimal for her child. For example, children who run when others attempt to interact with them benefit from physical boundaries with no clear runways; other children may benefit from having a defined place to sit, such as a beanbag chair or a chair and table. If you are not in the home, you can have the parent bring pictures or draw a rough map of the environment so that you can help her.

LIMIT DISTRACTIONS

Children with social communication challenges are often highly distracted by environmental stimuli, such as sounds, odors, lights, and clutter, and can become overly focused on electronics, such as the TV, tablets, smartphones, or computer games. Limiting distracting stimuli, clutter, and electronics can make it easier for the child to engage with the parent.

Ask the parent: "What sounds, sights, or items distract your child or make it difficult to play with him?" Then help the parent identify distractions in key areas of the house, including the play space. Discuss way for the parent to limit these distractions, especially during playtime.

The effect of a stimulus may vary on different children; for example, soft music in the background helps some children with regulation, while for others it can be distracting. Work with the parent to identify the type of environment that will be most conducive to learning for her child. If you are in the home, take the time to help the parent create a positive learning environment for her child.

ROTATE TOYS AND MATERIALS

Rotating toys that are freely available to the child in the home can help maintain the child's interest in toys and increase his engagement.

Ask the parent: "Which of your child's toys can you put into sets for a toy rotation?" Then

help the parent determine how she will organize and rotate toys at home (e.g., every 2–3 weeks). Favorite toys should be evenly distributed among the rotating toy groups.

Some children benefit from having a special set of favorite toys that are only used during playtime with a parent. If you think this would increase the child’s engagement with the parent, help the parent identify one to two of the most highly motivating toys for her child, and explain how use of these toys during times she is interacting with her child can increase motivation. Be sure that the parent limits access to these special toys when her child is not interacting with her.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent about making changes in the home environment. Use this time to answer any questions she has or to clarify any key elements of *Set Your Home Up for Success*. You might also ask the parent questions such as these:

“Can you imagine making some of the changes to your home that we discussed today?”

“Do any of the suggestions seem too difficult? What might make it easier to make some of these changes?”

“How do you think your child will respond to some of the changes we talked about today? Do you think they will help him engage with you more easily?”

Help the Parent Select Specific Changes to Her Home Environment

Ask the parent to record how she will implement the technique on the Practice Plan at the end of Chapter 1 in the parent manual (Form 29 in the online forms for coaches). For example, under “Limit Distractions,” she might indicate “Turn off the dishwasher and reduce all other sounds before playing in the kitchen.” If the child does not need a specific place to play, cross off the technique and tell the parent the strategy is not required.

Make sure that the parent indicates when she will make time for play, and have her begin playtime before the next session.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about making the changes on her Practice Plan. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Potential challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 96).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down on the Practice Plan what went well after she after she made changes to her home environment. Ask her also to write down any challenges under “What was hard?” Tell her that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the *Follow Your Child’s Lead* section of Chapter 2 in the parent manual. If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, have her read the entire chapter.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Set Up Your Home for Success*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has trouble fitting play into daily schedule

- Acknowledge the challenge, reiterate the importance of play, and help the parent identify a short period of time for play.
- Review the DAS to see if play can be scheduled into existing activities, such as bedtime.
- Help her identify activities her child may be able to get involved with, such as meal preparation or dishwashing (putting hands in water).
- Help her identify an activity the child likes (e.g., balloons, bubbles) that she can do after major routines (e.g., 5 minutes after meals before cleanup).

Does not have a consistent schedule

- Help her outline things that occur each day and see whether particular routines should happen at the same time.
- Suggest that she select a single activity she and her child enjoy and make sure it happens every day.
- Ask how she can carry out one of her routines the same way each day.

Has difficulty identifying a space to play

- Help her think creatively about setting up a space (e.g., tent, walk-in closet, area under a table).
- Schedule a home visit to observe the space and problem-solve.
- Have the parent draw a sketch of the environment.

Has too many toys available or lots of clutter in the home

- Help her identify ways to store materials to reduce clutter in a small area for play.
- Help her go through her toys and put them in sets.

Does not have appropriate play materials or toys in the home

- Let her know that play does not need to involve toys.
- Help her identify other materials the child can play with.
- Suggest types of toys the child may enjoy.

Has difficulty interacting with the child because siblings are present

- Determine whether the siblings could be involved in play.
- Suggest she schedule a 10-minute period to play with each child separately.
- Help her identify a time when siblings are busy (naps, school, other activities).
- Find out whether she can ask family or friends to watch the siblings during playtime.

Is overwhelmed by suggested changes

- Select the technique that will have the greatest impact.
- Help the parent make changes gradually over the course of the program.
- Schedule a home visit to help the parent make suggested changes.

UNIT 2

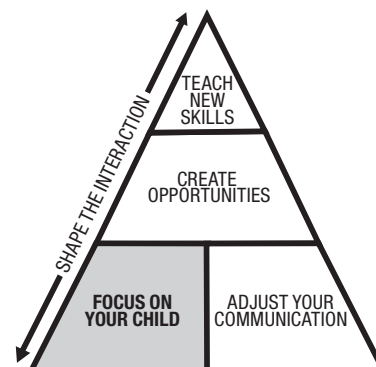
Focus on Your Child

Focus on Your Child, at the base of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, is the **F** of the F.A.C.T.S. This is the first step to successful implementation of Project ImPACT. The primary purpose of **Focus on Your Child** is to improve the child's social engagement with the parent during play and daily activities. A secondary purpose of this strategy set is to help the parent identify the child's interests, the behaviors the child uses to initiate communication (e.g., eye contact, gestures, words), and the reasons why the child communicates, so that she can be responsive to the child's behavior. This is particularly important for a child who is preverbal, at the preintentional stage of language development. It can also be important for a child who is prompt-dependent, as the parent may not be aware of the support she is providing to her child to assist with communication.

There are two **Focus on Your Child** techniques the parent can use: *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*. Both techniques can help the child actively engage with the parent during play and increase the length of time they can play together. The technique used will depend on the activity. Before introducing the first technique, be sure to introduce this unit, **Focus on Your Child**, to the parent by using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid as outlined in Session 4 on *Follow Your Child's Lead* below.

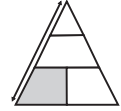
- If you are completing the parent training program in 24 sessions, you will have 2 sessions to teach **Focus on Your Child**. We recommend spending 1 session on each technique.
- If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will have 1 session to teach the information in this unit. We recommend that you teach the techniques together. You can use the session overview for *Follow Your Child's Lead*, and add the rationale and key elements from *Imitate Your Child*. You may need to simplify and select specific elements from each technique to highlight and coach. *Imitate Your Child* is one very concrete way the parent can join the child's play (a key element of *Follow Your Child's Lead*). If the parent has difficulty joining her child's play or is highly directive, you may wish to teach *Imitate Your Child* as a primary way to join the child's play.

You are ready to move to **Adjust Your Communication** once the parent receives a score of 3 or higher on the **Focus on Your Child** portion of the Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4).



SESSION 4

Follow Your Child's Lead



Session Goals

Help the parent use techniques to:

- Increase her responsiveness to her child's behavior.
- Increase her child's engagement with her during play.
- Increase the length of time she and her child are able to play together.
- Increase her child's initiations.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce **Focus on Your Child**.
- Introduce *Follow Your Child's Lead*.
- Demonstrate *Follow Your Child's Lead*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Focus on Your Child** (Form 30)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Key Elements: *Follow Your Child's Lead*

- Stay face to face with your child.
- Let your child lead the activity.
- Join in your child's play.
- Avoid questions and directions.
- Be sensitive, but persistent.
- Set limits.
- Wait and watch for your child's response.
- Respond to all your child's actions.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check in with the Family

Ask the family about how things have gone since the last session. Take a moment as well to engage the child in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn the first **Focus on Your Child** technique, *Follow Your Child's Lead*, to help her child engage and initiate. In the beginning of the program, it is beneficial to review the session agenda outline to provide the parent with clear expectations.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.



Remember to prepare for the sessions by arranging the coaching space, having appropriate toys available, and reviewing materials from the previous session.

Review the Practice Plan

Ask the parent to talk you through how she did with *Set Up Your Home for Success* and whether she was able to gather support from her team. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Help the



Remember to provide the parent with lots of positive feedback and encouragement for making changes at home.

parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in Session 3's Troubleshooting Tips (page 96). If the parent reports significant difficulty in setting up a space to play, limiting distractions, or identifying home routines, consider scheduling a home visit to assist the parent.

Introduce Focus on Your Child

Explain the Rationale

Introduce **Focus on Your Child**, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 24 there). **Focus on Your Child** is the **F** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. and provides the foundation for all of the strategies used in the program. It is used to encourage the child to engage actively with the parent during play, increase the child's motivation, and increase the parent's responsiveness to the child's behavior.

Introduce the Techniques

There are two techniques the parent can use to focus on her child: *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*. Both techniques involve joining the child in a fun way during play. The technique used will depend on the activity and the materials available.

Throughout this program, the parent will always begin an interaction by focusing on the child and then waiting and watching for the child's response. At this point in the program, the child can respond in any way. The parent will then respond to these actions in a logical way to teach the child that his behavior is meaningful and gets a response. The parent will use this strategy throughout the interaction with her child.

Introduce *Follow Your Child's Lead*

Explain the Rationale

Using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid in the parent manual, explain the rationale for *Follow Your Child's Lead*.

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty engaging and interacting with others. With *Follow Your Child's Lead*, the parent follows the child's interests, ideas of what to do, and feelings during play; waits and watches for her child's response; and then responds to the child's actions in a logical way.

Follow Your Child's Lead can be used during all activities in which it is OK for the child to direct the interaction. This ensures that the child is motivated, and it can increase the child's engagement with the parent and the length time they can play together.

Describe for the parent how *Follow Your Child's Lead* can be used to address the child's individual goals. You might say something like this:

“Brianna has a goal of increasing the length of time she will interact with you during play. This technique directly addresses that goal by joining her in something she likes to do.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Describe the elements of *Follow Your Child's Lead*, again using the parent manual. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

STAY FACE TO FACE WITH YOUR CHILD

The first step is for the parent to position herself so that she is at her child's level and can stay face to face with him. This helps her join her child's play, notice where he is looking, and respond to how he is feeling. It also makes it easier for the child to see what the parent is doing, watch the parent's facial expressions, and make eye contact.

Some children may prefer to sit on a parent's lap or may move away when the parent moves face to face, because they want to control the activity or because they are unsure of what the parent will do. Let the parent know that you will help her find a way to interact with her child while being face to face.

LET YOUR CHILD LEAD THE ACTIVITY

A child with social communication challenges may not be interested in parent-led activities and may be interested in activities that the parent finds unusual. Letting the child lead the activity lets the parent know what he is interested in and helps him engage with the parent because he is enjoying himself.

Ask the parent: “What are some ways your child likes to play?” If the parent reports that her child does not like to play, validate the parent's statement and provide observations on how her child plays. For example:

“You are right that Brianna does not seem that interested in toys, but she does seem to like to run around. Let's see if we can join her in running when we practice.”

JOIN IN YOUR CHILD'S PLAY

Once the parent sees what and how her child wants to play, she should join him in the activity by becoming a needed part of it. This might mean helping the child, adding to his play, or joining the child in physical or sensory play.

Ask the parent: “What are some ways you can join in your child's play?” If the parent is unsure, provide her with concrete examples, such as this one:

“If Brianna is running in circles, we can join her and run in circles together.”

Remind the parent that in this technique the child is the leader, and that her role is to join in the play, not to “correct” the child’s play.

AVOID QUESTIONS AND DIRECTIONS

Asking the child questions or giving directions takes the lead away from the child and does not allow the child to initiate. Therefore, the parent should avoid questions and directions, and instead comment on her child’s play to show interest in what he is doing. Give examples of comments the parent make to can to show interest in her child’s play that are appropriate for the child’s language level.

BE SENSITIVE, BUT PERSISTENT

Some children prefer to play alone or may need to leave the interaction briefly in order to self-regulate or calm down. If the child protests or moves away, the parent should give him a moment to re-engage. If he doesn’t on his own, she should follow his lead to his new activity and attempt to engage him again. Let the parent know that you will help her find ways to join the child’s play so that they can have fun together.

SET LIMITS

Although the parent should follow her child’s lead, she gets to determine which behaviors are OK for her child, and to set limits as necessary. Use your clinical judgment to help the parent determine which behaviors are allowable during play interactions and which are not. One essential rule is not to allow any behaviors that destroy property or may injure the child or another person. With this exception, allowable behaviors may vary, depending on the family.

Help the parent understand why it is OK to join the child’s play even if it is nonfunctional, unusual, or repetitive play, as long as it is safe. If behavior is a significant concern, consider whether it would be appropriate to go over the optional behavior management unit with the parent for several sessions before resuming the program (see Chapter 8 of the parent manual and Unit 8 of the present [coach] manual).

WAIT AND WATCH FOR YOUR CHILD’S RESPONSE

Once the parent has followed her child’s lead, she should wait and watch for signs that her child is engaging or communicating with her. The child’s response may be obvious or subtle, and may include looking at the parent, changing body posture, changing facial expressions, using gestures, or vocalizing.

Let the parent know that it is OK if the child does not respond to her when she follows his lead. She will learn additional strategies to help her child respond later in the program. In order for those strategies to be effective, the parent must first learn *Follow Your Child’s Lead*.

It can be difficult for a parent to determine all of the subtleties of communication while she is involved in an interaction. Let the parent know that you will work together as a team to observe each other’s interactions with the child, to identify the types and purposes of the child’s communication.

RESPOND TO ALL YOUR CHILD'S ACTIONS

The parent should respond to all her child's actions in a logical way, even if his behavior seems unintentional. This teaches the child that his actions have meaning and can be used to communicate with others.

Ask the parent: "What ways can you respond to your child's actions?" If the parent is hesitant to respond to all of the child's behaviors because her child is able to use more complex skills with support, highlight the importance of responding to all of the child's actions at the beginning, and let her know that she will learn techniques to increase the complexity of skills later in the program.

Explain the Steps of *Follow Your Child's Lead*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 24 there) to go over the steps of *Follow Your Child's Lead* and tie them to one of the child's goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions. You might say something like the following:

"Brianna has a goal of increasing the length of time she will interact with you during play. To work toward this goal, we will begin by being face to face and joining her in something she likes to do. We will then wait and see how she responds. Once she responds with a gesture, eye gaze, or body posture change, we will respond to her actions as meaningful. Using this technique may also help her begin to communicate her needs as she learns that her actions carry meaning. If she does not respond, that is OK; later you will learn to use techniques to create opportunities. We can use this time to see what she is interested in and how she plays on her own. Do you have any questions or concerns before we get started with practice?"

Demonstrate *Follow Your Child's Lead***Prepare for Your Demonstration**

Ask the parent to watch how you use *Follow Your Child's Lead*, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions.

"I would like you to watch for how I follow Brianna's lead while she is playing with the beans. Watch for how Brianna responds when I join her by handing her more beans. Does she move away, reach for more, or use another behavior? Does she stay with the activity longer when I do not ask questions or give directions? Watch and see how I respond to her actions."

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Follow Your Child's Lead* with the child, point out any behaviors the child uses to communicate and the reasons why he communicates. The parent needs to be able to recognize and interpret the child's communication before she can respond to it.

"Brianna moved to play with the ball. So I'm following her to that activity and getting face to face. I am waiting to see how she responds. . . . She looked at me, so I am responding to this

action by making a comment on her play: ‘Ball.’ . . . Now she moved to the cars, so I am following her to the cars and getting face to face again. . . . Remember, we want to be persistent to help her engage with us.”

Once you have finished the demonstration, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

”What did you notice about the length of time Brianna played with me and her communication?”

“What did she do when I got face to face?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Practice is the most important step in coaching. Make sure that the parent has at least 15 minutes per session to practice, from the beginning of the program onward.

Encourage the Parent to Practice

As the parent practices *Follow Your Child’s Lead* with her child, remind her of the steps she should follow, using specific examples based on the child’s current play.

Manage the Physical Environment

Remove distracting items, or hand the parent parts of the toy the child is playing with, so she can join his play.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on both the parent’s use of *Follow Your Child’s Lead* and the child’s response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while parents are practicing this technique can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 106) at the end of this session.

“Great job on joining Brianna’s play! She communicated by looking at you. This appeared to be a request to have you join her play again (the reason she is communicating).”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Begin with open-ended questions, and then move to more specific questions if necessary. The parent’s interaction with her child should guide your question selection. Here are some examples of questions:

“How did that feel when you followed his lead?”

“Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How did he respond to you when you engaged in his activity of choice? Did he play longer or switch activities more?”

“How does your child communicate with you? Does he use gestures, eye contact, vocalizations, or words?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Focus on Your Child** (Form 30).

Good goals for this technique include increasing the child’s engagement in social or toy play, as evidenced by eye contact, facial expressions, watching the play partner, or use of gestures or words; initiating activities by handing the adult a toy, using a gesture, or saying a word; and playing together for a longer period of time.

Good activities for this technique include toy and active play, or daily routines such as bath-time in which play is a part of the routine. *Follow Your Child’s Lead* is most effective when practiced during play or activities the child enjoys. Once the parent learns to use additional techniques that incorporate *Follow Your Child’s Lead*, the parent will use them during other daily activities. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 30 there) provides examples of how to use *Follow Your Child’s Lead* during play and daily activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using *Follow Your Child’s Lead* during an activity the parent has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do to focus on her child during *Follow Your Child’s Lead*. For example, if the activity is play with blocks, she might write this down: “Sit face to face and stack a block on top of his block.”

Ask the parent how she thinks her child might respond when she follows his lead and waits, and have her write this down in the “Wait” box. Remind the parent that the child can respond in many ways, including words, verbalizations, eye gaze, gestures, and body posture change. Tell the parent that she can write down how her child responds during practice next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box.

Next, ask how the parent will respond to her child. The child’s behavior will guide the parent’s response. For example, if the child looks at the parent, her response could be to continue to play, say hi, or make a comment. If the child moves away, the parent’s response could be “all done!” or “Bye-bye!” Table 2.1 in the parent manual has examples of ways to respond to the child’s behavior in a logical way.

The sequence graphic in the parent manual provides an individualized example of how the parent can use the technique with her child during a specific activity. Ask questions and give suggestions to help the parent identify the most effective elements of the technique for her child, her

child's response, and ways she can respond to her child. This collaborative process also helps you talk through potential challenges with the parent.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about using *Follow Your Child's Lead* at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for this technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 106).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the *Imitate Your Child* section of Chapter 2 in the parent manual. This is another technique the parent will learn to use as part of **Focus on Your Child**.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Follow Your Child's Lead*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty staying face to face

- Recommend a specific amount of space for the parent to sit from the child.
- Suggest making sitting face to face a game.
- Arrange furniture so that the parent and child can sit face to face.
- Encourage the parent to move with the child when he moves.
- Offer a mirror so that the parent and child can make eye contact without having to face each other.

Has difficulty letting the child lead

- Ask her to observe how her child plays for a few minutes before joining.
- Encourage the parent to change activities with the child when he changes activities.
- Remind her that directing the child's play places the child in the role of the responder and does not allow the child to initiate.
- Let her know that you will help her expand her child's play later in the program.

Has difficulty joining the child's play

- Give specific examples of ways to join the child's play.
- Hand the parent items she can use to join the play.
- Ask her how she can join the child's play in the specific activity.

Asks lots of questions

- Remind her to wait and watch for what the child does on his own to help him initiate.
- Let her know that you will help her ask questions and prompt language later in the program.
- Model language for the parent to use by rephrasing her questions as comments.
- Ask her to focus on just comments and no questions for 5-minute periods a couple of times a day. She can do this when she and the child are walking to the car or getting ready for bed, or during playtime.

Has difficulty waiting and watching

- Suggest counting to 5 in her head after she makes a comment or attempts to join in his play again.

Has difficulty responding to child's actions in a logical way

- Describe the child's behavior and the meaning it might carry.
- Ask her: "What do you think your child is telling you right now?"
- Help her use cues in the environment to interpret the meaning of her child's communication.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

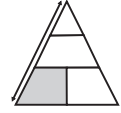
Is preintentional

- Point out behaviors the child may be using to communicate.
- Record several minutes of the interaction, and review the video with the parent to help her recognize the way the child is communicating.

<i>If the child . . .</i>	<i>You can . . .</i>
Is not engaged with toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a wide variety of materials for sensory exploration. • Encourage gross motor or active play. • Let the parent know that play does not need to involve toys. • Help the parent recognize other ways the child likes to play.
Moves frequently between activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the number of toys available for the child to move between. • Help the parent identify a smaller space to limit the area in which he can move. • Offer a child-size chair or beanbag chair, to help the child sit for longer.
Becomes frustrated or moves away when the parent joins his play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge that this can be hard. Suggest giving the child a moment to calm down and then trying again. • Suggest other ways the parent can join the play. • Offer other toys or materials that may be easier for the child to share.
Does not increase his engagement in response to this technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that subsequent sessions will focus on techniques to make the play interactive. • Focus on helping the parent identify the way in which her child communicates with support.

SESSION 5

Imitate Your Child



Session Goals

Help the parent use techniques to:

- Improve her child's ability to engage with her during play.
- Increase the length of time she is able to play together with her child.
- Increase her child's spontaneous vocalizations and language.
- Increase the number of different play actions her child uses.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Imitate Your Child*.
- Demonstrate *Imitate Your Child*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Focus on Your Child** (Form 30)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Pairs of highly preferred toys
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Key Elements: *Imitate Your Child*

- Imitate your child's gestures, facial expressions, and body movements.
- Imitate your child's vocalizations.
- Imitate your child's play with toys and objects.
- Only imitate positive behaviors.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask how the family is doing, and take a moment to engage the child in an activity.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The parent will learn to imitate her child to help him engage with her during play, increase the length of time she is able to play together with her child, increase her child's spontaneous vocalizations and language, and increase the number of different play actions her child uses. This is another way to focus on her child.

Ask the parent: "Do you have questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?" Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address today.

Review the Practice Plan

Have the parent talk you through the previous session's Practice Plan. How did she use *Follow Your Child's Lead* at home? Discuss the child's response, what went well, and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Follow Your Child's Lead* are in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 106) at the end of Session 4.

Practice is important! If the parent did not practice, problem-solve barriers and brainstorm solutions. See Part I, Chapter 3 for common challenges and solutions.

Introduce *Imitate Your Child*

Explain the Rationale

Explain *Imitate Your Child*, and describe how it is used with *Follow Your Child's Lead*. Use the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid in the parent manual as needed.

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty engaging and playing with others. With *Imitate Your Child*, the parent first uses *Follow Your Child's Lead*. Then she imitates his actions as a way to join in his play. She continues to wait for the child to respond, and then responds to his actions in a logical way.

Imitate Your Child is most helpful when there are two of the same or similar items to play with, and when the child is not playing with a toy. This technique can help the child increase his engagement and the length of the interaction. Many children enjoy being imitated and will use more vocalizations or language and try different play actions to see if the parent will imitate them. Describe how *Imitate Your Child* can be used to address the child's individual goals. You can say something like this:

"Imitate Your Child can be used to help Brianna increase the length of time she can interact with you during play, which is one of her social engagement goals."

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of *Imitate Your Child*. Ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent reflect on how she would use this technique with her child.

IMITATE YOUR CHILD'S GESTURES, FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, AND BODY MOVEMENTS

Imitating the child's gestures, facial expressions, and body movements can teach him that these nonverbal behaviors are meaningful and affect how the parent acts. These movements do not need to be purposeful for the parent to imitate them.

Ask the parent: "Which of your child's gestures, facial expressions, or body movements can you imitate?" If the parent is unsure, take time to observe the child's behavior with the parent and provide concrete examples of gestures, expressions, and movements to imitate.

This can be a particularly useful strategy for children who do not engage well with toys or who tend to wander aimlessly.

IMITATE YOUR CHILD'S VOCALIZATIONS

Imitating the child's sounds and words can not only capture his attention, but help him learn that his vocalizations are meaningful and that the parent has received his message. It may also encourage the child to vocalize more. Vocal imitation is used to increase the child's vocalizations and spontaneous language

Ask the parent: "Which of your child's vocalizations can you imitate?" If the parent is unsure, provide the parent with concrete examples of what to imitate. If the child does not use words yet, the parent should imitate any sounds he makes. If the child is using words or sentences, she should only imitate language that is related to what they are doing together.

IMITATE YOUR CHILD'S PLAY WITH TOYS AND OBJECTS

Imitating the child's play with toys or other objects is another way to join his play. It may also encourage him to use new or different play actions, to see whether the parent copies him. This works best when there are two of the same object available.

Ask the parent: "Which of your child's play actions can you imitate?" If she is unsure, provide the parent with examples of play actions she could imitate. As long as it is safe, the parent can imitate whatever the child does with the toys, even if it unusual. Over time, she can shape non-functional play actions into more appropriate play.

ONLY IMITATE POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

Imitating the child can increase the behaviors being imitated. Therefore, the parent should not imitate unsafe or destructive behaviors. Instead, she can imitate the child's actions while showing her child more appropriate ways to play, such as throwing a soft ball if he is throwing a truck. She can also match her child's emotions instead of the behaviors.

If the parent expresses concern about imitating the child's unusual or self-stimulatory behaviors, let the parent know that the goal is to increase social engagement, and you will focus on expanding appropriate play later in the program.

If imitating the child's self-stimulatory behaviors increases the child's engagement (e.g., eye contact, positive affect), the parent should continue to imitate him. However, if the child uses a self-stimulatory behavior to tune the parent out, the parent should only imitate the child when he engages in appropriate behavior, and attempt to join his play in another way.

Explain the Steps of *Imitate Your Child*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 24 there) to explain the steps of *Imitate Your Child* with an example specific to the child. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate *Imitate Your Child*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch how you engage in *Imitate Your Child*, how her child responds, and how you respond to her child's actions. You can say something like this:

“Brianna is playing with the ball, so I am going to imitate whatever she is doing with the ball. I will look for any response indicating that she is engaged. This could include eye contact, body posture changes, a gesture, or a sound.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Imitate Your Child*, remember to explain the action you imitate, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child:

“Now I am going to imitate Brianna's vocalizations and then wait to see how she responds. (*Coach imitates, followed by a wait; child vocalizes; coach imitates.*) She vocalized again. I responded to this action by imitating her again.”

Ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as this one: “What did you notice when I imitated Brianna's play with toys?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice *Imitate Your Child*

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow to use *Imitate Your Child*, giving specific examples based on the child's play and skill level. Based on what the child is involved in, the parent may choose to imitate play, gestures, or vocalizations. Ask the parent to watch and see what her child does once she imitates him, as in this example:

“Now I would like you to interact with Brianna while I sit behind you and provide feedback. Let's start with imitating Brianna's toy play. Imitate everything Brianna does with the toy, and let's watch and see how she responds.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Offer similar toys that the parent can use to imitate the child. Help by removing and cleaning up distracting items.

Provide Feedback

Remember to give lots of positive feedback, as well as suggestions to improve the use of the technique. Comment on both the parent's use of *Imitate Your Child* and the child's response. Suggest-

tions for giving feedback around common challenges can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table for this session (page 114).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this time to answer questions the parent has and to clarify any key elements of *Imitate Your Child*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did it feel to imitate Brianna?”

“Can you imagine playing that way at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How does Sam respond when you imitate him? Does he look at you, smile, vocalize, repeat the behavior, and look at you, or does he change activities?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Focus on Your Child** (Form 30).

Good goals for this technique include increasing the time the child stays engaged for a longer period of time, as evidenced by looking at the parent or using a gesture or word; responding to the parent by changing his behavior; using the behavior the parent imitates more frequently, such as increasing the number of vocalizations; or imitating the parent.

Good activities for *Imitate Your Child* include toy and active play. Imitate your child can be used during daily activities or play. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 34 there) includes examples of ways to imitate the child during play and daily activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using *Imitate Your Child* during an activity the parent has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on for the activity in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic in the Practice Plan. Remember to ask questions and give suggestions as needed.

Ask the parent what she will do for *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*. For example, if the parent says she will imitate her child's gestures and body movements during active play, write this down under “Focus.”

Ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she waits after she uses *Imitate Your Child*. If the parent indicates that the child could respond in different ways, talk through these examples and write down the positive response under “Wait.” If the parent reports a negative response, write it down under “What will be hard?” and let the parent know you will discuss solutions to this challenge in a few minutes. Tell the parent that she can write down the child's response during practice next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box.

Ask what she thinks her child's response will be to *Imitate Your Child*. In addition, ask how the parent will respond to her child. The child's behavior should guide the parent's response. For example, if the child changes his behavior, the parent should imitate that; if the child responds with a smile, the parent should respond by smiling and continuing to imitate the behavior.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Imitate Your Child* at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 114). Be sure to revisit any challenges that were discussed during reflection.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice. Let her know you will review this at the beginning of the next session. If you are ready to move to **Adjust Your Communication**, ask the parent to read part or all of this chapter in the parent manual (Chapter 3). Typically you will begin with *Use Animation*; however, you can choose to introduce *Model and Expand Communication* if you feel that this would be beneficial. If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, the parent should read the entire chapter.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Imitate Your Child*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty imitating the child's gestures or movements

- Ask her to watch for very subtle movements and imitate them in an exaggerated way.
- Describe specific behaviors for her to imitate.

Has difficulty imitating the child's vocalizations

- Imitate the child's vocalizations to cue the parent to do the same.

Has difficulty imitating the child's toy play

- Hand the parent a similar toy.
- Describe specific behaviors the child is doing for her to imitate.

Is uncomfortable imitating nonfunctional or repetitive behavior

- Remind the parent that the goal is to increase engagement and attention. Later in the program, she will learn to increase functional play.
- Encourage her to see if the technique increases his engagement. If it does, she should keep imitating. If the child tunes her out, she should try joining his play in a different way.
- Suggest that she imitate the child's emotion as she slightly changes the behavior to make it more appropriate.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Is not engaged with toys

- Encourage the parent to imitate all of the child's movements and vocalizations in an exaggerated way.
- Offer other fun materials.

Becomes frustrated when the parent imitates him

- Suggest that the parent imitate other aspects of his behavior.
- Give ideas of other ways the parent can join the play.

Takes the parent's toy when she tries to imitate his toy play

- Encourage the parent to trade toys with the child.

UNIT 3

Adjust Your Communication

Adjust Your Communication is the **A** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.; it is the second strategy set at the base of the pyramid. This strategy set is used to encourage the child's engagement, increase the parent's responsiveness to her child's behavior, and help the child use and understand nonverbal and verbal language. It is used in combination with **Focus on Your Child**.

There are two **Adjust Your Communication** techniques the parent can use: *Use Animation* and *Model and Expand Communication*. Both techniques can help the child actively engage with the parent during play. Each technique can address slightly different goals. *Use Animation* can encourage initiations and can help the child understand and use nonverbal communication. *Model and Expand Communication* is focused on helping the child understand and use verbal communication. Before introducing the first technique, be sure to introduce **Adjust Your Communication**, using the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid as outlined in Session 6 on *Use Animation*.

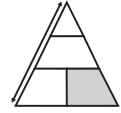
- If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, you will have 3 sessions to cover the information in this unit. We recommend spending the first session on *Use Animation*, the second session on *Model and Expand Communication*, and the third session reviewing the strategies at the base of the pyramid.
- If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will have 1 session to teach the information in this unit. We recommend that you combine the description by talking about how to *Use Animation* to *Model and Expand Communication*. Remember that you may need to simplify and select specific elements of each technique to highlight and coach. If the parent has a flat affect and the child responds well to exaggerated gestures and facial expressions, you may choose to spend more time coaching on *Use Animation*. If the parent uses too much or too little language, focus on *Model and Expand Communication*. Base your selection on the technique that will have the greatest positive impact on the parent-child interaction.

You will be ready to move to the next unit, **Create Opportunities**, once the parent receives a 3 or higher on the **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** portions of the Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4).



SESSION 6

Use Animation



Session Goals

Help the parent use techniques to:

- Share enjoyment with her child.
- Increase her child's initiations.
- Increase her child's understanding of nonverbal aspects of language, such as gestures, facial expressions, and body posture.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce **Adjust Your Communication**.
- Introduce *Use Animation*.
- Demonstrate *Use Animation*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Adjust Your Communication** (Form 31)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Key Elements: *Use Animation*

- Be excited about the activity.
- Exaggerate your gestures.
- Exaggerate your facial expressions.
- Exaggerate your vocal quality.
- Use attention-getting words.
- Adjust your animation to help your child stay regulated.
- Wait with anticipation for your child to respond.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the parent and child how they are doing, and take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn about the **Adjust Your Communication** strategy set and one of its component techniques, *Use Animation*. The parent can use this technique to improve her child's ability to share enjoyment, initiate, and understand nonverbal aspects of language such as gestures, facial expressions, and body posture.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk through how she used *Imitate Your Child* at home. If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, talk through how she used the selected techniques to focus on her child. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Ask questions to help identify the reasons for any challenges. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 114) at the end of Session 5.



Review notes from the previous session.

Introduce **Adjust Your Communication**

Explain the Rationale

Introduce **Adjust Your Communication**, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 36 there). **Adjust Your Communication**, the **A** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S., is the second strategy at the base of the pyramid. It is used together with **Focus on Your Child** to encourage social engagement and to help the child understand and use verbal and nonverbal communication.

Introduce the Techniques

There are two techniques the parent can use to adjust her communication: *Use Animation* and *Model and Expand Communication*. Each technique can be used to address different goals, but both can be used throughout interactions like the other techniques at the base of the pyramid.

The parent continues to focus on her child while adjusting her communication. She waits for the child to respond, and then responds to him in a logical way. Next, she will expand on his response. Like **Focus on Your Child**, the **Adjust Your Communication** strategy set can be used throughout the interaction with the child.

Introduce *Use Animation*

Explain the Rationale

Children with social engagement challenges often have difficulty engaging and initiating with others, and interpreting and using nonverbal communication. During *Use Animation*, the parent focuses on her child while adding more or less energy to her gestures, facial expressions, and vocal quality. She waits and watches for the child's response, and then responds to his actions in a logical way.

Use Animation can be combined with other techniques throughout activities. It can increase the child's ability to share enjoyment, initiate, and understand aspects of nonverbal communication (such as gestures, facial expressions, and body posture). It also increases the effectiveness of the other techniques, because it makes the parent's actions and words more obvious to the child.

Describe for the parent how *Use Animation* can address the child's individual goals. You might say something like this:

“Sam does not always look toward you when he is making a comment. *Use Animation* is one technique that can help to increase his engagement and eye contact with you during interactions.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss *Use Animation*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

BE EXCITED ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

When the parent shares her excitement with the child, it can encourage him to share excitement with her through eye contact and facial expressions. The parent can show excitement through making eye contact, smiling and laughing when appropriate, and using big gestures and facial expressions as she joins her child in his activity of interest.



Use Animation can be sometimes be difficult to teach, because adults vary significantly in their interaction styles. Use the information in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 123) for parents who are reserved.

EXAGGERATE YOUR GESTURES

Exaggerating gestures when communicating with the child can call attention to nonverbal communication that may be subtle and difficult to interpret and can make the parent’s verbal language easier to understand.

Ask the parent: “What gestures can you exaggerate?” If the parent is unsure of what gestures to exaggerate, provide her with examples of how to make gestures bigger. Examples can include exaggerating a wave, a gesture to indicate surprise (hand to mouth), a point, a gesture to indicate the size of an object (hands apart for “big”), or a clap of excitement.

EXAGGERATE YOUR FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

Exaggerating facial expressions can help the child attend to, interpret, and respond to the parent’s facial expressions. The parent can use gestures to help the child notice her facial expressions, if the child has difficulty attending.

Give the parent examples of ways she can exaggerate her facial expressions. For example:

- If the child hurts himself, the parent can make a sad face with a down-turned mouth and a frown.
- Surprise can be exaggerated with raised eyebrows and an O-shaped mouth.

EXAGGERATE YOUR VOCAL QUALITY

Exaggerating the speed, tone, volume, and inflection of speech can help the child understand how the changes in the parent’s vocal quality can change the meaning of the message.

Give examples of how vocal quality changes the meaning of communication. For example, slow and soft speech along with a down-turned mouth can be used to express sadness. Quickened speech and raised pitch, along with eye contact and a big smile, can be used to express excitement or enjoyment.

Help the parent identify ways to exaggerate her vocal quality. If she is having difficulty, demonstrate different vocal changes and have the parent listen for the difference between a question and a comment or a positive or negative emotion.

Have the parent pair vocal quality changes with both verbal and nonverbal communication to increase the child's understanding of vocal quality changes.

USE ATTENTION-GETTING WORDS

A child with social communication challenges may not attend to the parent when she exaggerates nonverbal aspects of language. Attention-getting words or sounds are one way the parent can gain the child's attention to cue the child she has something to share before exaggerating a gesture or facial expression.

Ask the parent: "What attention-getting words can you use?" If the parent is unsure, provide her with examples, such as "Uh-oh," "Oh, no," "Wow," or gasping loudly.

ADJUST YOUR ANIMATION TO HELP YOUR CHILD STAY REGULATED

Children learn best when they are in a regulated state—neither withdrawn nor overly aroused. If the child is becoming quiet and withdrawn, the parent can exaggerate her gestures, facial expressions, and vocal quality to increase her child's alertness. If the child becomes overaroused when the parent is highly animated, she can use smaller gestures and facial expressions, and slow down her speech and the volume of her voice.

Provide guidance on how much animation the parent should use, based on how her child responds to animation.

WAIT WITH ANTICIPATION FOR YOUR CHILD TO RESPOND

Children with social communication challenges often require additional time to initiate and respond. Presenting too much auditory information can cause a child to shut down or leave the interaction. Adding an expectant look and exaggerated gestures when waiting and watching can cue the child that the parent is expecting a response, while giving the child extra time to process the information. This increases the likelihood that the child will respond, especially when the parent has used an attention-getting word.

The amount of time the parent should wait with anticipation can vary considerably, depending on the child; it may range from 2 to 30 seconds. Provide the parent with a rough idea of the length of time she should wait.

Discuss the possibility that the child may not acknowledge the parent. This is OK; the parent can follow the child to the next activity and try this technique again.

Explain the Steps of *Use Animation*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 36 there) to explain the steps of *Use Animation* and tie the technique to one of the child's goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate *Use Animation*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you demonstrate *Use Animation*, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions. You might say something like the following:

“Since Brianna is playing with the ball, I am going to join her in ball play and use big gestures while catching the ball. After that, I will wait with anticipation by hold the ball as though I am going to throw it. I would like you to watch and see how Brianna responds. Look for any sign of communication from Brianna. Does she look at me, change her body posture, use a gesture, or make a sound? Watch and see how I respond to her.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Use Animation* with the child, name the key elements you use and the child's response to each one:

“Sam is looking at the balloon. I am going to blow up a little bit of it and then wait with anticipation by exaggerating my facial expressions and looking intently at Sam. (*Coach waits; child verbalizes; coach blows up the balloon.*) Sam said the word ‘Blow.’ I responded by blowing up the balloon.”

If the parent has been having difficulty with earlier techniques, be sure to review these techniques as needed (in addition to *Use Animation*), demonstrate, and have the parent practice.

Once you have finished the demonstration, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“How did Brianna respond when I exaggerated my gestures?”

“What did she do when I waited with anticipation?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow in *Use Animation* by providing specific examples based on the child's current play. Give the parent a specific technique to use to adjust her communication, such as using big gestures or adjusting her vocal quality. Choose the technique you think will have the greatest positive impact on the child's behavior.

Manage the Physical Environment

Offer materials and remove or clean up distracting items.

Provide Feedback

Comment on the parent's practice with *Use Animation* and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while parents are practicing this technique can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 123) at the end of this session.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Begin with open-ended questions, and then move to more specific questions if necessary. The parent's interaction with her child should guide your question selection. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did that feel when you used animation?”

“Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How did your child respond when you exaggerated gestures or facial expressions or waited with anticipation? Did you feel that this helped to keep him regulated and ready to learn?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Adjust Your Communication** (Form 31).

Good goals for this session include increasing engagement as evidenced by the child's looking at the parent or using a gesture, sound, or word; increasing the length of the interaction; using a gesture, sound, or word to initiate; or responding to the parent's use of facial expression or gestures.

Good activities include play or daily routines. *Use Animation* can be used during both preferred and nonpreferred activities. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 41 there) provides examples of how to *Use Animation* during various activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of *Use Animation* during an activity she has selected. Write down the key elements she will focus on within the activity in the relevant boxes on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do for **Focus on Your Child** and *Use Animation*. For example, if the parent indicates that she will try this during mealtime, have her write: “Rub belly and say ‘Yummy!’ with a big smile.”

Ask the parent what she will do to wait (i.e., wait with anticipation and big gestures) and how

she thinks her child might respond. If the parent indicates that the child could respond in different ways, talk through the examples, and write down a positive example in the sequence graphic.

Next, ask how the parent will respond to her child. For example, if the child looks at the parent, the parent will continue to play and give the child the object or action she believes he wants.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about practicing *Use Animation* at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for this technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 123).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. If you are ready to move to the next technique, have the parent read the section on *Model and Expand Communication* in Chapter 3 of the parent manual. This is another technique the parent can use to adjust her communication.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Use Animation*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has flat affect or is uncomfortable being animated

- Acknowledge that it may feel really funny to exaggerate her actions, but that she does not look as silly to others as she may feel.
- Have her pretend to communicate to someone from across the street who cannot hear what she is saying.
- Suggest concrete ways to make the facial expressions and gestures bigger and easier to see. For example, surprise can be exaggerated with raised eyebrows and an O-shaped mouth.
- Suggest that she try keeping her expressions and gestures small for a few minutes and then making them big for a few minutes, to see if it helps her child respond to her.

Has difficulty waiting

- Explain the importance of wait time to allow the child to initiate and respond.
- Suggest counting to 5 in her head before responding.

Has difficulty identifying activities in which to use this technique

- Review the Daily Activity Schedule, and identify gestures and emotions that can be used in those activities.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Does not respond to waiting with anticipation

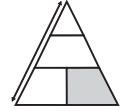
- Remind the parent to use an attention-getting word and an exaggerated gesture before waiting with anticipation.
- Encourage the parent to try this during highly motivating activities, such as tickles or chase.

Becomes too wound up when the parent is animated

- Point out signs that the child is getting dysregulated.
- Suggest that the parent use smaller gestures, a softer voice, and slower speech.

SESSION 7

Model and Expand Communication



Session Goals

Help the parent use techniques to:

- Change the way she speaks, to improve her child's understanding and use of new gestures, words, or sentences.
- To help the child expand the reasons he communicates.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Adjust Your Communication** (Form 31)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Model and Expand Communication*.
- Demonstrate *Model and Expand Communication*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Model and Expand Communication*

- Talk about what your child is seeing, hearing, or doing.
- Use simple language.
- Use gestures and visual cues.
- Speak and gesture slowly.
- Stress important words.
- Be repetitive.
- Avoid questions.
- Expand your child's communication.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask how the family is doing, and engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The parent will learn to use *Model and Expand Communication* to help her child learn new gestures, words, and sentences. This is another way to adjust her communication.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Have the parent talk you through how she practiced *Use Animation* at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Use Animation* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 123) at the end of Session 6.

Introduce *Model and Expand Communication*

Explain the Rationale

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty understanding and learning language. *Model and Expand Communication* can help the child learn new gestures, words, or sentences. It can also expand the functions or reasons for the child's communication (e.g., requests, greetings, protests, comments).

During *Model and Expand Communication*, the parent focuses on her child while using simple language to talk about the child's focus of interest. She waits for the child's response, and then responds logically and expands by modeling a gesture, word, or sentence.

Describe how *Model and Expand Communication* can address the child's individual goals. You can say something like the following:

“Brianna has a goal of using a point, vocalization, or single word to request actions or objects. When she requests items with a reach, we are going to point and name the object, to show her a new and more complex skill to use to request.”

“Sam has a goal of increasing his use of two- to three-word phrases to comment, request, and protest. When he uses one word on his own, we are going to expand on his language by adding words to create a phrase or a sentence, to show him a more complex skill he can use to communicate.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of *Model and Expand Communication*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child. For some parents, it may be beneficial to provide a brief demonstration of each element as you explain it.

TALK ABOUT WHAT YOUR CHILD IS SEEING, HEARING, OR DOING

Children are more likely learn a new word for an object or action if it is for something they are attending to. Therefore, the parent should label, describe, or comment on the things the child sees, hears, or does as they happen.

Ask the parent: “What language can you model around your child’s interests?” If the parent is not sure, brainstorm with the parent all of the objects (i.e., nouns), actions (i.e., verbs), and attributes (i.e., descriptive words) she can name within a specific activity. For a child with more language, you may also want to discuss emotions that can be modeled within the activity. Table 3.1 in the parent manual provides examples of language to model during activities.

Help the parent identify the reasons her child communicates (e.g., protesting, requesting, labeling, commenting, gaining attention, seeking attention, and sharing information), and give examples of how she can provide models to expand them. For example, some children may ask questions they already know the answers to in order to initiate (e.g., “What color is the car?”). If the parent knows the child knows the answer to a question, the parent will want to model a comment the child could use to initiate instead (e.g., “Look at my red car”).

USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty understanding communication, particularly if a speaker uses too many words. Encourage the parent to use simple language that is only slightly more complex than how the child communicates on his own. This can make it easier for him to understand and use new communication skills.

Ask the parent: “What type of communication can you model for your child?” Refer the parent to Table 3.1 in the parent manual if she is unsure. It can be helpful to provide concrete examples of how the parent can simplify her language for her child’s language level.

At this point, the child is not expected to imitate the parent’s verbal or nonverbal communication. The goal is to provide a model of a more complex skill while continuing to respond to the child’s spontaneous communication.

USE GESTURES AND VISUAL CUES

Using gestures and visual cues together with language can help children understand verbal communication. This is particularly important for children who are not yet verbal, as it provides additional information and a model of an alternative way to communicate.

With the parent, brainstorm types of gestures to model. A point is a great gesture to teach for requesting. Other gestures could include conventional gestures (e.g., a tap on an object for “open”) or simple signs that signify a certain object or action.

Take into account the family’s cultural background, because it may affect the type of gestures the parent chooses to model. For example, many Native Americans consider pointing with the finger impolite, and gestures are given with the head or the lips.

SPEAK AND GESTURE SLOWLY

Children with social communication challenges often require extra time to process information. Speaking slowly while exaggerating gestures can make it easier for the child to attend to and understand the parent’s language.

STRESS IMPORTANT WORDS

Emphasizing an important word in a sentence can draw the child's attention to it and increases the likelihood that he will associate the word with the object or action. The parent can also add a gesture when saying an important word, to emphasize the word and its meaning. This is particularly useful for children who use sentences but omit words or do not use descriptors.

Provide examples of words and gestures to emphasize, based on the child's skill level and goals.

BE REPETITIVE

Children learn better when they hear something many times. The parent can teach important words and language concepts (e.g., verbs), structures (e.g., past tense), or functions (e.g., greetings) by using them multiple times a day. The parent can use repetition to develop verbal routines (e.g., "Ready, set, go," "Here come tickles") for a child who is not yet verbal. These can be used to prompt language later in the program.

Help the parent identify words or language concepts to use repetitively, based on the child's language goals.

AVOID QUESTIONS

The parent should continue to avoid asking questions, because they take the lead away from the child and do not promote reciprocal interactions. Instead, the parent should make comments and label objects and actions.

If the parent tends to ask a lot of questions, refer her to Table 3.3 in the parent manual, and help her think of ways she can rephrase her questions into comments.

If she expresses concern about not asking questions, let her know that you will discuss ways to ask questions that get a response and promote reciprocal communication when she moves on to **Teach New Skills**.

EXPAND YOUR CHILD'S COMMUNICATION

After the child responds, the parent should restate what the child says and add new words or appropriate grammar.

Ask the parent: "How can you expand on your child's communication?" If the parent is unsure, refer her to Tables 3.4 and 3.5 in the parent manual, and help her identify ways to expand her child's language.

Explain the Steps of *Model and Expand Communication*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 36 there) to review the steps and tie them to one of the child's goals. Let the parent know that at times her child may imitate what the parent models. However, at this point she should continue to respond to all of his communication, even if he does not imitate the parent's model. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate *Model and Expand Communication*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use *Model and Expand Communication*. Point out specific elements you will use based on the parent's interaction style and the child's needs. Ask the parent to watch for how her child responds and how you respond to her child's actions.

Describe What You Are Doing

Point out the technique and the child's response as you demonstrate *Model and Expand Communication* with the child. For example:

“Brianna is playing with the ball, so I am joining her play and modeling the word ‘ball’ multiple times. I am also pointing to the ball as I label it. . . . Brianna looked at the ball, so I gave her the ball and expanded on her communication by saying the word ‘ball’ again.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“How did Brianna respond when I used simple language?”

“What types of language did you see me model?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow to use *Model and Expand Communication*. Use specific examples based on the child's play and skill level. Help the parent identify the types of language to model and the specific elements to use.

Manage the Physical Environment

Offer toys that can help the parent join her child's play, or hand her toys to give the child if he requests the items. Continue to assist her by removing toys the child is no longer using, to help decrease distractions.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of the *Model and Expand Communication* technique and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 131).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this time to answer questions the parent has and to clarify any key elements of *Model and Expand Communication*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did that feel when you modeled and expanded his communication?”

“Can you imagine playing that way at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How did your child respond when you used gestures and simple language to talk about what he was doing?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to select between-session practice goals and activities. Record selections on the Practice Plan—**Adjust Your Communication** (Form 31).

Good goals for this session include understanding and using gestures, sounds, words, or sentences for a variety of reasons. For example, the child will reach toward an object he wants, or will push away an item that he does not want.

Good activities for *Model and Expand Communication* include play and daily routines. This technique can be used during both preferred and nonpreferred activities. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 49 there) has examples of how to use *Model and Expand Communication* during a variety of activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using *Model and Expand Communication* during an activity she has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on within the activity in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do for **Focus on Your Child** and *Model and Expand Communication*. For example, if the parent chooses to do this at snacktime with crackers, with a child who is not yet using single words, have her write: “Say the word ‘Cracker.’”

Next, ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she waits after she uses *Model and Expand Communication*. Tell the parent that she can write down the child’s response during practice at home next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box. Remind the parent that the child does not need to repeat the language.

Ask the parent how she will respond and expand on her child’s response. Help the parent think through the specific gestures, words, phrases, or sentences she will use.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Model and Expand Communication* at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 131).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session.

If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, let the parent know that the next session will review the strategies at the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid: **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. This will include recording and reviewing a video of the parent using the techniques with her child. Decide with the parent which routines to use for practice and recording in the next session. If possible, schedule the review session in the home, to provide feedback in the child's natural setting. If this is not possible, ask the parent if there are toys she would like to bring to the clinic for the next session, or particular routines she would like to practice. You can also have the parent bring in a video of a home routine to conduct the video review. This allows the parent to receive feedback on her use of the strategies across routines.

If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will not have time for a review. Have the parent read the sections on *Playful Obstruction* and *Balanced Turns* in the **Create Opportunities** chapter in the parent manual (Chapter 4 there). Ask the parent to think about which techniques may be the most effective for her child.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Model and Expand Communication*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty talking about what the child is attending to

- Suggest that she imitate her child's play and then model language based on what they are doing.
- Ask her to observe how her child plays for a few minutes before modeling language.

Uses language that is too complex

- Give an example of what to say. For example, "In this activity, let's use the word 'Ball.'"
- Model simple language for her to use.

Is very quiet and rarely models language

- Suggest that she practice a play-by-play narration of her child's play in isolation, without worrying about using other techniques or simplifying her language, to help her become more comfortable with talking.
- Model language for her to use.

Asks lots of questions

- Ask her how she can turn questions into comments and model new information.
- Model language for the parent to use by rephrasing her questions as comments.
- Acknowledge that it can be difficult when the child does not respond. The parent may be doing this to fill up space if the child is particularly unresponsive.
- Let her know you will help her ask questions that will encourage back-and-forth communication later in the program.
- Ask her to focus on just comments and no questions for 5-minute periods a couple of times a day. She can do this when she and the child are walking to the car, getting ready for bed, or having playtime.

Frequently prompts her child to use more complex language

- Remind her that the focus is on increasing initiations. She will focus on teaching complex language later in the program.

Has difficulty using the key elements together

- Suggest only one to two elements at a time for her to use.

(continued)

**Troubleshooting Tips** *(continued)****If the child . . .******You can . . .***

Is not yet verbal

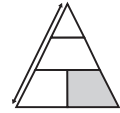
- Remind the parent to use gestures with single words.
- Suggest several natural gestures, such as pointing, tapping, and showing.

Is highly verbal

- Suggest specific forms and functions of language to model.
-

SESSION 8

Review of Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Use the two sets of techniques together to increase her child's engagement and communication.
- Recognize how her use of the techniques influences her child's response.
- Determine whether additional time should be spent on any techniques to help her engage with her child.

- Video Review Form—**Focus** and **Adjust** (Form 19)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Favorite toys
- Two pairs of some toys
- Video recording and viewing equipment



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Adjust Your Communication** (Form 31)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Focus** and **Adjust** (Form 14)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**
- Demonstrate **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Record and review a video of a parent-child interaction.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family about how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

This session will be spent reviewing the strategies from the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. You will help the parent use these strategies together, recognize how her use of the strategies influences her child's response, and determine whether additional time should be spent on any techniques to help her engage with her child.

You will provide a brief recap of the techniques and demonstrate them. The parent will have the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on any key elements at the base of the pyramid

that she is having difficulty using in different home routines. If you have been unable to go to the home, you will practice in the routines that you selected the previous session.

You will then video-record a brief parent–child interaction. You and the parent will review the video together; discuss the parent’s use of strategies, as well as the child’s response; and problem-solve if there are challenges. Help the parent recognize how her use of the strategies influences her child’s engagement. If you have been unable to go to the home, you can review a video of a home routine that the parent has recorded and brought to the session, instead of recording a video during the session.

Ask the parent: “Do you have questions about today’s session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?” Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Model and Expand Communication* at home. Discuss the child’s response, what went well, and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 7 (page 131).

Review Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication

Review the Rationale

Explain that these two sets of strategies are at the base of the F.A.C.T.S pyramid because they lay the foundation for the whole intervention. **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** make interacting fun and can increase the child’s engagement with the parent and with various activities. Remind the parent that she will use these techniques throughout each interaction to increase engagement and to make the strategies at the middle and the top of the pyramid effective.



The challenges the parent reports should help guide the review session.

Briefly Review the Key Elements and the Steps of the Techniques

Use the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S Review Sheet—**Focus** and **Adjust** (Form 14) to review examples of techniques that are relevant for the child. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions. Write the key elements that are likely to have the greatest impact on the interaction in the box next to each technique. For example, if the parent uses sentences and the child would benefit from a single-word model, write “Use one word” or “Use simple language” in the box next to *Model and Expand Communication* on the form.

Demonstrate **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use the key elements of the techniques you have identified, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate, be sure to point out to the parent how you are using the key elements of the different techniques together and how the child responds. Take time to demonstrate any technique that has been difficult for the parent to implement. Here are two examples:

“Brianna is rolling a car back and forth. I am moving so that I can stay face to face with her and roll another car next to hers. She just looked at me! So I am going to respond by rolling more and saying the word ‘Roll.’”

“Sam is lining up his cars. I’m joining him by lining up cars with him. Each time he or I add a car, I’m pointing to the car and saying, ‘More cars.’ Notice that I am using simple language and lots of animation.”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What did you notice when I imitated Brianna’s play with toys?”

“How did she respond when I used simple and repetitive language?”

If the parent has a difficult time responding, ask her to focus on one element, and then demonstrate the technique again:

“Watch to see which technique I use for **Focus on Your Child**. What technique did I use? How did he respond?”

Doing this helps the parent begin to observe how specific techniques affect her child’s social communication skills.



If the parent is having difficulty recognizing the important elements of the different techniques, you may choose to model each one separately for a few minutes.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Ask the parent to identify the technique she will use for each step and to describe it specifically. For example:

“How will you focus on your child?”

“What type of communication will you model?”

If she is unable to answer, use the Review Sheet to help her select the technique for each step.

Manage the Physical Environment

Give the parent items that she can use (e.g., a favorite toy, a similar toy for imitation). Help put away play materials that are not being used or distracting items, so that the parent can focus more easily on the interaction.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of the techniques and the child’s response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing these strategies can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of Sessions 4–7. The parent should practice with your feedback for at least 5 minutes or until she is successful at using the strategies together. If the parent seems to be searching for ideas or struggling, you might make a recommendation such as this:

“I wonder what would happen if you gave Sam a dump truck to put his blocks in. Let’s see if he looks at you or builds on your play.”

Record and Review a Video of a Parent–Child Interaction

Record a 5-Minute Parent–Child Interaction

Once the parent and child are interacting comfortably, record the interaction for about 5 minutes. If two parents are present, record only one parent at a time.

Refrain from giving verbal feedback during the parent–child interaction. However, if the parent is having difficulty engaging the child, you can provide assistance by giving the parent items that she can use (e.g., a favorite toy, a similar toy for imitation), or by putting away play materials that are not being used or distracting items so that the parent can focus more easily on the interaction. You can also stop the recording, provide feedback, and then start recording again. It is important to have a positive example to review with the parent.

Alternatively, as noted above, you can use a previously recorded video that the parent has recorded during a home routine to conduct the video review.

Review the Video with the Parent

The purpose of the video review is to help the parent evaluate her use of the strategies, note their effects on her child’s behavior, and identify the techniques that are most effective for her child. To accomplish this, you will use the Video Review Form—**Focus** and **Adjust** (Form 19).

Begin by giving the parent the Video Review Form. Explain that you will watch the recording

together to look for examples of when she used **Focus on Your Child** or **Adjust Your Communication**, and to observe how her child responded. On the Video Review Form, she will check the box for a technique in the “Parent’s use of techniques” column when she uses that technique, and write how the child responds in the “Child’s response” area. You can also use this form to make notes to review with the parent.

Have the parent tell you to pause the recording periodically whenever she wants to discuss what she has observed or review a particular interaction. If the parent does not tell you to pause after 2 minutes, pause the recording and ask the parent questions to help her reflect on the interaction that she has observed. Begin with open-ended questions, and then move to more specific questions if necessary. The parent’s interaction with her child should guide your question selection. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

“What were you doing to focus on your child?”

“What type of language did you model for your child?”

“How did your child respond to you when you were face to face?”

“Which techniques seemed to work best for helping your child engage with you?”

If the parent is unable to respond, provide her with specific behaviors to look for as she watches the recording, and pause when she notices those behaviors. Use the Video Review Form to guide these questions. It can be helpful to watch the same clip a couple of times. You might say, for instance:

“Let’s watch the recording and pause it when you are using exaggerated gestures and waiting with anticipation to see how Sam responds. Let me know when I should pause.”

Feedback during the video review should be primarily positive. However, if the parent has difficulty with a specific technique and you do not think she is aware of it, the video can be used to provide feedback. You can also encourage her to give her own feedback by having her identify differences in her child’s response, based on differences in her behavior.

“Brianna seems to be engaging really well with you here, using lots of eye contact. Let’s watch a clip of when she responds really well and when she doesn’t, to see if there are differences in what you are doing. What do you think you are doing differently here that is helping her engage?”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice and video review. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has, and to help the parent generate her own ideas for how she can use what she has learned at home. On the Practice Plan, write down the key elements across techniques that are likely to have the greatest impact on the interaction. For example, if the parent directs the child’s play, write “Join your child in his play” and “Imitate his play” under Focus and Adjust. Take the time to answer any questions she has. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

“Which of the techniques we practiced today seemed to work best for helping your child engage with you?”

“What could you try at home to make interacting more successful?”

“What is still challenging?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) and have the parent record between-session practice selections on the Practice Plan—Adjust Your Communication (**Form 31**).

Good goals for this unit include staying actively engaged during play, using eye contact during play or communication, initiating activities, or taking turns.

Good activities for **Focus on Your Child** include toy and active play and daily routines, such as dressing, meals, and bath-time. **Focus on Your Child** is usually only effective if the child enjoys an activity. **Adjust Your Communication** can be effective during both preferred and nonpreferred activities. The Try This at Home! tables in the parent manual have suggestions for how to use the techniques during different activities.



Remind the parent to try to schedule time for play every day. If 15 minutes is too long, help the parent identify shorter periods in which she can focus on her child and adjust her communication.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of one or more techniques she could use during one of the activities she has identified. Write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic in the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what elements of **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** will be most effective for the goal and activity she has identified.

Then ask the parent how she will wait and how she thinks her child will respond. Remind her that the child can respond in many ways. Tell the parent that she can write down how her child responds during practice at home next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box on the Practice Plan.

Finally, ask the parent how she will respond and expand on her child’s response. The child’s response should guide the parent’s response.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using the techniques at home, and brainstorm possible solutions together. Common challenges associated with each technique are listed in the Trouble-shooting Tips table at the end of each session.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes at home between sessions. Remind her to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the section on *Playful Obstruction* in Chapter 4 of the parent manual before the next session.

UNIT 4

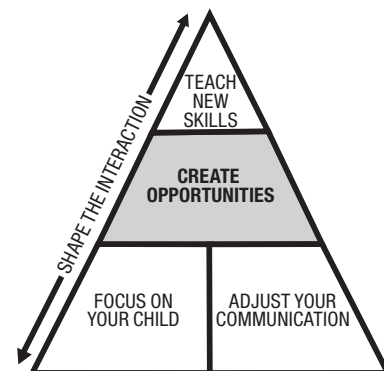
Create Opportunities

Create Opportunities is the **C** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. It is located in the middle of the pyramid. The purpose of **Create Opportunities** is to help the child initiate communication if child does not do so on his own, or to gain the child's attention when needed. It is used after **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

There are three sets of **Create Opportunities** techniques the parent can use: *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*. Each set and each individual technique can be used to address different goals, and some may be more helpful than others during particular routines. Before introducing the first technique, be sure to introduce **Create Opportunities**, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid as outlined in Session 9 on *Playful Obstruction*.

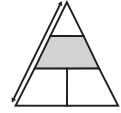
- If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, you will have 4 sessions to teach **Create Opportunities**. We recommend spending one session on each set of techniques and one session reviewing **Create Opportunities**. The order in which the three technique sets are introduced can vary, depending on what works best for the child and parent; however, be sure to provide the parent with a range of techniques to use during different activities and to address different goals.
- If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will have 2 sessions to teach **Create Opportunities**. We recommend spending one session on *Playful Obstruction* and *Balanced Turns*, and one session on *Communicative Temptations*. However, you can base the selection of techniques on the child's individualized goals, the rationale for each techniques, and the activities in which the parent practices these. Encourage the parent to read about all of the techniques, and allow her to provide input on the techniques that she thinks might be most effective for her child and that she feels most comfortable using.

The parent must be able to create an opportunity effectively before she can learn how to teach new skills. If the parent is not able to implement this strategy set effectively (score of 3 or higher on the **Create Opportunities** portion of the Intervention Fidelity Checklist), you may wish to spend additional time on coaching this strategy set before introducing **Teach New Skills**.



SESSION 9

Playful Obstruction



Session Goals

Help the parent use techniques to:

- Increase back-and-forth interactions with her child.
- Provide opportunities for her child to request or protest.
- Gain her child's attention.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys
- Puppets and other objects that can be used to block play
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce **Create Opportunities**.
- Introduce *Playful Obstruction*.
- Demonstrate *Playful Obstruction*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements:

Playful Obstruction

- Help your child anticipate an interruption.
- Playfully block your child's activity.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the previous session, and take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn about the **Create Opportunities** strategy set. She will also learn to use *Playful Obstruction* to increase back and forth interactions, provide opportunities for her child to request or protest, and to gain her child's attention.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Model and Expand Communication* at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Model and Expand Communication* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 7 (page 146). If you have completed the review described in Session 8 and find that challenges have arisen, refer to the Troubleshooting Tips tables in Units 2 and 3 for possible solutions.



If the parent did not practice, problem-solve practical barriers as discussed in Part I, Chapter 3.

Introduce Create Opportunities

Explain the Rationale

Introduce **Create Opportunities**, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 52 there). **Create Opportunities**, the **C** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S., is located in the middle of the pyramid. It is used to help the child initiate and attend to the parent.

Introduce the Techniques

There are three sets of techniques the parent can use to create opportunities for the child: *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*. Each technique can be used to address different goals, and some may be more helpful than others during particular routines.

The parent should continue to begin with the sets of techniques at the base of the pyramid (**Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Communication**). If the child does not initiate, or the parent needs to gain his attention, she will now create an opportunity. Once the parent creates an opportunity, she will continue to wait for the child to respond, and then expand his behavior in a logical way. This strategy set should be used about two-thirds of the time.

Introduce *Playful Obstruction*

Explain the Rationale

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty engaging or initiating with people when they are involved in an activity. With *Playful Obstruction*, the parent joins in the child's activity and then interrupts it in a playful way, to give the child a reason to protest the interruption or request to continue the activity.

Playful Obstruction is useful when the child is not ready for turn taking, gets upset when the parent takes a turn, or is not involved with play with toys. It can improve the child's ability to request and protest. Let the parent know that her child may become more frustrated as demands are increasing, and that this is OK. You will work together to decrease the child's frustration during practice.

Describe for the parent how *Playful Obstruction* can address the child's individual goals. You might say something like the following.

“*Playful Obstruction* is a technique we can use to increase the length of time Brianna will play with you, which is a social engagement goal for her.”

“Sam has a goal of increasing the number of words he uses to communicate. Using *Playful Obstruction*, you can create multiple opportunities for Sam to request something from you or protest your action.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of *Playful Obstruction*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

HELP YOUR CHILD ANTICIPATE AN INTERRUPTION

Children can become frustrated if their play is interrupted without warning. Using an anticipatory phrase before an interruption occurs lets the child know that something is going to change and gives him the opportunity to communicate before the change takes place. Combining the *Use Animation* technique with the anticipatory phrase makes it more noticeable.

Ask the parent: “What is a consistent phrase you can use to help your child anticipate an interruption?” If the parent is unsure, help her think of phrases that would be most applicable to activities the child enjoys.

If the child responds to the anticipatory phrase with a protest, the parent should respond appropriately and model a more complex response, such as “No” or “Stop.” Brainstorm gestures, words, phrases, or sentences the parent can use if the child protests after the anticipatory phrase.

PLAYFULLY BLOCK YOUR CHILD'S ACTIVITY

Playfully interrupting what the child is doing gets the child's attention and creates an opportunity for the child to request or protest. The parent can use a puppet, blanket, or other toy to make the interruption more fun and less frustrating. If the child is wandering aimlessly or running back and forth, the parent can get in the way of where he wants to go.

Ask the parent: “What are some ways you can playfully block your child's play?” If the parent has difficulty, give concrete examples of how to block play in fun ways during play activities the child enjoys.

Explain the Steps of *Playful Obstruction*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 52 there) to review the steps of *Playful Obstruction* and tie them to one of the child's goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate *Playful Obstruction*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use *Playful Obstruction*, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Playful Obstruction* with the child, point out any behaviors the child uses to protest the interruption or respond to the obstruction, particularly if he protests with subtle behaviors. The parent needs to be able to recognize and interpret the child's communication before she can respond to it. For example, you might say:

“Sam is running around the room, so I'm going to say, 'I'll get you,' and catch him. . . . I'm waiting to see what he does. . . . He said, 'Go,' so I'm letting him go. . . . I expanded his communication by saying, 'Let me go.'”

Once you have finished the demonstration, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What did you notice about the number of times Brianna communicated with me?”

“What did she do when I used a puppet and big gestures to help her anticipate the interruption?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow in *Playful Obstruction*, using specific examples based on the child's current play. Give the parent specific examples of anticipatory phrases she can use and ways to block her child's play.

“Let's see what happens if you use *Playful Obstruction* to interrupt Brianna's play with the ball. Remember to *Use Animation* and say, “I am going to get the ball,” to give her the opportunity to protest before you take the ball.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Give the parent items that she can use to block play, such as a puppet or other toy, or assist her by removing distracting items.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of *Playful Obstruction* and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing this technique can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 146).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Begin with open-ended questions, and move to more specific questions as necessary. The parent's interaction with the child should guide your question selection. Here are some examples of questions you could include:

“How did it feel when you used *Playful Obstruction*?”

“Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How did your child respond when you used the anticipatory phrase? Did he indicate that he wanted you to continue, did he protest, or did he not respond?”

“How did your child respond when you interrupted his toy or motor play?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32).

Good goals for this session include staying actively engaged during play by looking at the parent and/or using verbal or nonverbal communication to request or protest. For example, the child will use a gesture to protest, or the child will use a single word to request.

Good activities for this session include toy and active play or daily routines such as bathtime in which play is a part of the routine. The parent may also use *Playful Obstruction* throughout the day to gain her child's attention. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 56 there) provides examples of how to use *Playful Obstruction* during play and daily activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Use the Practice Plan's sequence graphic to talk the parent through a positive example of using *Playful Obstruction* during an activity the parent has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic.

Ask the parent how she will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

Ask how she will help the child anticipate the interruption and how she will playfully block him if needed. These aspects should be specific to the activity. Write down the specific anticipatory phrase the parent should use and how she will obstruct play in the **Create Opportunities** box.

Ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she uses *Playful Obstruction* and

waits. Have her indicate whether the child will respond with a protest to the anticipatory phrase or with a request during the interruption. If the parent reports that the child will respond negatively or won't respond, discuss it during problem solving. Write down how the child might respond to wait time and any strategies the parent should use to wait in the "Wait" box. This could include waiting after the anticipatory phrase or waiting after the obstruction. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds during practice at home next to the child icon located under the "Wait" box.

Next, ask how the parent will respond and expand on her child's response. The child's response should guide the parent's response. Have her write down that if the child protests the anticipatory phrase, the parent will stop the interruption and expand on the child's response. For example, if the child pulls his toy away when the parent says, "Here comes the puppet," the parent will interrupt and will say, "No," or "Don't take the toy").

Have her write down the gesture, word, phrase, or sentence she will use to expand on her child's response (e.g., she will give the child the toy and say the word "Truck" or the phrase "Give me the truck"). Remember, this should add one level of complexity to the child's spontaneous communication.

Help the parent see how her child's response informs her response to her child.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about using *Playful Obstruction* at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for this technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 146).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice. Let her know you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the section on *Balanced Turns*, the next technique of **Create Opportunities**, in Chapter 4 of the parent manual.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Playful Obstruction*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Does not use an anticipatory phrase

- Give an example of a specific phrase to use.
- Remind her that such a phrase can decrease frustration and let the child protest the interruption.

Is hesitant or unsure about how to block the child's play

- Suggest how she can block the play with her hand.
- Hand her a puppet or other toy she can use to block the play.
- Remind her that communication can take the form of body movement changes, gestures, fleeting eye contact, or words. Responding to subtle aspects of the child's behavior will teach him that his behavior carries meaning and elicits a response.

Does not respond to the child's protests

- Remind her that the focus is on increasing initiations. If the child communicates before she interrupts the play, she should respond by stopping the interruption and model "Stop" or "No."
- Help her recognize how the child protests.

Uses this technique too frequently

- Remind her that *Playful Obstruction* should only be used for about two-thirds of an interaction. If it is used too often, the child is likely to get frustrated.
- Remind the parent to return to **Focus on Your Child** after using *Playful Obstruction*.

If the child . . .

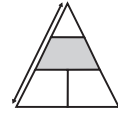
You can . . .

Becomes frustrated

- Suggest that the parent use a puppet or toy to interrupt the play instead of her hand.
- Suggest increasing the time between the anticipatory phrase and the interruption, to give the child enough time to protest.
- Ask her how she can make the obstruction more fun or part of the play.

SESSION 10

Balanced Turns



Session Goals

- Help the parent use techniques to:
- Help her child take turns.
 - Help her child request.
 - Show her child new ways to play.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Toys that are good for turn taking, such as cars, balls, or a ball chute
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Optional: Play Action Ideas (Form 13)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Balanced Turns*.
- Demonstrate *Balanced Turns*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Balanced Turns*

- Help your child anticipate turns.
- Take a turn.
- Model play during your turn.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family about how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The parent will learn to use *Balanced Turns* to help the child take turns, teach the child to request, and show the child new ways to play. This is another technique the parent can use to create an opportunity.

Ask the parent: “Do you have questions about today’s session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?” Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address today.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Have the parent talk you through how she used *Playful Obstruction* at home. Discuss the child's response, what went well, and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Playful Obstruction* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 9 (page 146). These challenges are often intensified at home, because the child is often not used to the parent's interrupting his play. It may be helpful to have the parent demonstrate her use of the technique in order to identify the problem if it is not clear.



Remember to give the parent positive feedback for practice and attempts at home.

Introduce *Balanced Turns*

Explain the Rationale

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty sharing toys and taking turns with others. They may also have difficulty initiating and playing with toys appropriately. With *Balanced Turns*, the parent focuses on the child, and then takes a turn with the child's toy or activity. During her turn, she can model play and wait for the child to respond. She responds to him by giving him back the item for his turn and expanding on his communication.

Balanced Turns is helpful when the materials support taking turns and when turn taking is a goal. The child also benefits from seeing new ways to play. *Balanced Turns* is similar to *Playful Obstruction* in that it is highly likely to elicit communication from the child. However, it differs from *Playful Obstruction* in that the parent follows through with a short turn even if the child protests. *Balanced Turns* helps the child understand and use turns; increases back-and-forth interaction, which is important for play and language; and shows the child new ways to play. Like other **Create Opportunities** techniques, this one should be used about two-thirds of the time

Describe how *Balanced Turns* can be used to address the child's individual goals. Turn taking is a skill that develops as children grow. If the child is not ready for turn taking with toys, talk to the parent about how she can model turns during social games or structured activities. You might say something like the following:

"We can use *Balanced Turns* to help Brianna increase the length of the interaction (her engagement), to help her request (a language goal), and to show her new ways to play (a functional play goal)."

"Sam has a goal of increasing turn taking and engaging in pretend play. *Balanced Turns* will address both goals. During your turn, you can model pretend play actions. This can help him develop pretend play."

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of *Balanced Turns*. Ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent discuss how she would use *Balanced Turns* with her child.

HELP YOUR CHILD ANTICIPATE TURNS

The parent should use the same phrase paired with a gesture to signal that she is about to take a turn. This is similar to the use of an anticipatory phrase in *Playful Obstruction* and gives the child a warning that something is about to change. *Use Animation* can help the child attend to the phrase.

Ask the parent: “What word, phrase, or gesture can you use to help your child anticipate your turn?” If the parent is unsure, help her identify a short, consistent phrase she can use during the activity, based on the child’s skill level. If the child does not understand pronouns, have the parent use names to indicate turns (e.g., “Mom’s turn,” “Brianna’s turn”).

TAKE A TURN

Once the parent has helped the child anticipate her turn, the parent should take a turn. Unlike in *Playful Obstruction*, the parent should take her turn even if the child protests or moves away.

Ask the parent: “What activity or toy would work well for taking turns?” If she is unsure, help the parent think about activities her child enjoys, and encourage her to select one that would work well for turn taking.

Help the parent identify the appropriate amount of time for her turn. In some instances, the parent’s turn may be fleeting, and she may not be able to complete the next step of modeling a new play action.

If the child is likely to become highly frustrated with turn taking, the parent can trade similar toys instead of taking turns with one toy. Once the child becomes familiar with the back-and-forth nature of the interaction, the parent can begin to take turns with one toy.

If the child seems to lose interest whenever the parent takes a turn, it could be because he may not know that he can get the toy back. In this case, the parent should return the toy to teach him that he can get the toy back.

MODEL PLAY DURING YOUR TURN

Once the child is able to take turns, the parent can model play during her turn, to show the child a new way to play with the materials. If the child cannot wait yet, the parent should not model a new play action.

Ask the parent: “What new play skills can you model when you take a turn?” If she is not sure, help the parent identify skills that are related to the child’s interest and appropriate for the child’s skill level. If needed, review the chart of play skills to model in the parent manual (Table 4.2 there).

You can also help the parent brainstorm play actions. Use the blank Play Action Ideas form (Form 13) to help the parent think about different play actions with a toy. Have the parent write

the name of a toy the child likes to play with in one of the “Toy” circles in the middle of a set of boxes. Then fill in the boxes around the circle with different actions the parent could model. These could include bringing an object into play, combining objects, or a pretend or symbolic play action.

Explain the Steps of *Balanced Turns*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 52 there) to review the steps and tie them to one of the child’s goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate *Balanced Turns*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use *Balanced Turns*. Point out specific elements you will use, based on the child’s needs. These could include the time between turns, whether you take turns or trade toys, or the type of play you will model. Ask the parent to watch for how her child responds and how you respond to her child’s actions:

“Watch for how I use *Balanced Turns* with Brianna while she is playing with the ball. Pay attention to how I let her know I am going to take a turn with her ball, and to how long a turn I take. Let’s see how she responds when I take a turn. If she gets frustrated, we can see what happens if I try trading balls instead.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Balanced Turns* with the child, point out the length of your turn, if you are trading toys, and/or the type of play you are modeling:

“Sam is playing with the cars. I am going to say, ‘My turn,’ take the car, briefly imitate his play, and wait to see how he responds. (*Coach does this.*) He looked at me. So I responded to this communication by giving him back the car.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What did Brianna do when I took a turn?”

“What type of play did you see me model?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow for *Balanced Turns*, using specific examples based on the child’s play and skill level:

“Brianna is holding the train. Let’s see what she does when you say, ‘Mom’s turn,’ and take a quick turn with the train. Wait to see how she responds, and then give her back the train.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Offer toys that can work well for turn taking. If the child is becoming frustrated, offer more structured activities or similar toys that the parent can trade with the child, and put away toys that cause disruption.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of *Balanced Turns* and the child’s response. Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 153).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the in-session practice. Use this time to answer questions she has and to clarify any key elements of *Balanced Turns*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did that feel when you used *Balanced Turns*?”

“Can you imagine playing that way at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How does your child respond when you try to take a turn? Does he allow the turn, leave, express frustration, or request his turn?”

“How many turns can your child take during an activity?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the parent’s completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32).

Good goals for this session include sharing toys, turn taking, staying actively engaged during play, using verbal or nonverbal communication to request, or using more complex play skills (e.g., functional or pretend play). For example, the child will reach toward the toy or name the toy to indicate that he wants a turn.

Good activities for *Balanced Turns* include toy and active play. For some children, this technique may need to be practiced during a structured activity. *Balanced Turns* can be used during some daily routines, such as mealtime (the parent and child can take turns taking a drink or bite) or bathtime (they can take turns with toys). The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 60 there) has examples of how to use *Balanced Turns* during play and daily activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using *Balanced Turns* during an activity she has selected. Have her write down the key elements in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Communication**.

Ask the parent how she will help her child anticipate her turn and what she will do during her turn. Help the parent identify the key elements that are most effective for the child. These could include taking a short turn, trading toys, or modeling a specific type of play.

Ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she uses *Balanced Turns* and waits. Have the parent write down how the child might respond and any reminders about how long to wait in the “Wait” box. Remind the parent that she can keep her turn short and return materials immediately if necessary, to teach the child turn taking. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds during practice at home next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box.

Next, ask the parent how she will respond and expand on her child’s response. Help the parent decide on the specific gestures, words, phrases, or sentence she will use, such as “My turn,” “Brianna’s turn,” or a tap on her chest.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Balanced Turns* at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (on the facing page). Challenges often intensify in the home with the child’s own favorite toys. If the parent reports that the use of toys at home may present a challenge, suggest that she identify and/or bring one or two toys to practice with during the next session. Be sure to note this, to allow time for practice at the start of the next session.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the section on *Communicative Temptations*, the last **Create Opportunities** strategy, in Chapter 4 of the parent manual.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Balanced Turns*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Does not respond to the child's request for a turn

- Remind her to respond to all types of appropriate communication by giving her child the object back.
- Help her recognize how the child requests.

Tries to prompt more complex language or play skills

- Remind her that the focus is on increasing initiations. She will focus on teaching these skills later in the program.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Leaves or becomes frustrated each time the parent takes a turn

- Remind her to use an anticipatory phrase to help the child anticipate her turn.
- Suggest that the parent make her turn shorter. She may even begin by immediately returning the toy.
- Suggest that the parent trade identical or similar objects instead of taking a turn with one toy.
- Limit the number of items available, to increase the child's attention to the parent's turn.
- Help the parent identify structured activities that lend themselves to turn taking, such as throwing a ball or balloon back and forth or rolling it.
- Remind the parent to return the object even if the child loses interest. This teaches him that there is a way to get the object back.
- Suggest the parent return to **Focus on Your Child** until the child is engaged again in play before taking another turn.

Does not let the parent take a turn

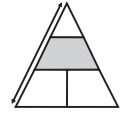
- Help the parent identify structured activities that lend themselves to turn taking (see above).
- Suggest that the parent use a puppet to take the turn instead.

Becomes frustrated when the parent plays with the toy in a new way

- Suggest that the parent take shorter turns and only model play on half of them.
- Have the parent imitate the child's play during her turn.
- Suggest the parent use *Playful Obstruction* while saying, "My turn," and then quickly return the object to the child.

SESSION 11

Communicative Temptations



Session Goals

Help the parent use techniques to:

- Increase opportunities for her child to initiate.
- Gain her child's attention.
- Expand the reasons her child communicates.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Toys that require assistance (bubbles, balloons, spinning tops)
- Toys that have multiple pieces or parts
- Favorite snacks that can be served in small portions
- Clear containers
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Communicative Temptations*.
- Demonstrate *Communicative Temptations*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Communicative Temptations*

- Put fun things in sight and out of reach.
- Control access to items.
- Give small portions.
- Use items that require your assistance.
- Have an item missing.
- Present a silly situation.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the last session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The parent will learn to use *Communicative Temptations* to help her child initiate, to gain his attention, and to expand the reasons he communicates. This lesson includes a number of different temptations. Some parents learn better if you teach only a few temptations or introduce, demonstrate, and coach the use of one temptation at a time. If you think either approach is preferable, let the parent know.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there additional

topics you would like to cover?” Adjust the session agenda if necessary to address the parent’s concerns.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Balanced Turns* at home. Discuss the child’s response, what went well, and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up during the between-session practice. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Balanced Turns* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 10 (page 153). If the parent has identified and/or brought in toys from home that were particularly challenging to take turns with, take a moment for the parent to practice with them, and provide feedback.

Introduce *Communicative Temptations*

Explain the Rationale

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty initiating interactions or seeking out others when they want or need something. With *Communicative Temptations*, the parent first focuses on the child and adjusts her communication. She then uses a communicative temptation and waits for the child to respond. Once the child responds, she responds to his behavior in a logical way and expands on his response.

The various individual strategies included in *Communicative Temptations* are useful for a child who initiates very little and for a child who becomes frustrated when the parent interrupts his play. They can help the child to initiate and direct communication to others for a variety of reasons. These techniques are easy to use during daily routines. Unlike *Playful Obstruction* and *Balanced Turns*, some of the individual *Communicative Temptations* are set up ahead of time, so that the child must seek out the parent to access items and activities that he enjoys. Like other techniques in **Create Opportunities**, *Communicative Temptations* should be used about two-thirds of the time.

Describe how *Communicative Temptations* can address the child’s individual goals. Highlight the ways the parent can expand the reasons her child communicates. These could include requesting, protesting, conversational repair, gaining attention, and/or using questions to gain information. You might say something like this:

“Brianna has a goal of using a point, vocalization, or single word to initiate a request. By using *Communicative Temptations*, you increase the opportunities Brianna has to initiate communication with you.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of *Communicative Temptations*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions to help the parent apply the information to her child.

PUT FUN THINGS IN SIGHT AND OUT OF REACH

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty gaining others' attention or initiating requests for help. Putting things in sight and out of reach creates opportunities for a child to initiate with a parent. This technique is helpful if the child becomes frustrated when his play is interrupted.

Ask the parent: "How can you put your child's favorite things in sight and out of reach?" If the parent is not sure, help her identify a favorite object that can be placed on a shelf or in a clear container. Discuss ways the parent can store favorite items at home that can encourage the child to initiate, while also preventing the child from using unsafe behavior to access them on his own.

CONTROL ACCESS TO ITEMS

Encourage the parent to keep control of items the child likes. This can gain his attention and help him ask for things he wants. By holding the item near her eyes, the parent can encourage the child to reference her with eye contact.

Help the parent watch for signs that the child wants an item, such as reaching for it or looking at the item. The parent should give her child the item if he uses a communicative behavior, but not let him grab it out of her hand.

If the child is frustrated with this technique, the parent may have more success with putting things in sight and out of reach.

GIVE SMALL PORTIONS

Providing only a small amount or piece of an item the child has requested can help him communicate for more. This temptation is particularly effective during snacks or meals with favorite foods. The parent should remain present and face to face, so the child knows he can ask for more.

Ask the parent: "What items does your child like that have multiple similar parts?" If the parent is unsure, help the parent think of materials the child likes that can be delivered in small portions.

USE ITEMS THAT REQUIRE YOUR ASSISTANCE

Another *Communicative Temptations* is to offer items or activities for which the child will need assistance. This can encourage the child to request help. This temptation is particularly helpful if the child gets very frustrated when the parent tries to interrupt his play.

Ask the parent: "For what favorite items or activities does your child need your assistance?" If the parent has trouble coming up with examples, help the parent think of snacks, toys, and activities the child might like that require assistance, such as juice boxes, wrapped treats, bubbles, balloons, spinning tops, wind-up toys, tickles, chase, or ball games.

HAVE AN ITEM MISSING

Leaving out a part or piece of a favorite activity can encourage the child to request the missing piece. The parent should show the missing piece to the child if he does not spontaneously initi-

ate the request. If the child is not able to identify that a particular item is missing, small portions should be used instead. This strategy is especially effective for teaching the child to ask questions, such as “Where is the _____?”

Ask the parent: “In what activities could you have an item missing?” If the parent is unsure, help the parent brainstorm ways to set up favorite activities ahead of time so that an item that the child needs is missing.

PRESENT A SILLY SITUATION

Suggest that the parent complete a familiar routine in a silly, obviously wrong way. This can encourage the child to communicate the right way to do it. If the child does not respond, the parent should explain how the situation was silly, and then complete the routine as expected.

If the child does not have a concept of the right and the wrong ways to complete an activity, this temptation is not appropriate.

Explain the Steps of *Communicative Temptations*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 52 there) to review the *Communicative Temptations* steps and tie them to one of the child’s goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate *Communicative Temptations*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use specific *Communicative Temptations*, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child. Focus on specific *Communicative Temptations* that you think will be most beneficial for the child. Show the parent how you have arranged the environment to have items you know the child prefers in sight and out of reach, if relevant. You might say something like this:

“Watch for the *Communicative Temptations* techniques I use with Brianna while she is playing with the toys. Pay attention to how I wait for her to initiate with me before I respond. Let’s see what happens when I have her favorite ball in sight and out of reach.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate this technique with the child, identify the particular temptation you choose and the child’s response to each one:

“I am using small portions by giving Sam only two crackers and waiting to see how he responds. (*Coach does this.*) He said the word ‘Cracker.’ So I’m giving him more crackers and expanding his language by saying, ‘Eat cracker.’”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If necessary, ask more specific probing questions, such as these:

“How did Brianna respond when I put her favorite toy in sight and out of reach?”

“What did Sam do when I had the trains missing from the train set?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Parent practice with *Communicative Temptations* could include play with toys (in sight and out of reach), a snack (small portions), or putting on the child’s jacket and shoes (items that require assistance, or a silly situation) at the end of the session. Remind the parent of the steps to follow, using specific examples based on the child’s activity. Help her identify the *Communicative Temptations* that might be most effective for the routine. You might say, for example:

“Remember to place the item within Brianna’s line of sight but out of her reach. Then wait for her to communicate with you.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Help the parent put items in sight and out of reach. Give the parent toys the child likes but requires assistance to use, and help the parent control access to materials.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of *Communicative Temptations* and the child’s response. Suggestions for feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 161).



Provide positive feedback on the techniques the parent uses well to elicit a positive response from the child.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the in-session practice. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has, and help her identify specific *Communicative Temptations* that she would like to use at home. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did it feel when you used *Communicative Temptations*?”

“Can you imagine using some of these temptations during your daily routines? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How does your child respond when you use one of the *Communicative Temptations*? Does he look at you, use a gesture, word, or sentence?” (If necessary, ask about a specific technique, such as in sight and out of reach or items requiring assistance.)

“Which temptations were most effective in helping your child initiate?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the parent’s completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32).

Good goals for this session include staying actively engaged during play; using a gesture, word, or phrase to request or protest; and using a gesture, sound, or word to gain attention, ask questions, or repair conversation.



Remind the parent to plan extra time during these daily routines to use these strategies to enhance the child’s communication.

Good activities for this session include daily routines, such as mealtime, dressing, and bathtime, as well as play. These strategies are only effective if the child enjoys an activity. Help the parent identify up to three routines the child enjoys in which she could use these strategies. Refer to the Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 65 there) for suggestions of *Communicative Temptations* to use during different activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using a *Communicative Temptations* strategy during one of the activities she has identified. Help the parent write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent how she will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** techniques.

Ask the parent which specific *Communicative Temptation* she thinks will be most effective for the goal and activity she has identified.

Ask what the child’s response might be after the parent uses the communicative temptation and waits. Have her write down how the child might respond to wait time, and any strategies the parents should use when waiting, in the “Wait” box. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds during practice at home next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box.

Next, ask how the parent will respond and expand on her child’s response. Remind the parent to respond to any behavior her child uses to initiate. She will learn to prompt for a specific response later on.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Communicative Temptations* at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 161).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes between sessions. Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice.

If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, the next session will be a review of the **Create Opportunities** techniques. This will include recording and reviewing a video of the parent using the techniques with her child. Ask the parent to think about the routines she might like to complete during the next session. It is great to have the review sessions in the home to encourage practice during daily routines. If a home visit is not possible, have the parent bring items from home to use during the next session. These could include food, clothes, toys, or any other items that would assist with practice of these techniques during daily routines. You can also have the parent bring in a video of a home routine to conduct the video review. This allows the parent to receive feedback on her use of the strategies across routines.

If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will not have time for the review session. If you are unable to complete a review session, have the parent read the first section or two of Chapter 5 in the parent manual, which covers **Teach New Skills**.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Communicative Temptations*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Tries to prompt for more complex language

- Remind her that the focus is on increasing initiations. She will focus on teaching complex language later in the program.
- Remind her to wait and respond to any initiation.
- Help her recognize how the child communicates.

Stops the back-and-forth interaction because it is repetitive

- Acknowledge this challenge, and reiterate the importance of repetition for learning. Remind her to continue with a strategy until the child loses interest.

Cannot add extra time to the routine at home

- Help her choose another routine in which she can add a minute or two to use the temptation at the beginning.
- Have her practice a quick snack or dressing routine, such as putting on shoes, to see if she can use a temptation without adding much time.

Has difficulty using the techniques

- Introduce the techniques one at a time, and have her practice each technique in isolation.
- Review the techniques you feel will be most beneficial for the child.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Attempts to climb to get an object in sight and out of reach

- Have the parent place the object in a clear container that the child cannot open.
- Suggest that the parent use a lock on the cupboard or refrigerator where the item is kept, so the child can initiate communication to the parent for access.

Grabs the toy from the parent

- Suggest that the parent stand up or hold the item out of the child's reach.

Becomes frustrated with the parent's controlling access

- Suggest that the parent use in sight and out of reach instead.
- Offer the parent a clear container to put the item in.

Does not initiate for items that require assistance

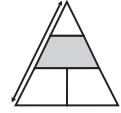
- Ask the parent to activate the toy once, place it within the child's reach, and wait to see if he initiates.
- Suggest that the parent hand the child the item in a clear container he cannot open, and see if he initiates.

Does not initiate for a missing item

- Ask the parent to show the missing item, place it within the child's reach, and wait to see if he initiates.
- Suggest using small portions instead.

SESSION 12

Review of **Create Opportunities**



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Use the **Create Opportunities** strategies together to increase her child's initiations and gain his attention.
- Recognize how her use of the strategies influences her child's response.
- Determine whether additional time should be spent on any techniques to help her child initiate.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Create Opportunities** (Form 15)

- Video Review Form—**Create Opportunities** (Form 20)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Favorite toys or items that can be used to create opportunities
- Video recording and viewing equipment



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review **Create Opportunities**.
- Demonstrate **Create Opportunities**.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Record and review a video of a parent-child interaction.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family about how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

This session will be spent reviewing the **Create Opportunities** strategy set, the **C** in the middle of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. You will help the parent use these techniques together with the previous strategies; recognize how her use of these techniques influences her child's response; and determine whether additional time should be spent on any techniques to help her child initiate or gain his attention, prior to introducing **Teach New Skills**.

You will provide a brief recap of the **Create Opportunities** techniques and demonstrate them. The parent will have the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on any key elements of these strategies that she is having difficulty with during different routines. If you have been unable to go to the home, you can practice in the routines that you selected the previous session.

You will then record a brief parent–child interaction. You and the parent will review the video together, discuss the parent’s use of strategies and the child’s response, and problem-solve as necessary. If you have been unable to go to the home, you can review a video of a home routine that the parent has recorded and brought to the session, instead of recording a video during the session.

Ask the parent: “Do you have questions about today’s session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?” Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address.



If you have been unable to teach the parent to use all **Create Opportunities** techniques accurately, that is OK! As long as she is using at least one of these techniques effectively to gain the child’s attention, you can move to **Teach New Skills**.

Review the Practice Plan



The challenges the parent reports should help guide the review session.

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Communicative Temptations* at home. Discuss the child’s response, what went well, and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 11 (page 161).

Review Create Opportunities

Review the Rationale

Using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, explain how **Create Opportunities** is used with the previous sets of strategies. There are three sets of techniques the parent can use to create opportunities: *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*. These strategies help the child engage and communicate when he does not do so in response to the techniques at the base of the pyramid. The parent will use one of the **Create Opportunities** techniques to gain the child’s attention before she teaches a new skill.

Briefly Review the Key Elements and the Steps of the Techniques

Use the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Create Opportunities** (Form 15) to review examples of techniques that are relevant for the child. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions. Write the key elements that are likely to have the greatest impact on the interaction in the box next to each technique. For example, if the parent blocks play without using an anticipatory phrase, write “Use anticipatory phrase” next to *Playful Obstruction* on the form. It can also be helpful to write examples of the anticipatory phrase she might use.

Demonstrate Create Opportunities

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use the key elements of the techniques you have identified, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate, identify the techniques you are using and the child's response. Be sure to emphasize any technique that the parent has indicated she would like to practice or that she is having difficulty using. Here is an example:

“Sam is playing with the trains. I'm going to pick up the train tracks and wait for him to initiate . . . He looked at me and said, ‘More track’ . . . I gave him one track and expanded his communication by saying, ‘I want more track.’

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” Ask more specific questions if the parent is unable to respond:

“What did you notice about the number of times Sam initiated with me?”

“What did he do when I held onto the tracks and waited with an expectant look?”

If the parent has a difficult time responding, ask her to focus on one element, and then demonstrate the technique again:

“Watch to see which technique I use to create an opportunity for Sam to communicate. What technique did I use? How did he communicate?”



If the parent has chosen several different techniques to practice, demonstrate them one at a time, and allow the parent to practice in between.

Doing this helps the parent begin to observe how specific techniques affect her child's social communication skills.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

In the clinic setting, this practice could include play with toys, a snack, or putting on the child's jacket and shoes at the end of the session. In the home setting, this could include a variety of caregiving routines. To increase independence, ask the parent to identify the technique for each step. For example:

“How will you focus on your child?”

“What technique will you use to create an opportunity?”

If she is unable to answer, use the Review Sheet to help her select the technique for each step.

Manage the Physical Environment

Give the parent items that she can use (e.g., a favorite toy, a similar toy for imitation). Help put away unused or distracting items, so that the parent can focus more easily on the interaction.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of the techniques and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing these strategies can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of each session. The parent should practice with your feedback for at least 5 minutes or until she is successful at using the **Focus on Your Child**, **Adjust Your Communication**, and **Create Opportunities** strategies together. If the parent seems to be searching for ideas or struggling, you might make a recommendation such as this:

“Let's see what happens if you use in sight and out of reach with the crackers. Place the cracker box in Sam's line of sight but out of his reach, and wait for him to communicate with you.”

Record and Review a Video of a Parent–Child Interaction

Record a 5-Minute Parent–Child Interaction

Once the parent and child are interacting comfortably, record the interaction for about 5 minutes. If two parents are present, record only one parent at a time.

Refrain from giving verbal feedback during the parent–child interaction. However, if the parent is having difficulty engaging the child, you can provide assistance by giving the parent items that she can use (e.g., a favorite toy, a puppet to block play), or by putting away play materials that are not being used or distracting items so that the parent can focus more easily on the interaction. You can also stop the recording, provide feedback, and then start recording again. It is important to have a positive example to review with the parent.

Alternatively, as noted above, you can use a video that the parent has recorded during a home routine to conduct the video review.

Review the Video with the Parent

The purpose of the video review is to help the parent evaluate her use of the strategies, note their effects on her child's behavior, and identify the techniques that are most effective for her child. To accomplish this, you will use the Video Review Form—**Create Opportunities** (Form 20).

Begin by giving the parent the Video Review Form. Explain that you will watch the recording together to look for examples of when she used **Create Opportunities**, and to observe how her child responded. On the Video Review Form, she will check the box for a technique in the “Parent's use of techniques” column when she uses that technique, and write how the child responds in the “Child's response” area. You can also use this form to make notes to review with the parent.

Have the parent tell you to pause the recording periodically whenever she wants to discuss what she has observed or review a particular interaction. If the parent does not have you pause after 2 minutes, pause the recording and ask the parent questions to help her reflect on the interaction that she has observed. Begin with open-ended questions, and then move to more specific questions if necessary. The parent's interaction with her child should guide your question selection. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

“How did you create opportunities for your child to initiate?”

“How did your child respond to you when you used that technique?”

“Which techniques seemed to work best for helping your child initiate?”

If the parent is unable to respond, provide her with specific behaviors to look for as she watches the recording, and pause when she notices those behaviors. You might say, for instance:

“Let's watch the recording and pause it whenever you use *Playful Obstruction*. We can then talk about how Sam responded. Remember, tell me when I should pause.”

Feedback during the video review should be primarily positive. However, if the parent has difficulty with a specific technique and you do not think she is aware of it, the video can be used to provide feedback. You can also encourage her to give her own feedback by having her identify differences in her child's response, based on differences in her behavior.

“I noticed that Brianna gets upset when you interrupt her play sometimes. But here she tolerates it really well, and looks at you when you use *Playful Obstruction*. What do you think you are doing here to keep her from getting upset? Let's watch the earlier clip where she gets upset, to see what you are doing differently here that helps her respond so well.”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice interaction. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has, and help the parent generate her own ideas for how she can use what she has learned at home. On the Practice Plan, write down the key elements under each technique that are likely to have the greatest positive impact on the child's behavior. For example, if the parent does not wait after creating an opportunity, write down the length of time the parent should wait in the “Wait” box. Take the time to answer any questions she has. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

“Which of the techniques we practiced today seemed to work best for helping your child initiate?”

“What could you try at home to get your child's attention more easily?”

“What is still challenging?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record these selections on the Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32).

Good goals for this unit include staying actively engaged during play; taking turns; or using a gesture, sound, word, or sentence to initiate or respond for a variety of reasons, such as to request an item, to protest, to comment, to gain attention, or request information.



Remind the parent to plan extra time during these daily routines to use these strategies to enhance the child's communication.

Good activities for this unit include toy and active play and daily routines, such as meals, dressing, and bedtime. These strategies are only effective if the child enjoys an activity. Refer to the Try This at Home! tables in the parent manual for suggestions of how to use the **Create Opportunities** techniques during different activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of one or more techniques she could use during one of the activities she has identified. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent how she will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** techniques.

Ask the parent what **Create Opportunities** technique(s) she thinks would be most effective for the goal and activity she has identified.

Ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she waits after she creates an opportunity. Have her write down how the child might respond to wait time and any strategies she should use to wait in the "Wait" box on the Practice Plan. Remind her that the child can respond in many ways. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds during practice at home next to the child icon located under the "Wait" box.

Ask the parent how she will respond and expand on her child's response. The child's response should guide the parent's response.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using the techniques at home, and brainstorm possible solutions together. Common challenges associated with each technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of each session.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes at home between sessions. Remind her to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the section on *Prompts and Rewards* in Chapter 5 of the parent manual before the next session.

UNIT 5

Teach New Skills

Teach New Skills is the **T** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. It is located at the top of the pyramid. The purpose of **Teach New Skills** is to increase the complexity of the child's communication, imitation, and play skills. Up to this point, the main focus of this program has been on increasing the child's engagement and initiations. The second half of the program focuses on increasing the complexity of the child's language, imitation, and play skills by using prompts and rewards. *Prompts* are cues that help the child produce a more complex or new response. *Rewards* or *reinforcement* are the positive consequences that are provided after the child uses the new or more complex skill. Rewards increase the likelihood that the child will use the skill again.

There are four sets of prompts the parent will learn to teach new skills: *Prompts for Using Communication*, *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, *Prompts for Imitation*, and *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Before introducing the specific prompts, introduce **Teach New Skills** and teach the initial session on *Prompts and Rewards*.

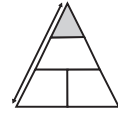
- If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, you will have 7 sessions for the **Teach New Skills** strategies. Begin by teaching the session on *Prompts and Rewards*. Then spend at least one session on each type of prompt. We recommend teaching these sessions in the following order: *Prompts for Using Communication*, *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, *Review of Prompts for Communication*, *Prompts for Imitation*, *Prompts for Expanding Play*, and *Review of Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play*. You can vary the order or choose to spend more time on a specific type of prompt if needed.
- If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will have 4 sessions to complete the information in this unit. We recommend the following order: *Prompts and Rewards*, *Prompts for Using Communication*, *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, and *Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play*. However, once you review *Prompts and Rewards*, you can choose the amount of time to spend on each set of prompts (depending on the child and parent goals). For some very young children, you may choose to teach following directions and receptive language through *Prompts for Expanding Play*.

The parent should be able to use the **Teach New Skills** strategies effectively before she begins learning how to **Shape the Interaction**. If the parent is not able to teach new skills effectively (score of 3 or higher on the **Teach New Skills** portion of the Intervention Fidelity Checklist), you may wish to spend additional time on **Teach New Skills** before introducing **Shape the Interaction**.



SESSION 13

Prompts and Rewards



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Learn how to make prompts effective.
- Understand how to make rewards effective.
- Understand the steps of teaching new skills.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—*Prompts and Rewards* (Form 33)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create opportunities
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce **Teach New Skills**.
- Introduce *Prompts and Rewards*.
- Demonstrate *Prompts and Rewards*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Prompts and Rewards*

- Make sure your child is motivated.
- Prompt a more complex skill related to what your child is doing.
- Use clear prompts.
- Wait after giving a prompt.
- Give more support as needed.
- Give less support over time.
- Make sure your child does what you ask.
- Give the reward immediately.
- Use a natural reward.
- Only reward positive behaviors.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family about how things have been since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity to occupy him while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn how to use *Prompts and Rewards* effectively to **Teach New Skills**. There is more discussion in this session, because the key elements of *Prompts and Rewards* need to be taught before specific prompts can be used effectively. The practice portion of the session will focus on how to identify good opportunities and skills to prompt.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk through how she used the **Create Opportunities** techniques she practiced in the home. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for **Create Opportunities** techniques are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of Sessions 9–11.



If the parent is unable to use **Create Opportunities** effectively, you will need to provide additional coaching on this strategy set before the parent can successfully begin **Teach New Skills**.

Introduce Teach New Skills

Explain the Rationale

Introduce **Teach New Skills**, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 68 there). **Teach New Skills** is the **T** in the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S., at the top of the pyramid. **Focus on Your Child, Adjust Your Communication, and Create Opportunities** help increase the child's engagement and initiations. However, sometimes these strategies by themselves are not enough to increase the complexity of the child's skills. **Teach New Skills** is used when the child does not increase the complexity of his skills with the techniques at the base and the middle of the pyramid.

Introduce the Techniques

There are four sets of prompts the parent will learn to use for **Teach New Skills**: *Prompts for Using Communication*, *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, *Prompts for Imitation*, and *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Each set of prompts is used to increase the complexity of the child's skills in that area.

Once again, the parent will begin with the techniques at the base of the pyramid (**Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication**), and then use a **Create Opportunities** technique to gain the child's attention if he does not initiate on his own. Once the child initiates or responds, the parent will use prompts and rewards to teach the child a new or more complex skill, rather than responding to the child's initial response. After the child uses that more complex skill, the parent will reward him and expand on the response. The **Teach New Skills** strategy set places more demands on the child and can increase his frustration. Let the parent know that this is OK; the two of you will work together to decrease the child's frustration during practice. This strategy set should be used about one-third of the time.

Introduce *Prompts and Rewards*

Explain the Rationale

Children with social communication challenges often have delayed language, imitation, and play skills. Prompts and rewards are the most effective ways to promote development in these areas.

The parent can use prompts and rewards in the natural environment and in relation to the child's interests, rather than in a structured setting, to increase the likelihood that the child will use these skills in new situations (generalization) and continue to use the skills over time (maintenance).

Prompts are the cues that help the child produce a new or more complex response. *Rewards* or *reinforcement* are any positive consequence provided after the child uses the new or more complex response. Rewards increase the likelihood that the child will use the skill again.

Prompts and rewards are effective when the child is highly motivated, the child needs to learn a new skill, and there is time to follow through with the prompt. Describe for the parent how learning to use the *Prompts and Rewards* techniques can address the child's individual goals. You might say something like the following:

"Prompts and rewards can be used to improve Brianna's ability to use a point or a word to request, to improve her imitation of gestures, and to improve her play with toys."

"Prompts and rewards can be used to improve Sam's ability to use two to three words spontaneously for a variety of reasons, to improve his imitation of gestures, and to improve his pretend play."

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to review *Prompts and Rewards*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS MOTIVATED

The child's level of motivation tells the parent when it is best to prompt, how difficult a response she can require, and how much support she will need to provide. The more motivated the child is, the more likely he will be to stay with an activity even when he is pushed to work harder. The best time to prompt a new skill is when the child is motivated by activity and is in a good mood. If he loses interest in the activity, or is unhappy, tired, or sick, he may leave the activity if prompted.

Ask the parent: "What activities would be good for prompting your child to use new skills?" If she is unsure, help the parent identify activities in which the child is usually motivated. Activities often include favorite play and snack routines. Help the parent identify ways to increase her child's motivation when he is not motivated by an activity, such as offering different activities or focusing on her child.

PROMPT A MORE COMPLEX SKILL RELATED TO WHAT YOUR CHILD IS DOING

Children are most likely to be successful at using a new skill if it is only slightly more complex than their current developmental level and is related to the materials, toys, and activities in which they are engaged.

Ask the parent: "What are some language or play skills you would like your child to use?" Help the parent think about language and play skills she may be able to prompt during motivat-

ing activities. These skills should correspond to the measurable goals that were developed at the beginning of the program. If the child has achieved some of these goals, refer to the developmental charts. Skills the parent has been modeling are great skills to begin prompting now.

USE CLEAR PROMPTS

The child must understand what is expected of him in order to respond correctly. Using clear prompts can keep the child from becoming frustrated. For a prompt to be clear, the parent must have her child's attention and must be sure the child understands what is being asked of him. The parent should avoid using several prompts together that require different responses, such as "Do you want this block?" . . . "What should I do?" . . . "Tell me, 'I want the block.'"

WAIT AFTER GIVING A PROMPT

It is important to wait and allow the child time to respond after the prompt before giving another prompt. If the child is bombarded with too much auditory information, he will be unable to respond and may begin to "tune out" the words. Conversely, if the parent waits too long, she may lose the opportunity. The amount of time can vary substantially—from 2 seconds to 30 seconds, depending on the child's skills, motivation, and mood.

Help the parent identify the appropriate amount of time to wait between prompts, based on her child's ability.

GIVE MORE SUPPORT AS NEEDED

To teach the child to use a new skill, the parent should provide the least supportive prompt necessary to help the child respond and receive the reward. Project ImPACT uses what we call the "three-prompt rule" as a rough guideline to limit the number of prompts the parent gives before the child successfully responds and gains the reward. If the child is not able to respond to the first prompt, the parent adds support until the child is successful. This helps decrease frustration and ensure that the child stays with the activity and receives the reward. The exact number of prompts depends on the child's skills, motivation, and mood. Help the parent think through the best number of prompts to use for her child in different situations.

Give the parent an example of how she can add support to teach her child a new skill. Let her know that you will help her identify the most appropriate prompt level to start with when specific prompts are introduced, and help her determine how and when to add support.

GIVE LESS SUPPORT OVER TIME

The parent should use less supportive prompts over time until the child is able to use his new skill spontaneously. After the child is able to respond successfully at one prompt level, the parent can begin using a less supportive prompt.

Give the parent an example of how she can give less support over time to help her child use a new skill spontaneously. Let her know that you will help her identify how and when to give less support.

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD DOES WHAT YOU ASK

When the parent prompts her child to use a specific skill, she should not reward him until he has used it successfully or made a good attempt. This teaches him that using the skill gets him the reward. If the child does not respond to the prompt, the parent should provide an additional prompt or increase the support to help him be successful.

Let the parent know that this element only applies when the child has been specifically prompted to use a more complex response, which should only be happening about one-third of the time. The rest of the time, she will continue to respond to her child's spontaneous skills.

GIVE YOUR CHILD THE REWARD IMMEDIATELY

The parent should provide the reward immediately after the child uses the prompted response. This helps the child make the connection between his behavior and the consequence (the reward or reinforcement).

USE A NATURAL REWARD

Natural rewards are related to the child's behavior, action, or communication. They increase the likelihood that child will use new skills during everyday activities. The reward can be anything that the child enjoys, as long as it related to what he is doing or saying.

Ask the parent: "What are some ways you can reward your child for using a new skill during daily activities or play?" If needed, help the parent identify natural rewards for using new skills within motivating activities. Let the parent know that you will help her learn how to use an extra reward if she is teaching with an activity that the child does not like.

ONLY REWARD POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

Rewards increase the likelihood of whatever behaviors they follow. Thus the parent should only reward appropriate behaviors and be careful not to inadvertently reward challenging behaviors.

Ask the parent: "What behaviors do you want to avoid rewarding?" Help the parent identify when she should not reward the child, particularly if he often uses appropriate and challenging behaviors simultaneously (e.g., the child says the word "Car" while also hitting her).

Explain the Steps of *Prompts and Rewards*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 68 there) to review the steps and tie them to one of the child's goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate *Prompts and Rewards***Prepare for Your Demonstration**

Ask the parent to watch for good times to prompt and skills to prompt, and to observe how you immediately reward the child's spontaneous skills. You might say something like this:

“I am going to use *Playful Obstruction* to help Brianna initiate with me during play. Times when she initiates are good times to prompt. Watch for when she initiates and think about what more complex skill would be good to prompt. For example, if Brianna uses a reach to request, a good skill to prompt might be a point or a single word.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate with the child, point out good times to prompt and skills that you might prompt:

“Sam is playing with the cars. I will follow his lead and join his play with the cars. I am using *Balanced Turns* to help Sam initiate. . . . Sam looked at me and said the word ‘Car.’ This is would be a great time to prompt. I modeled ‘Red car.’ This is the skill I will prompt once we discuss *Prompts for Using Communication*. At this point, I rewarded him immediately by giving him the car.”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What techniques were effective in help the child initiate or gaining attention?”

“When do you think would have been a good time to prompt?”

“What skills could I prompt?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Have the parent identify good times to prompt and skills that she might prompt. Once the parent is able to identify these times and skills, coaching can center around providing rewards.

Manage the Physical Environment

Remove distracting items, or give the parent items the child desires.

Provide Feedback

Give the parent feedback on her identification of good times to prompt and skills to prompt. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing this technique can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 176). You can also provide feedback on how to give rewards. The parent should provide a natural and immediate reward that is contingent on an appropriate response.



The length of the demonstration and practice can vary, depending on the parent’s use of the previously taught techniques. If the parent is able to gain her child’s attention, identify skills to prompt, and provide immediate and contingent reinforcement, the demonstration and practice can be brief.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has about *Prompts and Rewards*. Here are some examples of questions you could include:

“How do you feel about teaching new skills at home? Do you have any concerns?”

“What activities would be good for teaching new skills?”

“Which techniques do you think will be most effective for creating opportunities to teach new skills?”

“How could you reward your child when he uses a more complex skill during these activities?”

If the parent expresses concerns about using *Prompts and Rewards* at home, take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 176).

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Practice after this session follows the same sequence as in **Create Opportunities**, because the parent has not yet been taught prompts. The difference is that the parent will be thinking of the more complex skills she would like to prompt. Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—*Prompts and Rewards* (Form 33).

Good goals for this session include any skills the parent would like her child to use in any of the four core areas. If the parent has trouble, have her look at the Child Goals form and ask her if there is a goal she would like to address.

Good activities for this session include play activities and daily routines that the child enjoys. Encourage the parent to practice across activities that are motivating for the child.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using the strategies at the base and in the middle of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent how she will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

Ask how she will use a **Create Opportunities** technique to help him initiate and gain his attention.

Ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she waits after she uses a technique to create an opportunity. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds during practice at home next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box.

Next, have the parent look at the child’s current skills and think about the skills that she could prompt during the activity. Have her write this information in the “More Complex Skill” box.

Ask how the parent will reward her child’s spontaneous skills and expand on his response. The expansion should be the skill that the parent has written in the “More Complex Skill” box.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using the strategies at the base and middle of the pyramid at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for these techniques are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of the sessions in which the techniques are introduced.

Assign Reflection and Reading

In the reflection, have the parent record what went well and what was hard. She can also start thinking about good activities and skills to prompt. Have the parent read the section in Chapter 5 of the parent manual about the next strategy you will discuss. Typically this will be *Prompts for Using Communication*; however, if the parent identifies a different goal to address first, have her read that section first.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Prompts and Rewards*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty understanding the rules of *Prompts and Rewards*

- Select one or two *Prompts for Using Communication* to demonstrate and have the parent practice.

Has difficulty identifying good times to prompt

- Demonstrate a **Create Opportunities** technique with the child, and ask the parent to tell you when and what you should prompt.
- Have her practice a **Create Opportunities** technique and note when the child initiates or she gains the child's attention.
- Look at the Daily Activity Schedule with her to identify activities the child enjoys.

Is hesitant to prompt or withhold rewards

- Let her know that it's common for a child to become frustrated when an adult "changes the rules," and that this is OK. With time, her child will become accustomed to higher expectations, and his frustration will decrease.

Does not provide the reward immediately

- Remind her to provide the reward as soon as the child uses a more complex skill.

If the child . . .

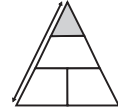
You can . . .

Gets frustrated

- Let the parent know that it is common for children to become frustrated when an adult "changes the rules" (see above).

SESSION 14

Prompts for Using Communication



Session Goals

Teach the parent how to use prompts and rewards to help her child:

- Use gestures.
- Use verbal language skills.
- Use nonverbal and verbal skills together.
- Communicate for different reasons.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create opportunities
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Prompts for Using Communication*.
- Demonstrate *Prompts for Using Communication*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Prompts for Using Communication*

- Use a time delay.
- Ask a question.
- Use a fill-in-the-blank sentence.
- Give a choice.
- Model language for your child to imitate.
- Use a verbal routine.
- Model a gesture for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the parent how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn to use different types of prompts and rewards to increase the spontaneity and complexity of her child's expressive communication skills. These prompts can be used to increase the child's use of gestures, verbal language, and nonverbal language skills, as well as to expand the reasons why the child communicates.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Have the parent talk you through times that were good for prompting and what more complex skills she would like to have prompted. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for **Prompts and Rewards** are in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the ends of Session 13 (page 176).

Introduce *Prompts for Using Communication*

Explain the Rationale

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty using language to communicate with others and can become reliant on cues from their parents. One way to teach a child to use new language forms and functions is to use prompts and rewards. Prompts that vary in the amount of support they provide will help the child use language more spontaneously. With *Prompts for Using Communication*, the parent begins with a technique at the base of the pyramid (**Focus on Your Child**) to make sure the child is motivated. She then uses a technique to create an opportunity, and waits for the child to initiate. Next, she uses prompts to help the child use a new or more complex skill. Once the child uses the new skill, she rewards and expands on the child's response.

Prompts for Using Communication can be used during play and daily routines the child enjoys. Again, the parent should use prompts only about one-third of the time during interactions. If prompts are used too often, the child is likely to get frustrated and/or will become dependent on prompts to communicate.

Describe how *Prompts for Using Communication* can address the child's individual goals. You might say something like the following:

“Brianna’s communication goal is to improve her ability to use a point, single word, or vocalization to request. Today you will learn specific prompts to help her use these new skills.”

“Sam’s communication goal is to improve his use of two- to three-word phrases spontaneously for a variety of functions. Today you will learn specific prompts to help him learn these new skills.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to review the key elements of *Prompts for Using Communication*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

Ask the parent: “What new communication skill can you prompt that is slightly more complex than your child’s current skills?” If the parent has difficulty identifying a skill, look at the Child Goals form, or ask her about the skills she has been modeling.

USE A TIME DELAY

A time delay is the least supportive prompt. After the child initiates, the parent waits with an expectant look for the child to use a more complex communication skill on his own. This differs

slightly from waiting with anticipation, because the parent now waits for an additional, more complex response after the child's initial communication.

Because this prompt does not provide the child with specific information about what his response should be, it is most successful after the child has responded successfully several times to a more supportive prompt. Help the parent identify when to move from a more supportive prompt to a time delay to increase the child's spontaneous communication.

If the child has difficulty responding, suggest pairing a visual cue (e.g., pointing to the item she wants the child to name) with the expectant look to help the child retrieve the word on his own.

ASK A QUESTION

Questions can help the child expand his vocabulary, use new sentence structures, and communicate about different aspects of an activity.

Children who are not yet using words can be taught to use gestures to respond to "what" and "where" questions. Children with more language skills can be taught to respond to more abstract questions. Help the parent identify the types of questions she should use with her child.

Unless it is a specific goal, tell the parent to avoid questions requiring only "yes-no" answers; they are less likely to expand the child's vocabulary.

USE A FILL-IN-THE-BLANK SENTENCE

Another type of prompt is a fill-in-the-blank sentence: The parent begins a sentence and waits to see if the child can complete the message. If the child has difficulty completing the sentence, the parent can use a visual cue (e.g., pointing to the item that completes the sentence) to help the child respond appropriately. Unlike a verbal routine, there can be more than one correct answer and the answer may change, depending on the contextual cues.

This type of prompt is effective for verbal children who have difficulty retrieving words in response to questions, and for children who are able to imitate a verbal model but cannot use the word spontaneously. If appropriate for the child's current skills, help the parent identify the types of questions she should use with her child.

GIVE A CHOICE

The parent can also present the child with two choices to answer a question. If the child has difficulty making choices, the parent should use a highly preferred item and a nonpreferred item. This is an effective prompt for children who are imitating a variety of words but are having difficulty using words spontaneously.

If the child has a tendency to repeat the last word given, the parent should provide the highly preferred choice first and the nonpreferred choice second, to help him learn to pay attention to the choice. The parent should respond to and reward her child by immediately giving him the item that he labels, even if it is the nonpreferred item. If the child names the object he does not want, the parent should provide more support, so that he is eventually able to get what he does want.

MODEL LANGUAGE FOR YOUR CHILD TO IMITATE

The parent can model a word or phrase for the child to imitate. When the parent uses a language model as a prompt, the child is expected to imitate the model. This type of prompt is particularly

helpful for children who are just beginning to imitate words or sounds, or are occasionally putting two words together.

Parents have a tendency to overuse this type of prompt with more verbal children, because they often respond immediately. If a child readily imitates a verbal model, the parent should use less support by using a choice, fill-in-the-blank sentence, or question.

USE A VERBAL ROUTINE

Verbal routines are meaningful phrases a child has heard many times. To use a verbal routine as a prompt, the parent starts the phrase, but leaves off the last word and waits with an expectant look. Verbal routines are helpful for children who are not yet using language and children who are just beginning to use language, because these phrases are repetitive and consistent.

MODEL A GESTURE FOR YOUR CHILD TO IMITATE

The parent can model a gesture for the child to imitate. When the parent uses a gesture model as a prompt, the child is expected to imitate the model.

Gesture prompts are useful for children who are not yet verbal. They can also be used with children who are verbal but do not use gestures to communicate. Work with the parent to identify gestures that can be used to signify certain objects, actions, or people.

USE PHYSICAL GUIDANCE

Physical guidance is the most supportive prompt. The parent physically assists the child in using a gesture, such as a point. The amount of physical support can be decreased as the child begins to use the gesture. For example, when teaching a child to point, the parent may initially need to help the child lift his hand and form his finger into a point. After some time, the parent may be able to provide physical support to the child's elbow to cue him to point.

Physical guidance is most appropriate for children who do not yet imitate verbal language or gestures. Gestures can act as a bridge to speech.

Explain the Steps of Prompts for Using Communication

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 68 there) for one of the child's communication goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Ask the parent: "What three prompts can you use to help your child use a new communication skill?" If the parent is unsure, help her identify the most appropriate prompts for her child's goal and ability. For example, to increase spontaneous language skills, the parent may use a time delay. However, to teach new vocabulary, the parent may initially use a verbal model.

Demonstrate Prompts for Using Communication

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use *Prompts for Using Communication*. Point out the type of prompt that you will begin with to elicit the more complex skill, and describe how you will add

support if the child does not respond. Ask the parent to watch for the type of prompts you use and the child's use of more complex communication. For example:

"I am going to ask questions to increase Sam's ability to use verbs. If he does not respond, I will use a fill-in-the-blank sentence and then a choice."

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Prompts for Using Communication* with the child, point out the prompt type(s) you use, describe how you add support, and note the child's response:

"Sam is playing with the ball. I am going to use *Playful Obstruction* to gain access to the ball and wait to see how he communicates. . . . He said the word 'Ball.' I'm going to ask a question to prompt him to use more complex language. (*Coach asks Sam: 'What should I do with the ball?'*) He said the word 'Ball' again, so I am going to add support by using a choice. (*Coach asks Sam: 'Throw ball or hide ball?'*) He used a more complex response by saying, 'Throw ball,' so I am going to reward him by throwing the ball and expand on his response. (*Coach says, 'Throw the red ball.'*)"

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: "What did you notice during the interaction?" If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

"What type of prompt helped Sam respond?"

"How did I reward him after he used the new skill?"

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

The parent should practice *Prompts for Using Communication* with her child during a range of activities, to understand how to use prompts in different situations. In the clinic setting, this practice could include play with toys, a snack, or putting on the child's jacket and shoes at the end of the session. In the home setting, the practice could include a variety of caregiving routines. Remind the parent of the steps she should follow in *Prompts for Using Communication*. Use specific examples based on the child's play and skill level, and have the parent add support if the child does not respond. Let the parent know that the type of prompt can change, depending on the goal. For example, she might use a time delay to increase spontaneous language for requests, but she might use questions or choices to increase verbs:

"Use questions to increase Sam's use of verbs. If he doesn't respond, use a fill-in-the-blank sentence, and then provide him with a choice."

Manage the Physical Environment

Hand the parent materials to create an opportunity (e.g., a puppet or toy to block play, specific toys that work well for turn taking, or materials that require assistance), or remove distracting items from the environment.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of *Prompts for Using Communication* and the child's response. In particular, give feedback to help the parent use the appropriate prompt and to add or decrease support as indicated:

“Great use of *Playful Obstruction* to get Sam's attention! He said, ‘Push the car,’ when you gave him a choice! Next time, let's see what he does if you ask him: ‘What should I do with the car?’”

Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges that arise when a parent is practicing *Prompts for Using Communication* can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 184).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the in-session practice. Use this time to answer questions she has and to clarify any key elements of *Prompts for Using Communication*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How does it feel to prompt your child to use new language skills?”

“Can you imagine using these prompts at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“What types of prompts were most successful for helping your child respond? Was it difficult to use these types of prompts?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34).

Good goals for this lesson include using gestures (point, tap, or sign) or verbal language (e.g., single words, word combinations, or sentences) to request, give instructions, or share information, and responding to “wh-” questions.

Good activities for *Prompts for Using Communication* include any activity that the child enjoys. At this point in the program, try to identify three different activities to help the parent use

techniques across settings. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 78 there) has examples of how to use *Prompts for Using Communication* during play and daily activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using *Prompts for Using Communication* during an activity she has selected. Have her write down the key elements in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, to make sure her child is motivated before she prompts.

Next, help the parent identify the technique she will use to create an opportunity for the child to communicate.

Ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she waits after she uses a technique to create an opportunity. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds during practice at home next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box. The child’s skill will help inform the more complex skill to prompt.

Ask the parent what more complex communication skill she will prompt her child to use. Have her write this skill next to the target. Help the parent select a new skill that is different from, or slightly more complex than, what the child is using on his own.

Then ask the parent which three prompts she will use to help her child use the new skill. Have her write the prompts in the numbered boxes, with 1 being the least supportive prompt she will use first and 3 being the most supportive prompt. Tell the parent that she can write down the new skill her child uses under the three prompt boxes.

Ask the parent how she will reward and expand on her child’s response. Remind her that she should reward her child even if his response was not the exact skill she was anticipating, as long as it was appropriate and more complex than his initial communication. For example, if she was trying to prompt for “Throw ball” and he says “Give ball,” or adds an attribute (“Big ball”), she can go ahead and reward the more complex skill.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about practicing *Prompts for Using Communication* at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 184).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the section in Chapter 5 of the parent manual on the next set of prompts you will introduce. If you will introduce *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, and the parent is having difficulty with helping her child follow directions during daily routines, plan to coach on these routines during the next session. If you are providing training in the clinic, see if the parent can bring any materials or items for the daily routine that is challenging.



Troubleshooting Tips for Prompts for Using Communication

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty helping her child initiate before prompting

- Suggest a specific **Create Opportunities** strategy, as well as one prompt that is likely to elicit the child's response. Once the parent is comfortable, then coach her on how to add more or less support.

Has difficulty identifying good times to prompt

- Suggest specific child behaviors to watch for that indicate high motivation (positive affect, reaching, eye contact, etc.).

Prompts for unrelated skills

- Ask her to observe how her child plays for a few minutes before prompting language.
- Suggest specific skills she can prompt.
- Ask her: "What three language skills are related to your child's activity?"
- Suggest that she prompt the communication skills she has been modeling.

Prompts communication skills that are too complex

- Remind her of the communication skill she is looking for before she prompts, and cue her when the child has given that response.
- Ask her: "What communication skill is one step more complex than what your child does on his own?"

Does not use clear prompts

- Suggest a specific prompt to use.
- Model a simple prompt for her to use.

Provides more supportive prompts too quickly

- Suggest that she count to 5 in her head before she uses a more supportive prompt.

Does not provide enough support to help the child use the more complex communication skill

- Cue her when to add more support.
- Give her three specific prompts to use.

Prompts too frequently

- Remind her to respond to her child's spontaneous communication.
- Suggest that she prompt for a more complex communication skill after only every third initiation.
- Give her a concrete amount of time to wait before prompting a new skills (e.g., only prompt every 1–2 minutes)

Does not require a more complex response before giving the reward

- Remind her to follow through with the prompt, even if the child protests.
- Let her know that it is OK if the child gets a little frustrated.
- Ask her: "What communication skills are you looking for?"

If the parent . . .***You can . . .***

Does not provide the reward immediately

- Cue the parent when to reward her child.
- Suggest the parent give the child the reward within a concrete amount of time (e.g., 1 second).
- Have the parent practice with you.

Inadvertently rewards inappropriate behavior

- Ask the parent to describe behaviors she wants to avoid rewarding.
- Cue her when her child uses an inappropriate behavior.

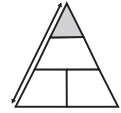
If the child . . .***You can . . .***

Gets frustrated when the parent prompts communication

- Acknowledge that this is common, and that children usually become less frustrated as they learn the new expectations.
- Suggest that the parent start with a prompt her child can respond to successfully. Once the routine is set, cue her to decrease support every third time.
- Remind her to go back to **Focus on Your Child** to get engagement.
- Suggest she prompt for a more complex communication skill after only every third initiation.

SESSION 15

Prompts for Understanding Communication



Session Goals

Teach the parent how to use prompts and rewards to help her child:

- Follow directions.
- Understand new words, phrases, or language concepts.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys
- Items for daily routines, such as clothes, dishes, and meal preparation
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Prompts for Understanding Communication*.
- Demonstrate *Prompts for Understanding Communication*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Prompts for Understanding Communication*

- Use a verbal instruction.
- Use a gesture prompt.
- Model the action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask how things have been with the family since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The parent will learn to use different types of prompts to help her child follow directions and understand new words, phrases, and language concepts.

This strategy differs from the other techniques presented in this program, as there may be times the child needs to follow a direction during routines or activities he doesn't choose, such as putting his toys away or getting his shoes. Tell the parent that you will discuss additional techniques she can use if the child does not enjoy the activity.



If you and the parent have identified any routine or activity that is problematic, tell the parent that you will demonstrate and have her practice during that routine/activity.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?” Adjust the session agenda if necessary to address the parent’s concerns.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Prompts for Using Communication* at home. Discuss the child’s response, what went well, and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up during the between-session practice. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Prompts for Using Communication* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 14 (page 184).

Introduce *Prompts for Understanding Communication*

Explain the Rationale

A child with social communication challenges may have difficulty attending to or understanding a parent’s language. This can impair the child’s ability to follow directions. With *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, the parent usually begins by focusing on the child and then creates an opportunity to gain the child’s attention. She then uses specific prompts to help him follow a verbal direction. Once the child responds, the parent rewards him by letting him do the activity in the way he wants.

Prompts for Understanding Communication can be helpful when a child has a difficult time following directions during play and familiar daily routines. If the child needs to follow directions in a routine he does not choose, such as getting dressed or brushing his teeth, the parent may begin by creating an opportunity to gain his attention, and may need to use an extra reward (such as a favorite activity or a treat). Again, prompts should be used only about one-third of the time.

Describe how *Prompts for Understanding Communication* can be used to address the child’s individual goals. For example:

“*Prompts for Understanding Communication* can be used to help Sam follow directions during daily routines, such as getting his cup and sitting at the table.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to review *Prompts for Using Communication*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

USE A VERBAL INSTRUCTION

The parent should use a simple verbal instruction that tells the child exactly what to do. She should avoid asking a question when she means to give an instruction (e.g., she should say “Bring me your shoes,” instead of “Can you bring me your shoes?”).

Ask the parent: “What directions can you give during daily routines?” If the parent is unsure,

help her identify directions that are appropriate for the child's skill level and the activity. Goals could include following one-step directions (e.g., "Get your shoes"), two-step directions (e.g., "Get your shoes and your jacket"), directions containing spatial concepts (e.g., "Put your plate on the table"), directions containing temporal concepts (e.g., "Get your shoes after you get your coat"), or directions containing two or more units of information (e.g., "Bring me the big red cup").

If the child has limited verbal comprehension, the parent should start by pairing the verbal instruction with a gesture prompt.

USE A GESTURE PROMPT

Pairing a gesture with a verbal instruction can help the child attend to the verbal instruction and cue the child how to respond. Give the parent examples of gestures she can use with a verbal direction, such as pointing to an item, holding up an item, or pantomiming an action.

MODEL THE ACTION FOR YOUR CHILD TO IMITATE

Modeling the action adds a little more support by showing the child what he should do. This prompt is helpful for children who can imitate but have difficulty understanding verbal language.

Provide specific examples of how to model an action. For example, if the child does not follow the direction "Get your shoes," after the parent gives the verbal instruction and points to the shoes, she can model the action by walking over, getting the shoes, and bringing them to the child. She can then put them back and give the child the same verbal instruction: "Get your shoes."

USE PHYSICAL GUIDANCE

Physical guidance is the most supportive prompt. If the child is not able to follow the direction when the parent shows him what to do, she should physically help him follow the direction. Provide the parent with concrete examples of how and when to use a physical prompt with her child. For example, after the command "Get your shoes," the parent can take the child's hand, bring him to his shoes, and help him pick them up.



Remind the parent to give a direction only when she is able to follow through.

Explain the Steps of *Prompts for Understanding Communication*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 68 there) to explain the steps and use one of the child's goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.



Remind the parent to wait after each prompt for the child to respond, before repeating the instruction or adding support.

Ask the parent: "What three prompts can you use to help your child follow your direction?" If she is unsure, help the parent identify the most appropriate prompts for the child's skill level. For a more verbal child, the parent may only need to repeat the verbal instruction before adding support. For a less verbal child, the parent may need to start with the verbal instruction paired with a gesture prompt and move quickly to physical guidance.

Ask the parent: "How can you reward your child for follow-

ing your directions?” If the parent is unsure, help her brainstorm natural rewards within familiar routines. See the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 192) if the child has difficulty following directions, or if you feel that a tangible reinforcer may be required.

Demonstrate *Prompts for Understanding Communication*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you gain the child’s attention, which type(s) of prompts you use to help the child follow directions, how the child responds, and how you reward the child for following the direction. If the parent has brought items to practice a particular routine, use the items when you demonstrate.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Prompts for Understanding Communication* with the child, point out what you are doing and why at each step:

“Brianna is playing with the ball. I am moving into her line of sight and using *Playful Obstruction* to stop the movement of the ball to gain her attention. . . . She looked at me. I gave her the verbal instruction: ‘Throw the ball.’ . . . She did not respond. I showed her how to throw the ball [gesture prompt and model of the action]. She continued to hold the ball, so I added more support by using physical guidance. I immediately rewarded her with praise and let her have the ball back.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If necessary, ask more specific probing questions, such as these:

“How did Brianna respond when I gave her a clear verbal instruction?”

“What type of prompt worked best to help her respond?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Have the parent practice *Prompts for Understanding Communication* during a variety of routines. If possible, have the parent practice with directions that she would like her child to follow during daily routines. Provide the parent with specific prompts and key elements to use before she begins the interaction with her child:

“Remember to use a clear verbal instruction that has only one step, such as ‘Push the car,’ ‘Give me the car,’ or ‘Open the garage.’ Wait for Sam to follow your direction. If he doesn’t, you can repeat the verbal instruction on its own or add a gesture prompt. Remember, you want him to be successful by the third prompt, even if you have to use physical guidance.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Remove distracting items, and give the parent items to reward the child after he follows the direction.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of *Prompts for Understanding Communication* and the child's response. Suggestions for feedback on common challenges that come up while practicing can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 192).



Provide the parent with both positive and corrective feedback to help her use the appropriate prompt, and to help her follow through once she has given the direction.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the in-session practice. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has about *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How does it feel to help your child follow the direction?”

“Can you imagine using these prompts during your daily routines? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“What types of prompts do you feel you need to use to help him follow the verbal instruction?”

“Are you able to think of ways to reward him after following the directions you would like him to at home?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have her record selections on the Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34).

Good goals for this session include following one- or two-step directions in play and familiar daily routines (e.g., “Feed the baby,” “Pull up your pants”), retrieving requested objects that are in the room but not directly in front of the child (e.g., “Get your cup”), and putting away materials on request (e.g., “Put the pens away”).

Good activities for *Prompts for Understanding Communication* include play and familiar daily routines. This technique can be used during both preferred and nonpreferred activities. However, if the child resists a routine, the parent may need to use an extra reward for following the direction. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 82 there) has examples of how to use *Prompts for Understanding Communication* during play and daily activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using *Prompts for Understanding Communication* during one of the activities she has identified. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do to focus on her child and adjust communication. If the parent has selected a direction during a routine the child does not enjoy, then move to the next step.

Next, help the parent identify the technique she will use to create an opportunity to gain her child's attention.

Ask how her child might respond to show that she has his attention, and have her write this in the "Wait" box. For example, you might have her write "Wait until he looks at me or stops the activity."

Ask the parent what direction she will prompt her child to follow. Have her write this direction next to the target. Help the parent think of directions that are appropriate for the child's receptive language skills.

Then ask the parent which three prompts she will use to help her child follow the direction. Have her write the prompts in the numbered boxes, with 1 being the least supportive prompt she will use first and 3 being the most supportive prompt. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds under the three prompt boxes.

Ask the parent how she will reward her child after he follows the direction. If possible, have her identify natural rewards. If not possible, help the parent identify the extra reward she will give.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Prompts for Understanding Communication* at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 192).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes between sessions. Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice.

If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, the next session will be a review. Ask the parent to think about the daily routines she might like to practice during the next session. If possible, conduct the review session in the home, to encourage practice during daily routines. If a home visit is not possible, have the parent bring items from home to use during the next session. These could include food, clothes, toys, or any other items that would assist with practice of these techniques during daily routines. You can also have the parent bring in a video of a home routine to conduct the video review. This allows the parent to receive feedback on her use of the strategies across routines.

If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will not have time for the review session. Have the parent read the appropriate next section of Chapter 5 in the parent manual (*Prompts for Imitation* or *Prompts for Expanding Play*).



Troubleshooting Tips for Prompts for Understanding Communication

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty gaining her child's attention before giving a direction

- Suggest a specific **Create Opportunities** technique and one prompt that is likely to elicit the child's response. Once the parent is comfortable, then coach her how to add more or less support.

Gives directions that are unclear or too complex

- Remind her of the level of complexity of directions she should give before she prompts (e.g., one step, two steps).
- Suggest a specific verbal instruction to use.
- Model directions for her to give by rephrasing her unclear directions in a more appropriate form.
- Ask her how she can make her directions clearer.

Prompts for unrelated skills

- Suggest specific skills she can prompt.
- Ask her: "What three skills are related to your child's activity?"
- Help the parent think of activities in which the reward can be natural.

Does not provide enough support to help the child follow the direction

- Cue the parent when to add more support.
- Give the parent three specific prompts to use.

Prompts too frequently

- Remind her to pause between prompts and return to her focus on her child.
- Give her a concrete amount of time to wait before prompting a new skill (e.g., only prompting every 1–2 minutes).

Does not require a more complex response before giving the reward

- Let her know that it is OK if the child gets a little frustrated.
- Ask her: "What communication skills are you looking for?"
- Remind her to follow through once she's given a direction, even if the child protests.

Does not provide the reward immediately

- Cue the parent when to reward her child.
- Suggest that the parent give the child the reward within a concrete amount of time (e.g., 1 second).
- Have the parent practice with you.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

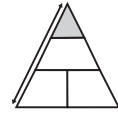
Gets frustrated when given a direction

- Suggest that the parent start with a prompt her child can respond to successfully. Once the routine is set, cue her to decrease support every third time.
- Teach the parent to use an extra reward (something the child likes that is not related to the task) after the child follows the direction.

Resists physical guidance

- Coach the parent to be quick and matter-of-fact in following through with physical guidance.
- Model physical guidance with the child for the parent to observe.
- Have the parent practice with you as you pretend to be the child.

SESSION 16

Review of *Prompts for Communication***Session Goals**

Help the parent:

- Use the strategies together to increase the complexity of her child's communication skills.
- Recognize how her use of different communication prompts influences her child's response.
- Determine whether additional time should be spent on any techniques to help her teach her child new communication skills.

**Materials**

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Teach New Communication Skills** (Form 16)

- Video Review Form—**Teach New Communication Skills** (Form 21)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create opportunities
- Video recording and viewing equipment

**Session Agenda**

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review *Prompts for Communication*.
- Demonstrate selected *Prompts for Communication*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Record and review a video of a parent-child interaction.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

This session will be spent reviewing how to use prompts and rewards to teach the child new communication skills. You will help the parent use these strategies together with the previous strategies, recognize how her use of these techniques influences her child's response, and determine whether additional time should be spent on any of the techniques. You may choose to focus on expressive or receptive language skills.

You will provide a brief recap of the different communication prompts and demonstrate them. The parent will have the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on any key elements of *Prompts for Using Communication* or *Prompts for Understanding Communication* that she is having

difficulty with during different routines. If you have been unable to go to the home, you can practice the routines that you selected the previous session.

You will then record a brief parent–child interaction. You and the parent will review the video together, discuss the parent’s use of strategies and the child’s response, and problem-solve as necessary. If you have been unable to go to the home, you can review a video of a home routine that the parent has recorded, instead of recording a video during the session.

Ask the parent: “Do you have questions about today’s session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?” Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Prompts for Understanding Communication* at home. Discuss the child’s response, what went well, and what was hard.

Challenges are often intensified at home because of time constraints and previous patterns of interaction. If the child is having significant difficulty completing daily routines or following directions, it may be beneficial to spend a session introducing the elements described in the optional behavior management chapter/unit (Chapter 8 of the parent manual, Unit 8 in the present manual). Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 15 (page 192). The challenges the parent reports should help guide the review session.

Review *Prompts for Communication*

Review the Rationale

Prompts and rewards are used to increase the spontaneity and complexity of the child’s language skills. The parent will continue to begin each interaction by using **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** techniques to increase motivation and engagement. She will then use a **Create Opportunities** technique to gain the child’s attention. Next, she will choose which prompt to use to increase the complexity of her child’s language skills. Once the child uses the new skill, she will reward him and expand on his response.

Ask the parent: “What communication goal would you like to try teaching today?” If she is not sure, help the parent identify appropriate communication goals, based on the child’s current skills. If necessary, review the Child Goals form, and have her select the goal she would like to address.

Briefly Review the Key Elements and the Steps of the Techniques

Use the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S Review Sheet—**Teach New Communication Skills** (Form 16) to review examples of techniques that are relevant for the child. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions. Write down the key elements that are likely to have the greatest positive impact on the interaction in the box next to each technique. These should include the technique she will use to create an opportunity and the prompt type or types that are most effective for the child.

For example, if *Playful Obstruction* works well to create an opportunity, highlight that and write down any elements the parent may need to remember, such as an anticipatory phrase. If the child imitates a verbal model, remind the parent to start with a question, and then use a fill-in-the-blank statement or choices before she uses the verbal model.

Demonstrate *Prompts for Communication*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use the prompts you have identified, how you add support to help the child use the new skill, and how you respond to the child's actions.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate, point out the type of prompts you use, describe how you add support, and note the child's response.

“Brianna is rolling a car back and forth. I am moving so that I can stay face to face with her, and I'm rolling another car next to hers. I am going to use *Playful Obstruction* to stop her car to gain her attention. . . . She tried to push my hand away. I am going to ask her a question to prompt her to use a point, verbalization, or word. (Coach asks Brianna: ‘What should I do?’) She pushed my hand again, so I am going to add more support by using a choice. (Coach asks Brianna: ‘Move or push car?’) She made the sound ‘Mm,’ so I am going to reward her by moving my hand and expand on her response. (Coach says the word ‘Move.’)”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What type of prompts helped Brianna respond?”

“How did I reward her after she used the new skill?”

“What technique did I use to create an opportunity for her to initiate?”



If the parent has chosen to practice both *Prompts for Using Communication* and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, demonstrate them one at a time and allow the parent to practice in between.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

The parent now practices the prompts she has chosen to teach her child new communication skills during a routine or play. To increase independence, ask the parent to identify the technique she will use for each step. For example:

“What technique will you use to create an opportunity before you use a prompt?”

“What type of prompt will you use?”

“How will you reward him after he uses the new skill?”

Manage the Physical Environment

Hand the parent materials as needed (e.g., a puppet or toy to block play, specific toys that work well for turn taking, or materials that require assistance), or remove distracting items.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of *Prompts for Communication* and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing these strategies can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of Sessions 13–15. The parent should practice with your feedback for at least 5 minutes or until she is successful at using the F.A.C.T.S. strategies together. In giving feedback, you might say something like this:

“Sam seems to respond to the choice prompt, which is great! I wonder what would happen if you started with a question prompt the next time.”

Record and Review a Video of a Parent–Child Interaction

Record a 5-Minute Parent–Child Interaction

Once the parent and child are interacting comfortably, record the interaction for about 5 minutes. If two parents are present, record only one parent at a time.

Refrain from giving verbal feedback during the parent–child interaction. However, if the parent is having difficulty engaging the child, you can provide assistance by giving the parent items that she can use (e.g., a favorite toy, a puppet to block play), or by putting away play materials that are not being used or distracting items so that the parent can focus more easily on the interaction. You can also stop the recording, provide feedback, and then start recording again. It is important to have a positive example to review with the parent.

Alternatively, as noted above, you can use a previously recorded video that the parent has recorded during a home routine to conduct the video review.

Review the Video with the Parent

The purpose of the video review is to help the parent identify the prompts she is using, their effects on her child's behavior, and which prompts are most effective for her child. To accomplish this, you will use the Video Review Form—**Teach New Communication Skills** (Form 21). This session will focus on the types of prompts and any prompt or reward strategies that will make the techniques most effective.

Begin by giving the parent the Video Review Form. Explain that you will watch the recording together to look for examples of when she used prompts for communication and rewards, and of how her child responded. On the Video Review Form, she will check the box for a technique in the “Parent's use of techniques” column when she uses that technique, and write how the child responds in the “Child's response” area. You can also use this form to make notes to review with the parent.

Have the parent tell you to pause the recording periodically whenever she wants to discuss what she has observed or review a particular interaction. If she does not have you pause after 2

minutes, pause the recording and ask the parent questions to help her reflect on the interaction that she has observed. Begin with open-ended questions, and then move to more specific questions if necessary. The parent's interaction with her child should guide your question selection. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

“How did you create opportunities for your child to initiate?”

“What prompts did you use to help your child use a new communication skill?”

“How did your child respond to you when you prompted him for more language?”

“Which prompts seemed to work best for helping your child use new communication skills?”

“Which prompts were most effective in helping your child follow your directions?”

If the parent is unable to respond, provide her with specific behaviors to look for as she watches the recording, and pause when she notices those behaviors. (It can also be helpful to watch the same clip a couple of times.) You might say, for instance:

“Let's watch the recording and pause it whenever you asked a question to prompt Sam to use a new communication skill. We can also see if you used a more supportive prompt to help him respond, and watch how Sam responded. We can also pause when you think you should have prompted him but didn't, and discuss what prompts might have worked well. Remember, let me know when I should pause.”

Feedback during the video review should be primarily positive. However, if the parent has difficulty with a specific technique and you do not think she is aware of it, the video can be used to provide feedback. You can also encourage her to give her own feedback by having her identify differences in her child's response based on differences in her behavior.

“Brianna did not respond to your prompt here. Let's watch the clip again and think about what you could have done to make your prompt more effective.”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the interaction. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has and help her generate her own ideas for how she can use what she has learned at home. Take the time to answer any questions she has. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

“Which of the prompts we practiced today seemed to work best for helping your child use new communication skills?”

“Which of the prompts helped your child understand communication skills?”

“What could you try at home to help your child respond to your prompts better?”

“What is still challenging?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Record selections on the Practice

Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34). If the parent plans to practice both *Prompts for Using Communication* and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, have her complete separate Practice Plans.

Good goals for this unit include using gestures (point, tap, or sign) or verbal language (e.g., single words, word combinations, or sentences) to request, give instructions, or share information; responding to “wh-” questions; or following one- or two-step directions in play and familiar daily routines (e.g., “Feed the baby,” “Pull up your pants”).

Good activities for this unit include ones that the child enjoys. At this point in the program, it is great to identify three different activities to help the parent learn to use the strategies across settings. The Try This at Home! tables in the parent manual (pages 78 and 82 there) have examples of how to teach new communication skills during various activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of **Teach New Communication Skills** during an activity she has selected. Have her write down the key elements in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, to make sure her child is motivated before she prompts.

Next, help the parent identify the technique she will use to create an opportunity for the child to communicate or gain his attention.

Ask her what she thinks her child’s response will be when she waits after she uses a **Create Opportunities** technique. Help the parent choose a technique that will elicit a communicative behavior when she is prompting her child to use communication, and a technique that will gain his attention when she is prompting her child to understand communication.

Ask the parent what more complex communication skill she will prompt her child to use. Have her write this next to the target.

Then ask the parent which three prompts she will use to help her child use the new skill. Have her write the prompts in the numbered boxes, with 1 being the least supportive prompt she will use first and 3 being the most supportive prompt. Tell the parent she can write down the new skill her child uses under the three prompt boxes.

Ask the parent how she will reward and expand on her child’s response. Remind her that she should reward her child even if his response was not the exact skill she was anticipating, as long as it was appropriate and more complex than his initial communication.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

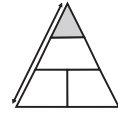
Ask the parent what might be hard about practicing **Teach New Communication Skills** at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of Sessions 13–15.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes at home between sessions. Remind her to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next group session. Have the parent read the section on *Prompts for Imitation* in Chapter 5 of the parent manual before the next session.

SESSION 17

Prompts for Imitation



Session Goals

Teach the parent how to use prompts and rewards to:

- Build her child's imitation skills.
- Teach her child new ways to play with toys.
- Teach her child to use new gestures.
- Teach her child more complex play skills.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Prompts for Imitation*.
- Demonstrate *Prompts for Imitation*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create opportunities
- Two pairs of some toys
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Optional: Play Action Ideas (Form 13)



Key Elements: *Prompts for Imitation*

- Model an action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn to use prompts and rewards to teach her child to imitate play actions and gestures. This strategy can help the child connect with the parent and learn new ways to play through imitation.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk through how she used prompts to teach her child new communication skills at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Discuss the child's response, what went well, and what was hard. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Prompts for Using Communication* and *Prompts for Understanding Communication* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of Sessions 14 and 15 (pages 184 and 192).

Introduce *Prompts for Imitation*

Explain the Rationale

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty watching others and imitating their behavior. The ability to observe and imitate others' behavior is very important for learning new skills and social interaction. Using *Prompts for Imitation* can improve the child's ability to imitate spontaneously, without a direct command to imitate. This will improve his ability to learn from his environment and to imitate for a social purpose. With *Prompts for Imitation*, the parent first uses **Focus on Your Child** (specifically, *Imitate Your Child*) and **Adjust Your Communication**. She then uses a **Create Opportunities** technique if the child does not attend to her with the techniques at the base of the pyramid. Once she has her child's attention, she uses prompts to help him imitate her action. She then rewards her child by praising him and by letting him return to the way he was playing or interacting.

Prompts for Imitation are useful for children who have difficulty imitating gestures and play, and for children who have difficulty entering play through using imitation. Descriptive gestures can be abstract and thus harder to imitate. Thus the parent should target gesture imitation only if the child already has some skill in object imitation.

Describe how *Prompts for Imitation* will address the child's individual goals. You might say something like this:

“This technique can help Brianna imitate your actions with toys. We can focus on having her imitate simple play actions with her favorite toys, like balls.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual as you introduce the elements of *Prompts for Imitation*. Ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

MODEL AN ACTION FOR YOUR CHILD TO IMITATE

Prompts for Imitation are used to teach imitation as a skill in and of itself. In other words, the parent is trying to increase her child's ability to match her behavior, rather than to use a specific language, gesture, or play behavior. Therefore, to add support, she will repeat the model of the action or gesture up to two more times before using physical guidance.

Provide the parent with a concrete amount of time to wait (e.g., 3 seconds) before modeling

the behavior again. Depending on the child's goals, the parent may choose to model play actions with objects or to model gestures.

Ask the parent: "What play actions can you model with your child's favorite toy?" If she is unsure, use Table 5.4 in the parent manual to help the parent think of different play actions she can model. Emphasize that since that the goal is to increase imitation rather than teach specific play skills, the parent should focus on fun actions the child is likely to want to imitate. If the child has a lot of difficulty imitating, the parent should start by modeling familiar actions, even if they are unusual. For example, if the child only plays with cars by spinning their wheels or lining them up, she should model spinning the wheels when the child is lining up cars.

Next, ask the parent: "What gestures can you model that relate to your child's play?" If she is not sure, use Table 5.5 in the parent manual to help the parent think of a number of gestures she could use to describe her child's play. Some such gestures might include affective themes (e.g., "Oh, no" with hands on face), as well as gestures that describe objects (e.g., "Airplane" with arms out), attributes (e.g., "Big" with raised arms), and actions (e.g., "Spin" with finger moving in a circle).

USE PHYSICAL GUIDANCE

If the child does not imitate the action after it is modeled three times, the parent should provide physical guidance to help the child imitate the action. Once the child imitates the behavior, either on his own or with physical guidance, the parent should immediately reinforce him by providing praise and allowing him to play in the way he chooses.

Explain the Steps of *Prompts for Imitation*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 68 there) with an example specific for the child. Remind the parent to use a **Create Opportunities** technique if the child does not attend to the initial model of a new play action.

Demonstrate *Prompts for Imitation*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you begin the interaction by imitating the child, how you gain his attention, which play action or gesture you model, how you add support, and how the child responds. Ask the parent whether she would like to focus on imitating play actions or gestures. If appropriate, demonstrate use of prompts for play actions and gestures.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Prompts for Imitation* with the child, point out the technique you use to create an opportunity, the prompts you use to help the child imitate, and the child's response:

"Brianna is spinning the wheels on the car. I am going to move into her line of sight and began spinning the wheels on another car. I will describe the play by saying, 'Spin wheels.' . . . She looked at me. I will model a new way to play with the car by pushing it and saying, 'Drive car.'

. . . She did not respond, so I will model the action up to two more times. . . . Brianna still did not respond, so I helped her push the car [physical guidance]. Once she used the new skill, I rewarded her by giving her praise and letting her choose how to play with the car. I then returned to imitating her play.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If necessary, ask more specific probing questions, such as these:

“What type of prompt did I use to help Brianna imitate?”

“How did I reward her after she imitated the gesture?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow for *Prompts for Imitation*, using the sequence graphic. Provide her with specifics of the prompts she should use to teach imitation:

“Remember to model the action three times with the same simple language. If he does not imitate the behavior, add support by using physical guidance.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Give the parent items she can use to imitate her child. Continue to remove distracting items.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of *Prompts for Imitation* and the child’s response. Help the parent alternate between imitating her child and asking her child to imitate her. You should also help the parent identify behaviors for the child to imitate. Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 204).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use the time to answer any questions the parent may have about *Prompts for Imitation*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did it feel when you used prompts to help your child imitate you?”

“Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“How does your child respond when you model a play action or a gesture?”

“Do you think you had his attention before you modeled? If not, what **Create Opportunities** technique could you use?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record selections on the Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34).

Good goals for this session include functional or pretend actions with a toy; greeting/parting gestures (e.g., waving, blowing kisses); gestures to display emotions (e.g., clapping, high fives); or gestures that describe actions (e.g., “Spin” with finger moving in a circle, “Stop” with palm out).

Good activities include play, daily activities the child enjoys such as storytime, or mealtime. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 87 there) has examples for how to use prompts during play and daily activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of using *Prompts for Imitation* during the activity she has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan. This strategy differs slightly from the other **Teach New Skills** strategies, and therefore its practice differs as well.

With this strategy, you will first tell the parent that she will focus on her child by imitating him and then modeling a new gesture or play action for him to imitate. She should write down the skill she will model next to the target above the three numbered prompt boxes.

Next, ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond after she models the new skill. If she does not think her child will imitate the action without support, ask the parent how she will create an opportunity to gain her child’s attention before she adds more support and provides another model of the skill.

Then ask the parent how her child might respond to the **Create Opportunities** technique and how long she should wait before she prompts the new skill. Have her write this information in the “Wait” box.

Remind the parent that the *Prompts for Imitation* remain the same throughout this practice. She will add support by modeling the action up to two more times. If the child still does not respond, she will use physical guidance. Have her write these prompts in the three prompt boxes.

Ask the parent how she will reward and expand on her child’s response. The reward is typically praise and the parent’s imitating the child’s behavior.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Prompts for Imitation* at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 204).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down what went well and what was hard during home practice. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the *Prompts for Expanding Play* section in Chapter 5 of the parent manual for the next session. Explain to the parent that this technique is used to increase the variety and complexity of her child’s play. The parent should come to the session with any questions she may have about the technique.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Prompts for Imitation*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty identifying play actions or gestures to model

- Suggest actions that are easy or fun to imitate.
- Suggest that she take time to watch how other children play with toys for ideas.
- Suggest that she bring her child's favorite toys to the next coaching session.
- Ask her: "What are three gestures you can use with this toy?"

Prompts imitation too frequently

- Remind her to imitate her child the majority of the time.
- Give her a concrete amount of time to wait before modeling a new play skill for the child to imitate (e.g., every 1–2 minutes).

Does not provide enough support to help the child imitate

- Cue the parent when to add more support.
- Suggest repeating the model if the child doesn't imitate within 5 seconds.

Has difficulty gaining her child's attention before modeling an action

- Encourage the parent to use *Playful Obstruction* before she presents a model.
- Cue her for good times to model actions.
- Remind her to *Use Animation* to make her actions clear.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Leaves the interaction before he imitates

- Remind the parent to follow through with the prompt, even if the child protests or leaves the interaction.
- Suggest that the parent move through the prompt sequence more quickly.
- Encourage the parent to follow the child with the toy and model the action again.
- Help bring the child back to the interaction for the parent to model the action again.

Does not imitate on his own

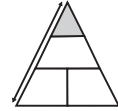
- Suggest that the parent watch how the child plays with toys and model actions he uses spontaneously. Once he begins to imitate these actions, cue her to model new but similar actions every third time.
- Ask her: "What are three things your child likes to do with this toy?"

Resists physical guidance

- Coach the parent to be quick and matter-of-fact in following through with physical guidance.
- Model physical guidance with the child for the parent to observe.
- Have the parent practice with you as you pretend to be the child.

SESSION 18

Prompts for Expanding Play



Session Goals

Help the parent use prompts and rewards to:

- Increase the number of different actions her child does with a favorite toy.
- Teach her child to play with new toys.
- Teach her child to play in more complex ways.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Several highly preferred toys that can be used in multiple, creative ways
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Optional: Play Action Ideas (Form 13)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Prompts for Expanding Play*.
- Demonstrate *Prompts for Expanding Play*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Prompts for Expanding Play*

- Make a leading comment.
- Ask a question.
- Give a choice.
- Use a verbal instruction.
- Model an action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The parent will learn to use prompts and rewards to expand her child's play. These prompts target the use of specific play skills, rather than increasing her child's ability to imitate her behavior (*Prompts for Imitation*). However, the parent will still use a model and physical guidance on occasion to help her child use new play actions.

Ask the parent: "Do you have questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?" Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address today.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Have the parent talk you through how she used *Prompts for Imitation* at home. Discuss the child's response, what went well, and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Prompts for Imitation* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 17 (page 204).

Introduce *Prompts for Expanding Play*

Explain the Rationale

Children with social communication challenges often have delayed play skills. They may play with toys nonfunctionally (e.g., spinning the wheels on a toy car rather than pretending to drive it) or repetitively (e.g., setting up a tea party the same way over and over). Children may also become dependent on their parents' verbal and visual instructions to play, which can make play with peers challenging.

Play prompts can be used to increase the complexity and variety of a child's play. Play is a great place to teach problem-solving skills, imagination, and perspective taking. Play prompts can also be used to decrease the child's reliance on prompts and increase independent use of play skills. The parent will begin with a technique at the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid (**F**ocus on **Y**our **C**hild and **A**djust **Y**our **C**ommunication) to join the child in his play. Then she will use a **C**reate **O**pportunities technique to gain the child's attention. Next, she will prompt a new or slightly more complex play skill. Once the child uses the new skill, the parent will reward him by letting him play the way he wants. Like other prompts, *Prompts for Expanding Play* should be used only about one-third of the time during interactions.

Since these prompts are primarily verbal, they are usually more successful for children with better play and language skills. If a child has difficulty responding to verbal instructions, the parent should continue to use *Prompts for Imitation* to help the child expand his play skills.

Describe how *Prompts for Expanding Play* can be used to address the child's individual goals. You might say something like the following:

“Brianna's play goal is to improve her ability to use toys for their intended purpose—that is, to improve her functional play skills. Today you will learn different prompts to help her improve her functional play.”

“Sam's play goal is to improve his ability to play with toys in a pretend manner. Today you will learn different prompts to help him improve his pretend play.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent understand how she can use this strategy with her child.

Begin by asking the parent: “What new play skills can you prompt your child to use?” If the parent is unsure, review the ways that the parent can increase the variety and complexity of her

child's play. Use the table in the parent manual (Table 5.7 there) to help identify skills. Depending on the child's skill level, you might identify combinatorial play (e.g., nesting cups, stacking rings), functional play (e.g., pushing a car, feeding a puppet, putting it to bed), or pretend play (e.g., substituting one object for another or projecting emotions onto an object).

You can also have the parent complete part or all of the Play Action Ideas form (Form 13) to help the parent think about different play actions with a toy. Have the parent write the name of a toy the child likes to play with in one of the "Toy" circles in the middle of a set of boxes. Then have her fill in the boxes around the circle with different actions the parent could prompt. These could include bringing an object into play, combining objects, or a pretend or symbolic play action.

MAKE A LEADING COMMENT

Once the child is engaged in play, the parent can make a leading comment that can help cue the child to expand the complexity of his play. She can pair the comment with a gesture to help the child respond.

This prompt is appropriate for a child with good receptive language skills. It is effective in improving the child's ability to generate new play ideas, link actions together to tell a story, and the child's ability to make inferences.

Help the parent think of a gesture she can pair with the comment to improve the child's ability to respond. For example, the parent might say, "Baby looks hungry," and hold up a bottle to encourage her child to feed the baby.

ASK A QUESTION

Questions can be used to cue the child to expand the complexity of his play if he has difficulty responding to a leading comment. Once the parent asks the question, she will wait to see whether he expands on his play. The child may respond to the question by engaging in the play action rather than giving a verbal reply.

Questions are appropriate for children who have good receptive language skills but have difficulty expanding their play themes. It is effective in increasing the complexity of a child's play and adding sequences to the child's play. Help the parent think of open-ended questions (e.g., "What should Elmo do now?") to help her child expand his play.

GIVE A CHOICE

The parent can give the child a choice between two new play actions if the child has difficulty responding to an open-ended question. This prompt provides the child with ideas of play, but allows him to have the final decision on the play sequence or type of play that will be added.

Help the parent think of choices that she could use during play (e.g., "Should Elmo eat or go to sleep?"). With play prompts, both play actions can be preferred.

USE A VERBAL INSTRUCTION

Children who have difficulty generating ideas during play often benefit from a verbal instruction that tells them a new play with a toy, how to add another step to the play sequence, or to bring

new toys into the play. The verbal instruction should be clear, and the action should be related to a child's activity of choice.

This prompt is helpful for children who have difficulty responding to the less supportive prompts, and it is often a good starting place for children with limited play skills.

MODEL AN ACTION FOR YOUR CHILD TO IMITATE

Providing a model of play is essentially the same procedure described for increasing object imitation skills in *Prompts for Imitation*. It is also similar to the modeling strategy described in *Balanced Turns*. The difference is that the parent will model the play action once and then will use physical guidance if the child does not respond.

USE PHYSICAL GUIDANCE

The physical guidance prompt is essentially the same when the parent is teaching any new skill: The parent provides physical assistance to help her child use a new play skill if he does not respond to the less supportive prompts. This type of prompt is used when the child does not respond to the verbal instruction or model of play.

Explain the Steps of *Prompts for Expanding Play*

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual (page 68 there) with an example specific to the child. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions. This is the same sequence the parent uses for all of the prompts she has learned in the **Teach New Skills** lessons. The difference is that the prompts this time will be related to play skills.

The parent will learn to start with the least supportive prompt and then to add support if the child does not respond. Remind the parent of the three-prompt rule. Although you want the parent to provide the least support necessary to elicit a response, it is important to help the child be successful before he becomes too frustrated.

Ask the parent: "What three prompts can you use to help your child use the new play skill?" If the parent is unsure, show her the prompt table in the parent manual (Table 5.8 there) and highlight where she should start and the support she will add.

Demonstrate *Prompts for Expanding Play*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for the type of prompts you will use and how the child responds. Point out the specific prompts you will use, based on the child's goals and current skills. It can be helpful to identify the play skill you will target.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Prompts for Expanding Play*, point out the prompt type(s) you use and the child's response. In play, it is sometimes easier to complete the prompt sequence and then explain, as illustrated in the example below:

“Sam was playing with the cars. I moved into his line of sight and stopped movement of his car to gain his attention. He looked at me. I asked a question, ‘Where should the car go?’, and let go of the car. Sam did not respond. So I stopped the car again to gain his attention and presented him with a choice: ‘Should the car go to the gas station or the car wash?’ Sam responded by washing the car. I rewarded him by providing praise (‘Yay, you washed your car!’) and letting him play with the toy for a little while before providing another prompt.”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What type of prompt was effective in expanding Brianna’s play?”

“What type of play skills did you see me prompting?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow to use *Prompts for Expanding Play*, using specific examples based on his goals and skill level:

“Sam enjoys play with cars. We have a goal to expand his pretend play. Start with a leading comment (‘The car is dirty’). If he does not respond, use a question (‘The car is dirty. What should we do?’). If he still does not respond, then give him a choice (‘The car is dirty. Should we wash it with a rag or the hose?’).”



It can be difficult to think of new ways to play during an interaction. If necessary, help the parent brainstorm play ideas with the toys before she begins practicing.

Manage the Physical Environment

Offer toys that will help the parent think of play ideas, and clear away unused toys to limit distractions.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of *Prompts for Expanding Play* and the child’s response. Suggestions for feedback and common challenges are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 212).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the interaction. Here are some examples of questions you could include:

“How did that feel when you used prompts to expand your child’s play?”

“Can you imagine doing this at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“What types of prompts are most successful in expanding your child’s play skills?”

“What types of play skills did you prompt? Can you think of how to do this with your child’s toys at home?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Record selections on the Practice Plan—Teach New Skills (Form 34).

Good goals for this session include increasing the complexity of the child’s play (e.g., use of pretend play), increasing the number of sequences used in play, or increasing the number of toys with which the child plays.

Good activities for this session include toy play and active play, as well as mealtime and bath-time. Once you have identified an activity, help the parent identify the type of play she will teach. For example, if the parent chooses to teach her child pretend play during play with cars, help her identify specific play with cars. This could include pushing the car to the gas station, washing the car, or fixing a part of the car. The Try This at Home! table in the parent manual (page 92 there) has examples of how to use *Prompts for Expanding Play* in these activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of *Prompts for Expanding Play* during the activity she has selected, and have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

Ask the parent what **Create Opportunities** technique she will use to gain her child’s attention before prompting play. *Balanced Turns* can work well for prompting new play skills.

Ask the parent how she thinks her child will respond when she waits after she creates an opportunity. Tell the parent she can write down how her child responds next to the child icon under the “Wait” box.

Next, ask the parent what new play skill she will prompt, and have her write this next to the target. Help the parent select a play skill that is different from, or slightly more complex than, the child’s current skill.

Then ask the parent which three prompts she will use to help her child use the new skill. Have her write the prompts in the numbered boxes, with 1 being the prompt she will start with (the least supportive prompt) and 3 being the most supportive prompt. Help the parent identify specific language rather than the type of prompt (e.g., “Baby is hungry” rather than a leading comment). This helps the parent think of ways to prompt during play. Tell the parent she can write down the new skill her child uses under the three prompt boxes.

Ask the parent how she will reward and expand on her child’s response. The reward should

be allowing the child to play as he chooses with the toy. Provide examples of ways she can expand with a new play action or bringing another object into the play.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about prompting play at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 212).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session.

If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, the next session will be a review. Ask the parent to think about different play activities in which she might like to practice. If possible, have this session in the home, so that you can provide feedback on the use of the child's toys. If this is not possible, have her bring items from home. You can also have the parent bring in a video of a home routine to conduct the video review. This allows the parent to receive feedback on her use of the strategies across routines.

If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will not have time for the review. Have the parent read Chapter 6 of the parent manual (**Shape the Interaction**).



Troubleshooting Tips for *Prompts for Expanding Play*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty identifying good play skills to prompt

- Help her identify good actions to do with the toys the child is playing with, new toys that could be added to expand the play theme, or emotions that could be brought into play.
- Ask her: “What are three other things you could you do with this toy?”
- Suggest that she take time to watch how other children play with toys for ideas.
- Suggest that she bring her child’s favorite toys to the next coaching session.

Does not use clear prompts

- Remind her to gain her child’s attention before prompting a new play skill.
- Suggest a specific prompt to use.
- Model a clear prompt for her to use.

Prompts play too frequently

- Remind her to respond to her child’s spontaneous play skills.
- Suggest she prompt for a more complex play skill after only every third initiation.
- Give her a concrete amount of time to wait before prompting a new skill (e.g., every 1–2 minutes).

Does not provide enough support to help the child use the more complex play skill

- Cue the parent when to add more support.
- Give the parent three specific play prompts to use.

Does not require a more complex response before giving the reward

- Remind her to follow through with the prompt, even if the child protests.
- Let her know that it is OK if the child gets a little frustrated.

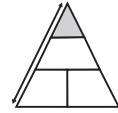
If the child . . .

You can . . .

Gets frustrated when the parent attempts to change his play

- Remove toys that cause frustration from the coaching space.
- Acknowledge that this is common, and that children usually become less frustrated as they learn the new expectations.
- Suggest that the parent start with a prompt her child can respond to successfully, and then allow the child to play his own way. Once the routine is set, cue her to decrease support every third time.

SESSION 19

Review of *Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play***Session Goals**

Help the parent:

- Use the strategies together to increase the complexity of her child's imitation and play skills.
- Recognize how her use of different *Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play* influences her child's response.
- Determine whether additional time should be spent on any techniques to help her teach her child new imitation and play skills.

**Materials**

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** (Form 17)

- Video Review Form—**Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** (Form 22)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Favorite toys that can be used in multiple, creative ways
- Two pairs of some toys
- Video recording and viewing equipment

**Session Agenda**

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review *Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play*.
- Demonstrate *Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Record and review a video of a parent-child interaction.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family about how things have gone since the last session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

This session will be spent reviewing how to use prompts and rewards to teach the child new imitation and play skills. You will help the parent use the prompts together with the previous strategies; recognize how her use of these prompts influences her child's response; and determine whether additional time should be spent on any prompts to help her child use new imitation and play skills.

You will first provide a brief recap of the different prompts for imitation and play, and then demonstrate them. Next, the parent will have the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on any key elements of *Prompts for Imitation* or *Prompts for Expanding Play* that she is having difficulty with during different routines.

You will then record a brief parent-child interaction. You and the parent will review the video

together, discuss the parent's use of strategies and the child's response, and problem-solve as necessary. If you have been unable to go to the home, you can review a video of a home routine that the parent has recorded and brought to the session, instead of recording a video during the session.

Ask the parent: "Do you have questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?" Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Prompts for Expanding Play* at home. Discuss the child's response, what went well, and what was hard.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 18 (page 212). The challenges the parent reports should help guide the review session

Review *Prompts for Imitation and Expanding Play*

Review the Rationale

Prompts are used to teach the child new imitation and play skills, and rewards are used to increase the likelihood that the child will use these new skills again. The parent will begin the interaction the same way she has already learned, by focusing on her child. When teaching imitation, the parent will use *Imitate Your Child* to set up a back-and-forth imitation game. When expanding play, she can join the child's play in other ways. Then she will create an opportunity to gain the child's attention. Once the parent has the child's attention, she will prompt the child to imitate a play action or gesture or use a new play skill. After the child imitates or uses the new play skill, she will reward him by letting him play the way he wants and imitating or following his lead again. She can also expand the child's play by modeling a new play action. The parent should only prompt a new play skill about one-third of the time. The rest of the time, she should continue to follow his lead in play and respond logically to his spontaneous actions.

Ask the parent: "What imitation or play goal would you like to work on today?" If she is unsure, help the parent identify an appropriate imitation or play goal, based on the child's current skills. If necessary, review the child's goals on the Child Goals form, and have her select the goal she would like to address.

Briefly Review the Key Elements and the Steps of the Techniques

Use the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S Review sheet **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** (Form 17) with examples that are relevant for the child. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions. Write the key elements that are likely to have the greatest positive impact on the interaction in the box next to each technique. Include the prompts that are likely to be most effective for increasing the complexity of the child's imitation or play skills. For example, if the child responds well to questions and choices to expand his play, write these prompts next to play prompts. It can also be help-

ful to write examples of prompts such as “the baby is hungry” for a leading comment or “throwing and kicking the ball” for a play model.

Demonstrate *Prompts for Imitation and Play*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Indicate the prompt that you will begin with to elicit imitation or play, and describe how you will add support if the child does not respond. Ask the parent to watch for which prompts you use and how the child responds.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate, identify the prompts you are using and the child’s response. Be sure to emphasize how you add support to help the child use the new skill:

“Sam is playing with the cars. I am going to use *Playful Obstruction* to gain his attention before I prompt him. I will use a leading comment to prompt him to expand his play. (*Coach says, ‘The car is dirty.’*) Sam does not change his play, so I will add support by using a question. (*Coach asks Sam: ‘The car is dirty; what should we do?’*) Sam still is not responding, so I’ll add a choice. (*Coach holds up a cloth and a toy hose, and asks Sam: ‘Should we wash the car with a rag or a hose?’*) . . . Sam said the word ‘Rag’ and took the rag to pretend to wash the car. I rewarded him by letting him play how he wants with the car.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What type of prompt was effective in expanding Brianna’s play?”

“What type of play skills did you see me prompting?”



If the parent has chosen several different goals to practice, demonstrate the prompts for the goals one at a time and allow the parent to practice in between.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

The parent should practice using the prompts she has chosen during play with different toys. To increase independence, ask the parent to identify the technique for each step. For example:

“What technique will you use to create an opportunity?”

“What prompt will you start with to help him direct pretend play toward you or another object?”

If she is unable to answer, use the Review Sheet to help her select the technique for each step.

Manage the Physical Environment

Offer toys that the parent can use to imitate her child, or that will help her think of play ideas. Clear away toys to limit distractions.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of prompts and rewards and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing these strategies can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of each session. The parent should practice with your feedback for at least 5 minutes or until she is successful at using the strategies together. If the parent seems to be searching for ideas or struggling, you might make a suggestion such as this:

“Let's see what happens if you use a choice before you give a verbal direction. Start with the question ‘Where should the car go?’ If he does not respond, you could ask him: ‘To the car wash or the store?’”

Record and Review a Video of a Parent–Child Interaction

Record a 5-Minute Parent–Child Interaction

Once the parent and child are interacting comfortably, record the interaction for about 5 minutes. If two parents are present, record only one parent at a time.

Refrain from giving verbal feedback during the parent–child interaction. However, if the parent is having difficulty engaging the child, you can provide assistance by giving the parent items that she can use (e.g., a favorite toy, a puppet to block play), or by putting away play materials that are not being used or distracting items so that the parent can focus more easily on the interaction. You can also stop the recording, provide feedback, and then start recording again. It is important to have a positive example to review with the parent.

Alternatively, as noted above, you can use a previously recorded video that the parent has recorded during a home routine to conduct the video review.

Review the Video with the Parent

The purpose of the video review is to help the parent evaluate her use of prompts for imitation and play, note their effect on her child's behavior, and identify the prompts that are most effective for her child. To accomplish this, you will use the Video Review Form—**Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** (Form 22).

Begin by giving the parent the Video Review Form. Explain that you will watch the recording together to look for examples of when she used prompts for imitation and play and rewards, and to observe how her child responded. On the Video Review Form, she can check the box for a technique in the “Parent's use of techniques” column when she uses that technique, and write how the child responds in the “Child's response” area. You can also use this form to make notes to review with the parent.

Have the parent tell you to pause the recording periodically whenever she wants to discuss

what she has observed or review a particular interaction. If the parent does not have you pause after 2 minutes, pause the recording and ask questions to help her reflect on the interaction that she has observed. Begin with open-ended questions, and then move to more specific questions if necessary. The parent's interaction with her child should guide your question selection. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

“How did you gain your child's attention before you prompted your child to use a new play skill?”

“What prompts did you use to help your child use a new play skill?”

“What prompts helped your child imitate you?”

“How did your child respond to you when you prompted him to use a new play skill?”

“Which play prompts seemed to work best for expanding your child's play skills or teaching new imitation skills?”

If the parent is unable to respond, provide her with specific behaviors to look for as she watches the recording, and pause when she notices those behaviors. You might say, for instance:

“Let's watch the recording and pause it whenever you use a question to prompt Sam to use a new play skill. We can then talk about what went well or what you can try next time to make it more successful. Let me know when I should pause.”

Feedback during the video review should be primarily positive. However, if the parent has difficulty with a specific technique and you do not think she is aware of it, the video can be used to provide feedback. You can also encourage her to give her own feedback by having her identify differences in her child's response, based on differences in her behavior.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has, and help her generate her own ideas for how she can use what she has learned at home. Take the time to answer any questions she has. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“Which of the prompts we practiced today seemed to work best for helping your child use new play or imitation skills?”

“What could you try at home to help your child respond to your prompts?”

“What is still challenging?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Record selections on the Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34).

Good goals could include increasing the complexity of the child's play (e.g., use of pretend play), increasing the number of sequences used in play, or increasing the number of toys with which the child plays.

Good activities include play with favorite toys, active play, bathtime, and even mealtime. Help the parent identify specific types of play she will teach, based on the activity she has selected. For example, if the parent chooses to teach her child pretend play during play with cars, help her identify specific play with cars. This could include pushing the car to the gas station, washing the car, or fixing a part of the car. The Try This at Home! tables in the parent manual (pages 87 and 92 there) have examples of how to teach imitation and play skills during various activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Using the Practice Plan, talk the parent through a positive example of *Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play* during the activity she selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent how she will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** techniques.

Ask the parent what **Create Opportunities** technique she will use to gain her child's attention before modeling or prompting play.

Ask the parent what imitation or play skill she will prompt, and have her write this next to the target on the Practice Plan.

Then ask the parent which three prompts she will use to help her child use the new skill. Have her write the prompts in the numbered boxes, with 1 being the least supportive prompt she will use first and 3 being the most supportive prompt. Use specific language rather than the type of prompt (e.g., "Say, 'The baby is hungry'" rather than "Leading comment"). Tell the parent she can write down the new skill her child uses under the three prompt boxes.

Ask the parent how she will reward and expand on her child's response. Remind her that the reward should be allowing the child to play as he chooses. Provide examples of ways she can expand with a new play action or bring another object into the play.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about teaching imitation and play at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of Sessions 17 and 18 (pages 204 and 212).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next group session. Have the parent read the *Shape the Interaction* section in Chapter 6 of the parent manual before the next session.

UNIT 6

Shape the Interaction

Shape the Interaction is the **S** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. It is located on the side of the pyramid. The purpose of **Shape the Interaction** is to help the parent use the Project ImPACT strategies together to keep the child engaged and having fun, while also learning new skills.

There are two topics covered in the **Shape the Interaction** unit: *Shape the Interaction* and *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. Use the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to introduce these two topics.

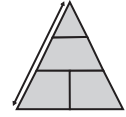
- If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, you will have 3 sessions to teach **Shape the Interaction**. Begin with a *Shape the Interaction* session (Session 20). If the parent receives a score of 3 or lower on the **Shape the Interaction** portion of the Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4), you should spend another session (Session 21) on *Shape the Interaction*. If the parent receives a score of 4 or higher on Form 4, you can spend two sessions (21 and 22) on *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*.
- If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will have 1 session to teach **Shape the Interaction**. We recommend you focus on the *Shape the Interaction* topic; if you have additional time, you can discuss *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*.

The parent must be able to use **Shape the Interaction** effectively before she moves to Unit 7 and updating goals. If the parent is not able to implement this strategy set effectively (a score of 4 or higher on the **Shape the Interaction** portion of Form 4), you may wish to spend additional time coaching on these strategies before you turn to Unit 7 and update goals. At this point, you should complete the entire Intervention Fidelity Checklist and provide support and additional coaching in the needed areas.



SESSION 20 (AND SESSION 21)

Shape the Interaction



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Use the Project ImPACT strategies together to keep her child engaged and having fun, while also teaching him new skills.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 35)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create opportunities
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)
- Community Activity Schedule (Form 23)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce **Shape the Interaction** (the unit) and *Shape the Interaction* (the topic).
- Demonstrate *Shape the Interaction*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements:

Shape the Interaction

- Move up and down the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to keep your child engaged and learning.
- Select the strategy to use based on your child's motivation/mood and the activity.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have been since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn to *Shape the Interaction* to keep her child engaged while teaching new skills. The amount of time spent helping the parent use the techniques together may vary from one to two sessions, depending on the parent's skills.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used prompts and rewards to teach her child new imitation and play skills. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of Sessions 17–18 in Unit 5 (pages 204 and 212). If the parent reports significant difficulty teaching new skills, consider spending time at the beginning of the session to review the relevant prompts and rewards.

Introduce **Shape the Interaction** (the Unit) and *Shape the Interaction* (the Topic)

Explain the Rationale

Shape the Interaction, the **S** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, involves balancing use of the different strategies to keep the child engaged and having fun, while also teaching him new skills.

Some children can become frustrated if the parent spends too much time at the top of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. Conversely, if the parent spends too much time at the bottom of the pyramid, children may not be challenged enough to learn new skills. In **Shape the Interaction**, the parent moves up and down the pyramid to keep the child optimally engaged in an interaction, while teaching new skills.

There are two topics in this unit: *Shape the Interaction* and *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. The first topic focuses on helping the parent balance her use of the Project ImPACT strategies across various home activities. The second topic helps the parent balance her use of the Project ImPACT strategies in the community.

The parent will start with the strategies at the base of the pyramid. If needed, she will create opportunities for the child to initiate. Sometimes the parent will respond to the child's behavior as meaningful right away, and sometimes the parent will prompt him to use a new skill before she rewards him. Her use of the strategies will depend on the child's skills, motivation, and mood, as well as on the particular activity in which they are engaged.

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to review the key elements of *Shape the Interaction*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

MOVE UP AND DOWN THE F.A.C.T.S. PYRAMID TO KEEP YOUR CHILD ENGAGED AND LEARNING

The parent should start with the strategies at the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to help her child engage with her and the activity. If the child doesn't respond or if she wants to teach a skill, she will create an opportunity to help him initiate or gain his attention. The parent should try to teach

new skills about one-third of the time. If the child is not motivated, the parent should move back down to the base of the pyramid to increase engagement and motivation.

Use the pyramid and the sequence graphic in the parent manual to illustrate how the parent will move up and down the pyramid to help her child engage and learn new skills. Remind the parent of the sequence she will follow at each level of the pyramid.

- *Bottom*: Focus on your child and adjust communication, wait for the child's response, and respond and expand.
- *Middle*: Focus on your child and adjust communication, create an opportunity, wait for the child's response, and respond and expand.
- *Top*: Focus on your child and adjust communication, create an opportunity, wait for the child's response, prompt to teach a new skill, and reward and expand.

SELECT THE STRATEGY USE TO YOUR CHILD'S MOTIVATION/MOOD AND THE ACTIVITY

The goal is to use the strategies together to improve the child's social communication skills. However, depending on the child's motivation and mood, as well as on the specific activity, there are times when it is better to use some strategies rather than others. Use Figure 6.1 in the parent manual to walk the parent through how to choose a strategy.

- *Is my child motivated?* If the child is motivated, it is a great time to teach a new skill. If the child is not motivated, the parent should use the strategies at the base of the pyramid to increase motivation and engagement.
- *Is my child calm and happy?* If the child is highly frustrated, the parent should use the strategies at the base of the pyramid to elicit engagement and motivation. If the child is calm, the parent can create an opportunity or teach a new skill.
- *Can I control access to what my child wants?* If the parent can control access to the desired item, she can create opportunities or teach a new skill. If she cannot control access, she can respond and model a more complex skill.
- *Do I have time to follow through?* If the parent has time to follow through, she can use prompts to teach a new skill. If she is in a hurry, this is not a great time to teach a new skill. Instead, she can use the strategies at the base of the pyramid or create opportunities.

Ask the parent: "Which of your daily activities are best for teaching new skills?" If she is not sure, help the parent think about activities in which she can control access to the desired item or action and can follow through with the prompt.

Next, ask the parent: "Which of your daily activities are best for focusing on your child and adjusting your communication?" If necessary, help the parent think about activities that may be better for using the strategies at the bottom of the pyramid.

If the child is using an inappropriate behavior such as hitting to gain the parent's attention, she should immediately prompt the child to use a more appropriate skill (such as a word or a tap on the arm) to gain the parent's attention in all instances, even if the child is frustrated. This is outlined in the optional unit on addressing challenging behavior (Unit 8 of the present manual and Chapter 8 of the parent manual).

Demonstrate *Shape the Interaction*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent if there is a specific goal she would like you to target. Explain how you will move up and down the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to address the targeted goal. You might say something like this:

“Watch how I move up and down the pyramid to help Sam use two- to three-word phrases. If he is not initiating with me, or if I want to teach a new skill, I will move up the pyramid. During times when he is very motivated by the activity, I am going to prompt him to use two to three words. To give him the opportunity to use his language spontaneously, and to keep him engaged and having fun, I will move back down the pyramid and respond to his spontaneous skills. I will also model play and language skills for him, but I won’t require him to use them.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Shape the Interaction* with the child, identify the techniques as you use them and the child’s response:

“Sam is playing with the cars. I’m holding up more cars to get his attention. He said the word ‘Car.’ He seems pretty motivated, so I’ve prompted him by asking a question to expand his communication: “Which car do you want?” He said the word ‘Car’ again. (*Sam grabs for the car.*) I’ve added more support by using a fill-in-the-blank sentence: ‘I want the . . . ?’ Again he said the one word ‘Car.’ (*Sam starts to fuss.*) Now I’ve used a choice to add more support to help him respond: ‘The red car or the black car?’ He said, ‘Red car,’ so I’ve given him the car. He’s getting a little frustrated, so I’m going to go back to following his lead with the cars for a while before I prompt him again. I can model the words I want him to say while I am doing this: ‘Drive the red car.’ Next time I hold up a car, I’m going to accept whatever word he gives me. Once he’s calm again, I’ll try to prompt for another two- to three-word phrase.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“How often did you notice that I used the prompts from **Teach New Skills?**”

“Did you see me reward and respond to his spontaneous communication some of the time?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, using specific examples based on the child’s skills, motivation, and mood. Use the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18) to highlight the technique the parent should attend to during each step. As you review each step, write down the key elements that are likely to have the greatest positive impact on the interaction in the box next to each technique. These should include the techniques she will use to

focus on her child, to adjust communication, to create an opportunity, and to teach new skills. In the box next to **Shape the Interaction**, you can provide reminders for the parent regarding when to move down the pyramid to increase engagement and motivation, and when she may move up the pyramid to teach new skills. For example, you might write: “Move down to the base of the pyramid when the child is frustrated,” and “Use the **Teach New Skills** techniques when the child is highly motivated and uses a behavior to communicate.” You might also say something like this:

“Brianna is playing with the balls. Begin by joining her with the play in the balls. If she does not respond, use *Playful Obstruction* to gain her attention. Once she responds, respond to her by giving her the ball and showing her a point while saying the word ‘Ball’ on two out of three opportunities. Every third opportunity, prompt to help her point or say the word ‘Ball’ before you give her the ball.”

Manage the Physical Environment

At this point in the program, the goal is for the parent to begin to manage the environment with a decreased amount of support. If she is having difficulty, rather than removing items and helping her control access, ask questions to help her think about why the strategy might not be working. For example:

“Why do you think Brianna is moving from activity to activity?”
 “What do you think you could do to gain Brianna’s attention?”

Provide Feedback

By this point in the program, you should be using less directive corrective feedback. Describe the situation, but do not tell the parent to use a specific technique or strategy. Less directive feedback can be given in the form of a question (e.g., “Why do you think Sam is having difficulty responding to you?”) or a comment (e.g., “Sam is playing with the car”). This type of feedback helps the parent move toward independence. Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges that come up while practicing *Shape the Interaction* can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 226).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this time to help the parent understand how to move up and down the pyramid to keep her child motivated and engaged while also teaching the child new skills. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did it feel to use all the strategies together?”
 “Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“Think about your daily activities. Which activities can you see yourself using these strategies in? Which strategies might work best within these activities?”

“Are there any activities during which you struggle to use the intervention strategies?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

The Practice Plan for the **Shape the Interaction** unit (Form 35) differs from previous practice plans, as the goal is to help the parent begin to use the strategies across many activities and to think about how she might use different techniques in different activities.

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the parent’s completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and up to six activities in which she can practice. Have her record her selections on the Practice Plan. At this point, the parent can select any of her child’s goals that were developed at the beginning of the program. Help the parent choose the activities that will be best for addressing the goals.

Help the Parent Complete the Practice Plan

Talk the parent through techniques that she can use during each activity that she has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the box for that activity on the Practice Plan. Help the parent think through whether it is a motivating activity and what the child’s general mood in regard to the activity is likely to be. This can help her decide whether it would be a good time to adjust communication or to teach a new skill. Encourage her to select both preferred and nonpreferred activities, to help the parent see how she may choose different strategies, depending on the type of activity.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Shape the Interaction* at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 226). Common challenges and solutions for the specific techniques are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the end of the relevant sessions.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes between sessions. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. In addition, ask her to complete the Community Activity Schedule (the fourth form at the end of the parent manual or Form 23 online for coaches) before the next session.

If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, you can either spend another session on *Shape the Interaction* or move on to *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* for 2 sessions. The parent is ready for *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* when she achieves a score of 4 or higher on the Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4). Discuss the possibility of having the next session in a community setting, and have the parent read the section on *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* in Chapter 6 of the parent manual. If you have two sessions to spend on *Use Project ImPACT in the*

Community, we recommend you spend the first session reviewing the information and the second session in the community. If you have only one session to spend on *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*, it is beneficial to meet in the community setting; be sure to discuss some of the child's favorite things (e.g., toys) and ask the parent to bring them to the community setting.

If it is not possible to meet in the community, have the parent video-record an interaction in the community and bring it to the next session. If the parent is unable to video record or meet in the community, tell her that you will review the Community Activity Schedule (Form 23) during the next session and discuss the strategies that may be most effective during each routine.

If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will not have an additional session to spend on *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. Have the parent read the **Moving Forward** chapter of the parent manual (Chapter 7) before the next session.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Shape the Interaction*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty balancing the use of the strategies

- Remind her of the goal of moving up and down the pyramid to keep the child engaged and motivated while also teaching the child new skills.
- Recommend a specific frequency for teaching new skills, such as this: “Respond to your child’s spontaneous use of the skill twice; the third time, prompt him to use a specific, more complex skill.”
- Record a brief parent–child interaction, and review the video with the parent. Have her identify when she responds to her child’s spontaneous skills and when she teaches new skills.

Has difficulty using the intervention during a specific home routine

- Schedule a home visit during a daily activity that is particularly challenging for the parent.
- Ask her to bring in a video of the home routine, and review it with her during the next session.
- Talk through the best times to respond and reward, and the best times to teach a new skill. Provide concrete suggestions for which techniques are best suited to specific daily activities.

If the child . . .

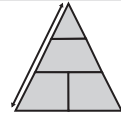
You can . . .

Has difficulty engaging in a specific home routine

- Consider reviewing Chapter 8 of the parent manual with the parent.

(SESSION 21 AND) SESSION 22

Use Project ImPACT in the Community



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Understand how and when to use the Project ImPACT strategies in the community.



Materials

- Practice Plan—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 35)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Favorite toys
- Community Activity Schedule (Form 23)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review the Community Activity Schedule.
- Introduce *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*.
- Demonstrate *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*

- Bring your child's favorite things.
- Create many, brief learning opportunities.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the previous session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed. If you are meeting in the community setting, have an item that will engage the child while you review the Practice Plan and introduce the key elements.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn to use the strategies together in a community setting.

If you have two sessions on this technique, you will spend the first session using the Community Activity Schedule (Form 23) to plan for your community outing at the next session. The second session will then be spent on demonstrating and coaching the technique in the community.

If you have only one session for this technique and are meeting in the community, you will follow the same structure as in previous coaching sessions; however, your introduction of the technique may need to occur as you are demonstrating it with the child in order to keep him engaged.

If you are unable to meet in a community setting, you will spend the demonstration and coaching portion reviewing a video the parent has made of a community interaction and has brought in to the session. Explain that you will review the video recording together, following the same format as in the review sessions.

If the parent was unable to video-record a community outing, explain that you will discuss the use of this technique in the activities for which she has provided a description.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

If you are in the community setting, you may find it challenging to review the Practice Plan from the previous session. You can choose to skip this aspect and tell the parent you will discuss it at the start of the next session.

Otherwise, review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Shape the Interaction* at home. Discuss the child’s response, what went well, and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up during the between-session practice. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of the previous session (page 226). If the parent is struggling with a particular technique, refer to the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of the pertinent session.

Introduce *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*

Explain the Rationale

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty using their skills in new environments. They may also exhibit challenging behaviors in unfamiliar settings and when they are bored. Using the Project ImPACT strategies in multiple community settings can help the child generalize his skills to new settings and new people. It can also help increase his engagement and reduce boredom or frustration when he is out with a parent in the community. Moreover, *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* is helpful for expanding the range of settings in which the child is engaged and for helping him learn new skills.

Describe how *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* can address the child’s individual goals. You might say something like this:

“You can use Project ImPACT strategies at the park to help Brianna use single words to request or protest in a different setting and with new people. It can also decrease her frustration and increase her engagement in the activity by providing her with an appropriate way to communicate her needs.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to review the key elements of *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

BRING YOUR CHILD'S FAVORITE THINGS

Some children can be hesitant to engage with others in new activities and unfamiliar settings. Having a favorite item can help the child feel more comfortable and can be used to help the child engage with the parent in new environments. The favorite toy or item can also be used as a reward if the child has difficulty following directions in some community settings.

Ask the parent: "Which of your child's favorite things can you bring to engage him during community outings?" If she is not sure, help her think about some items she could bring on outings to help him engage with her or the activity. Items should vary based on the outing.

CREATE MANY, BRIEF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Brief and repeated interactions can increase the child's engagement in new settings and help him use his skills in different settings with different people. The parent will base her selection of a technique to use on what the child's motivation and mood are like, whether she can control access, and whether she has time to follow through in the community activity.

Ask the parent: "What are some good community activities for using Project ImPACT?" If the parent is unsure, help her identify at least three community activities that would be good for using the strategies. These are typically activities that the child enjoys or participates in willingly. If the parent reports that a particular community routine is challenging, work with her to find ways to improve interactions during this routine. It can be helpful to introduce the information in Unit 8 of the present manual and Chapter 8 of the parent manual if the child has significant behavioral difficulties with particular activities.

Next, ask the parent: "How can you use the strategies during these activities to address your child's goals?" If she is not sure, help the parent identify how she can use different techniques during the activities she identified to address her child's goals. For example, if the child has a goal of making choices, the parent could have him select a favorite food at the store, choose which play structure to play on at the park, or choose where to sit when waiting at the doctor's office.

Discuss the role the environment plays in the choice of strategies. The parent should choose to use the strategies at the base of the pyramid when there are time constraints (i.e., they are waiting in a checkout line and the store is closing), when she is in an uncontrolled environment, when she is unable to gain the child's attention, and/or when the child is highly frustrated. The parent should teach new skills when the child is highly motivated for the routine or activity, and when the parent can control access to the desired item.

Review the Community Activity Schedule

If the parent has not completed the Community Activity Schedule (Form 23) before this session, complete it with the parent to get a better understanding of the child's community activities and how he currently participates in these. You will use this information as you discuss how to use the Project ImPACT strategies during community activities.

Ask questions to enable you to understand how the community routine is structured, how frequently the routine occurs, and how the child engages in the routine. For example, if the parent

indicates that she takes the child to the store and that the child enjoys this activity, you might ask questions such as these:

“How does your child usually participate in grocery shopping?”

“What does your child do when you arrive? Can he get out of the cart on his own, or does he need help?”

“Does he ask to sit in a cart, or does he walk?”

“Does he like to pick out food?”

Demonstrate *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent whether there is a specific goal she would like you to target in the community setting, and explain the strategies you will use to address the targeted goal.

If you are unable to conduct the session in a community setting, review the video, following the same format you have used for the earlier review sessions. If the parent has not been able to record a community outing, discuss the community activities she has identified. Practice the strategies you recommend, and discuss how to adapt use of the techniques to the particular community routine:

“You have indicated that you would like Sam to use two- to three-word phrases. While we are going through the grocery store, I’m going to follow his lead by handing him the items to put in the cart, and I’ll use simple language to label what he is looking at. When he is motivated for a favorite food, I will hold it up to control his access to it, and then prompt him to use a two- to three word phrase before I give it to him to put in the cart. If he starts to get frustrated, I’ll go back to labeling the food as he puts it in the cart.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate with the child, identify the techniques as you use them and the child’s responses:

“Brianna is on the swing. I’m pushing her from the front, so that we can stay face to face, and I’m using single words to describe the action. Now I am going to stop the swing as a form of *Playful Obstruction* and see if she indicates she would like to go. . . . She looked at me, so I will ask a question: ‘What do you want?’ . . . She did not respond, so I’ll use a verbal routine: ‘Ready, set, _____.’ . . . She said the word ‘Go.’ I am rewarding her by pushing her again, and expanding by saying, ‘Go fast.’”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“How often did you notice that I used the prompts from **Teach New Skills**?”

“Did you see me reward and respond to his spontaneous communication some of the time?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, and use specific examples based on the child's skills, motivation, and mood to explain the strategies she should use.

“Sam is saying the word ‘Cheerios.’ Let’s see what he does if you control access to the Cheerios and ask, ‘What should I do with the Cheerios?’ If he does not expand his language, add support until he uses a two- or three-word phrase, such as ‘Cheerios in cart’ or ‘Put in.’ Reward him by putting them in the cart. If he becomes frustrated, continue modeling language for a while before you create another opportunity. If he is not frustrated, we can try it again in a couple of minutes with another desired food item.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Help the parent remove any obstacles or control access to any desired objects in the community setting. It is important for her to feel successful.

Provide Feedback

The parent may feel less comfortable receiving feedback in a community setting than in a clinic session. To increase the parent's comfort level, ask her whether she would like live feedback, or whether she would like you to take notes and review them with her at the end of the outing. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing in the community can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 233).

It can be challenging to use the Project ImPACT techniques in new settings. Let the parent know that she can always ask questions or ask for you to step in and demonstrate.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the interaction. Questions will vary, depending on the setting. Here are some examples of questions to ask if you are in the community:

“How did that feel to use the strategies in the community? If it felt uncomfortable, what might make it easier?”

“Did you notice a change in your child's engagement or use of skills?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child Goals form from the parent manual and the parent's completed Community Activity Schedule (Form 23) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have her record her selections on the Practice Plan—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 35). Help the parent select a goal that she can target across many community activities.

Help the parent identify community activities in which to practice. Good community activities are ones that the child enjoys and are manageable for the parent. If the child is resistant or the parent is rushed, the parent may have less success, which will likely cause her to be hesitant to use the strategies in the community.

Help the Parent Complete the Practice Plan

On the Practice Plan, talk the parent through techniques that she can use during each community routine that she has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the box for that activity.

Help the parent think through whether the routine is motivating and what the child's general mood is during the activity. This can help her decide if it would be a good time to adjust communication or to teach a new skill.

Help her also think about how much time she has and whether she is able to control access to items to teach new skills. Help her think about how she might use different strategies, depending on the environment, time constraints, and the child's motivation and mood.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about using the strategies in the community. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (on the facing page). Common challenges and solutions for the specific techniques are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of the relevant sessions. If you have been unable to meet in the community, or if the parent would like to receive feedback on strategies to use in a particular community routine, have the parent video-record the community routine and bring it to the next session.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes between sessions. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read **Moving Forward** (Chapter 7 of the parent manual) before the next session. Tell the parent that the final sessions will be spent in updating the child's goals, devising new goals, and making a plan for treatment after completion of the program.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Is hesitant to teach new skills in the community

- Remind her that she can use a brief and repetitive interaction, such as cueing the child to say the word “Open” before getting in and out of the car.
- Remind the parent that motivation is key. If the child does not want to get out of the car, for instance, this would not be a good time to teach a new skill.
- Talk through the activity, and help the parent identify a small portion of it the child enjoys and in which she can control access to the object or action the child enjoys.
- Remind the parent to use the techniques at the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid if she cannot control access to desired objects or if she does not think she has the ability to follow through with the prompt.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Becomes frustrated

- Have the parent use the techniques at the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid.
- Have the parent think of favorite toys or items such as snacks she can bring to make the outing more enjoyable.

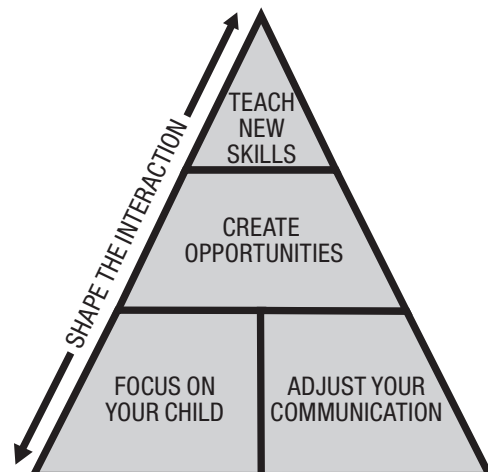
UNIT 7

Moving Forward

The purpose of **Moving Forward** is to help the parent evaluate her child's progress, update goals as needed, adapt her use of the strategies to address the new goals, and plan for continued success. There are two topics you will cover: *Update Your Child's Goals* and *Plan for Continued Success*.

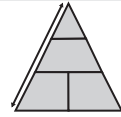
- If you are completing the program in 24 sessions, you will have 2 sessions to discuss **Moving Forward**. We recommend that time be spent in reviewing progress and updating the goals first. You will use the information from the new goals to determine the next best steps.
- If you are completing the program in 12 sessions, you will have 1 session to review progress, update goals, and plan for continued success. Help the parent update at least one goal, using the format described for Session 23. You may update other goals, based on the parent's report and the data you have collected on the child's skills, but allow time to plan for continued success in the single session.

At the end of the program, the parent should have a plan for continued success and should schedule monthly follow-up sessions for 6 months or as needed. The procedure for the follow-up sessions is provided at the end of this unit.



SESSION 23

Update Your Child's Goals



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Review her child's progress toward his goals.
- Develop new social communication goals for her child if needed.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Goal Development Form (Form 10)
- Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8)
- Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) (Form 9)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18)
- Favorite toys
- Recording equipment



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Update Your Child's Goals*.
- Review the child's progress.
 - Have the parent complete the Social Communication Checklist
 - Interact with the child and complete the Social Communication Checklist
 - Observe and record a 5-minute parent-child interaction
- Develop new goals as needed.
- Have the parent practice with new goals, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the last session, and take a moment to engage the child in an activity.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will review her child's progress toward his goals and develop new goals as needed. She will also practice using Project ImPACT to address the new goals. If the parent has been open to video-recording the sessions, let her know that you would like to record part of the parent practice in this session. In the next and final session, you will review some of the video of the par-

ent–child interaction from the first session and this session, to help the parent recognize her and her child’s accomplishments.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Ask the parent to talk through how she used Project ImPACT in the community setting. Discuss what went well and what was hard.

If the parent has recorded an interaction in the community, review the video with the parent and provide feedback. The format of the video review should be similar to the format used during the earlier review sessions.

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing in the community. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 22 (page 233).

Introduce *Update Your Child’s Goals*

Explain the Rationale

Measuring the child’s progress toward goals lets the parent decide the best way to help him moving forward. If the child has met one or more of his goals, the parent should set new goals that she will help him achieve. If the child has not made progress on a goal, the parent should consider whether a different goal might be more appropriate or whether the child would benefit from an additional service to help him meet the goal.

Understanding how to develop goals and measure progress can empower the parent to be an active decision maker in her child’s intervention services.

Review the Child’s Progress

You will measure the child’s progress toward his goals, using both versions of the Social Communication Checklist (SCC; Forms 8 and 9), session data you have collected, and any other assessments you think may be helpful.

Have the Parent Complete the Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version)

Ask the parent to complete the parent SCC (Form 8) to assess her child’s current skills. She should indicate whether the child uses each skill “rarely or not yet,” “sometimes, but not consistently,” or “usually (at least 75% of the time).” For SCC items 32–36, if the child uses the skill “usually” or “sometimes,” the parent should check whether he most often uses nonverbal (gestures) or verbal (words and sentences) behaviors. If the child used to perform a behavior, but no longer

does because he is now using a more complex skill, the parent should check the box for “usually.” Remind the parent to think about how her child uses his skills independently.

Be available to respond to any questions and to clarify responses that may be vague or difficult to interpret. If two parents are present, ask them whether they want to complete a checklist together or independently. It is OK for parents to have different perceptions of the child’s skills, as the child may in fact use different skills with each parent.

Interact with the Child and Gather Data

While the parent completes the SCC, interact with the child to gather data on his progress toward his goals. You can say something like this to the parent: “While you fill out the SCC, I’m going to interact with Sam and take some data on his progress toward the goals we set at the beginning of the program.”

Use the Session Data Sheet (Form 12) to take data on the child’s use of his skills at different prompt levels, and to assess his progress in general. If the child is able to use a skill spontaneously the majority of the time, then that goal has been met, and new goals should be developed.

Use the coach version of the SCC (Form 9) to evaluate progress over the course of the program and determine new areas to develop goals. Directions for scoring both versions of the SCC can be found on the last page of Form 9.

Finally, ask the parent directly: “Has your child made progress toward his goals?” More specifically, assess the parent’s perception of her child’s progress on each of the goals she developed at the beginning of the program. Help her determine which goals should be updated, based on her SCC results, the session data you have collected, and any additional assessments. If the child has made limited progress, let the parent know that you will help her determine the best way forward.

Observe and Record a 5-Minute Parent–Child Interaction

Have the parent play with her child, using the Project ImPACT strategies to address the child’s goals, and record a 5-minute segment of this parent–child interaction on video. During the last session, it can be motivating for the parent to see her accomplishments and the child’s progress as she watches the pre- and postintervention videos. You can also use the videos to emphasize the techniques that work well with the child and improve the parent’s ability to evaluate her use of techniques.

Develop New Goals as Needed

Use a collaborative approach to help the parent determine which of the child’s goals should be updated and whether new goals would be appropriate. Depending on the child’s progress, some of the goals may remain the same, and others may need to be changed.

Solicit input from the parent on new goals she has for her child in a skill area. For example, if you are beginning with communication, ask the parent: “Are there new communication skills you would like your child to work on?” Record this information under “Long-Term Goals” on a blank copy of the Goal Development Form (Form 10). This is the same form that was used at the beginning of the program to set goals.

Use the child's current skills and the SCC results to help the parent break down her goals into *specific and measurable goals* that *follow developmentally from the child's current skill level*. Record this information under "Current Skills" on the Goal Development Form. If the parent has difficulty identifying goals, you can make suggestions. Be sure to confirm with the parent that she endorses the goals you suggest. Write these new goals down on the Goal Development Form under "Short-Term Goals." Have the parent write the new short-term goals on the Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36). Let the parent know that you will work together to complete the Practice Plan at the end of the session.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Now that the parent is familiar with all of the Project ImPACT strategies, you do not need to demonstrate the techniques before the parent practices.

Encourage the Parent to Practice

The parent should practice strategies that address the child's new goals. Remind her that she may need to use different prompts to address the child's new goals. You can say something like this:

"Brianna's new communication goal is to use two words when requesting items. Begin with the time delay, then ask a question, and use a fill-in-the-blank sentence if she does not answer. She can already imitate two words, so we want to try to use a less supportive prompt."

Manage the Physical Environment

Ask the parent questions if you feel that stimuli in the environment are interfering with the parent's ability to interact or teach new skills. For example: "Brianna seems to be moving around a lot; why do you think that is?"

Provide Feedback

Provide coaching on those techniques that will lead to the most success for the parent and the child. Remember, only provide feedback on a limited number of techniques at a time. If the parent is having challenges, you can step in to demonstrate and use the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18) to highlight the techniques that may be most effective in addressing the child's new goal.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Here are some examples:

“Which techniques are most effective in addressing your child’s new goals?”

“What prompts seem to be most effective for the new goals for using communication, play, or understanding communication?”

Restate the updated goals that have been selected earlier in this session. Ask the parent if there is anything she might like to add, and have her record any additional goals on the Practice Plan.

Help the Parent Identify Activities and Strategies

Help the parent identify at least two activities for each goal, to help the parent use the strategies across settings. Ask open-ended questions about the activities and the strategies. For example:

“You have a goal to help Brianna use two words to request during snacktime and playtime. Which strategies might you use during snacktime? Do you think the same strategies will work at playtime?”

If the parent has difficulty, you can provide more support by offering choices of techniques. Have her record the activities and the strategies on the Practice Plan.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about addressing the new goals at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions for each technique are listed at the end of the relevant session.

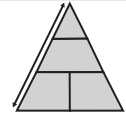
Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes between sessions. She can also take this time to think about additional supports she will need moving forward. Let her know you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have the parent read the *Plan for Continued Success* section in Chapter 7 of the parent manual, if she has not already done so.

If the parent is having difficulty implementing any of the techniques at home, or if you have not had the opportunity to provide coaching in the home, suggest that she video-record an interaction and bring it to the next session for feedback. You may also wish to schedule the final session in the home, to help the parent problem-solve any remaining challenges with using the intervention at home.

SESSION 24

Plan for Continued Success



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Recognize her own and her child's accomplishments.
- Problem-solve any continuing challenges with using Project ImPACT.
- Identify additional supports.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Plan for Continued Success*.
- Review pre- and postintervention video clips (optional).
- Have the parent reflect, and plan for follow-up.
- Have the parent complete exit measures.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—*Plan for Continued Success* (Form 37)
- Copy of completed Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36)
- Favorite toys
- Pre- and postintervention video clips (optional)
- Parent Satisfaction Survey (Form 24)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Key Elements: *Plan for Continued Success*

- Recognize your family's accomplishments.
- Problem-solve continuing challenges with using Project ImPACT.
- Get others on board.
- Identify your family's needs.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the last session, and then ask the parent what she hopes to accomplish during this final session.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The format of the final session may vary, depending on the parent's and child's needs. Typically, this session is spent recognizing accomplishments, problem-solving any remaining challenges the parent may have with using Project ImPACT, and identifying the family's future needs. In this session, you will complete the Practice Plan with the parent while you review the key elements. The amount of time you spend on each aspect may vary, depending on the family's needs. If time allows, it can be fun and rewarding to watch the videos of the initial and final parent-child interactions, to show the parent the progress her child has made over the course of the program, as well as the techniques that work well with her child. Take time to let the parent know what to expect during her final session.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the previous session. Have the parent talk you through how she used the Project ImPACT strategies at home to address her child’s new goals. Discuss what went well and what was hard.

If the parent has brought a video from home, review it together. Ask open-ended and probing questions to help her identify the techniques that are working well for her child, as well as ways she can enhance the effectiveness of any techniques that are not working well.

Challenges in practicing at home are typically related to using prompts to address the new goals. In addition, some parents begin to prompt during the majority of the interactions, which can increase child frustration. Refer to the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of the relevant sessions for common challenges and possible solutions for specific techniques.

If specific aspects of the intervention or routines continue to be challenging, or if the parent reports difficulty in using the intervention to target the child’s new goals, you can demonstrate, have the parent practice, and provide feedback before you introduce *Plan for Continued Success*.

Introduce *Plan for Continued Success*

Explain the Rationale

The purpose of this session is to help the parent maintain her family’s success with Project ImPACT after the program concludes.

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss *Plan for Continued Success*. Ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual as you go, to help the parent apply the information to her family and child. Together with the parent, record the information you discuss on the Practice Plan—*Plan for Continued Success* (Form 37).

RECOGNIZE YOUR FAMILY’S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recognizing her own and her child’s accomplishments helps the parent see the positive impact of her work with her child and can increase her motivation to continue to use the Project ImPACT strategies at home. With the parent, record the accomplishments on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent: “What have your child and you accomplished in this program?” If the parent has difficulty responding, help her identify improvement in the quality of the parent–child relationship, growth in the child’s skills, and the role she has played in these achievements.

REVIEW PRE- AND POSTINTERVENTION VIDEO CLIPS (OPTIONAL)

It can be very empowering for the parent to observe positive changes in her own and her child's behavior through video. If you have recorded videos of parent–child interactions at the beginning and end of the program, or if the parent has recorded videos at home, review clips from both time points with the parent. Be sure to preview both videos before the session, to make sure that the parent will observe positive changes.

Watch 2–3 minutes of the first video with the parent. Pause it and ask her what she notices about her own and her child's behavior. Have her reflect on what her interactions with her child were like before the program. Next, watch 2–3 minutes of the second video. Ask questions to help her identify positive changes in the quality of the interaction, her child's skills, and her use of the intervention strategies. Help her see the ways in which her behavior has contributed to her child's improvements.

Help the parent think about how she might record her and her child's successes as the family moves forward. This could involve completing a daily or weekly diary entry, or recording videos of positive parent–child interactions. Any suggestions can be written down under “Next steps” on the Practice Plan—*Plan for Continued Success*. This Practice Plan will allow her to record what went well, so that she can share with you during the first follow-up session.



It is important for the parent to end the program feeling successful about her ability to support her child's development, or she is unlikely to continue using the intervention techniques.

PROBLEM-SOLVE CONTINUING CHALLENGES WITH USING PROJECT IMPACT

Identify any continuing challenges or issues that might interfere with the parent's ability to maintain her use of the Project ImPACT strategies at home and in the community after completion of the program. With the parent, record what will be hard on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent: “What will be hard about using the Project ImPACT techniques as you move forward?” If the parent has difficulty identifying challenges, you can ask more specific questions, such as these:

“Are there specific skills you are having difficulty teaching your child?”

“Which techniques are you most comfortable using? Least comfortable?”

If the parent reports a challenge with using a particular strategy or addressing a particular goal, it can be helpful to demonstrate and have the parent practice, using the same format you have used throughout the program. If the parent reports other barriers, such as a lack of time or support, take time to problem-solve. With the parent, record the challenge and possible solutions on the Practice Plan.

Discuss the importance of scheduling follow-up sessions with the parent, to help her continue her use of Project ImPACT with her child after the program is complete. Clinical experience reveals that if a parent does not receive periodic follow-up sessions, her use of the intervention often declines significantly over time. Such follow-up sessions can provide the necessary support

to maintain the parent's use of Project ImPACT. They can also help the parent update her child's goals and adapt her use of the intervention as her child develops new skills.

GET OTHERS ON BOARD

Teaching other family members or friends to use Project ImPACT provides the parent with additional support and can help the child use his skills with new people.

Ask the parent: "Who can you teach to use Project ImPACT strategies?" If she is unsure, help the parent think about other individuals in her child's life who might be able to help, such as other family members, child care providers, or family friends. Help her think of ways they may be able to learn some of the strategies. If the parent expresses interest in helping a sibling learn some of the intervention techniques, refer to the discussion of adaptations at the end of Chapter 2 in Part I of this manual.

IDENTIFY YOUR FAMILY'S NEEDS

Help the parent become aware of her family's needs and of additional supports and services that may help her meet these needs.

Ask the parent: "What goals do you have for your child that were not addressed in Project ImPACT?" Once she has identified these, discuss any services or supports that may be available to the family to address these goals. With the parent, record the goals on the Practice Plan.

If the child is exhibiting challenging behavior, discuss whether you and the parent should complete the behavior management unit (see Unit 8 in this manual and Chapter 8 of the parent manual) to help her manage her child's behavior.

If a goal cannot be addressed by the strategies in Project ImPACT, or if the child would benefit from an increase in intensity to increase the rate of progress, make the appropriate referral. Record the supports and relevant referrals on the Practice Plan as you discuss them with the parent.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Follow-Up

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the various ways you have discussed of helping the parent experience continued success after the program is finished. Use this time to answer any questions she has. You might ask questions like these:

"Are there things we discussed today that would help you continue to use Project ImPACT successfully?"

"Do you have any questions about the supports or referrals?"

Schedule Follow-Up Sessions

Follow-up sessions should be scheduled once a month, for 6 months or as needed. Ideally, follow-up sessions are conducted in the home; however, the clinic setting is effective if this is not possible.

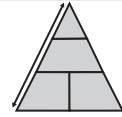
Assign Reflection

Have the parent look at the Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36), which you and she completed at the end of Session 23. The parent should continue to note what goes well and what is hard. Encourage her to make a note of any other items she might want to discuss during the first follow-up session. Tell the parent that she can bring a video of an interaction to the follow-up session if she would like to share successes or receive feedback on routines that might be challenging.

Have the Parent Complete Exit Measures

Take time at the end of the session to have the parent complete the Parent Satisfaction Survey (Form 24) and any additional measures relevant to her completion of the program. This will give you important information on ways to improve your parent coaching skills.

Follow-Up Sessions



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Maintain the ability to implement the intervention.
- Review and update goals.
- Use the Project ImPACT strategies to address new goals.

- Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) (Form 9)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create an opportunity
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38)
- Copy of completed Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36)
- Completed Goal Development Form from previous session (Form 10)
- Goal Development Form (Form 10)
- Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8)



Session Agenda

- Check in, review the Practice Plan, and set the session agenda.
- Review the child's progress.
- Review and practice the Project ImPACT strategies.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In, Review the Practice Plan, and Set the Session Agenda

Ask the family about how things have gone since the previous session. It may be helpful to have a brief interaction with the child to engage him in an activity before you speak to the parent. This check-in will inform your session agenda.

Look at the written Practice Plan from the previous session, and have the parent report on what went well and what was hard. Ask the parent: “What would be most helpful for us to do this session?”

Depending on the parent's response, you might begin with a review of the child's progress to update the child's goals, a review of the Project ImPACT strategies with parent practice, or some problem solving if recurring or new challenges have arisen. If the parent has brought a video to review, take time to review the video, answer any questions, and provide feedback.

Review the Child's Progress

Gather Information on the Child's Progress

Gather information on the child's progress toward the goals recorded on the updated Goal Development Form (Form 10) and the Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36). Use parent

report, observation of a parent–child interaction, and interaction with the child yourself (if necessary) to understand the child’s skills.

Ask the parent to report any progress the child has made on his goals since the most recent coaching session. For example, you might ask:

“You were working on increasing your child’s use of single words. How is he communicating now?”

“You were working on increasing your child’s functional play. How is he playing now?”

Have the parent use the intervention strategies with her child while you observe. This observation will help you determine the child’s current skill level, as well as the parent’s continued ability to use the intervention techniques.

While the parent interacts with her child, take notes on the child’s progress toward his goals and the parent’s use of the Project ImPACT strategies (use the Intervention Fidelity Checklist, Form 4). If you feel you need additional information on the child to assess progress, take time to interact with the child yourself.

Update the Child’s Goals as Needed

Use a collaborative approach to help the parent determine which of the child’s goals should be updated and whether new goals are appropriate. Even if the child has not met a goal, the parent may have a new goal that she would like to target in one of the four core areas. Solicit input from the parent throughout this process. You might say something like this:

“It is great to see that Brianna is beginning to use single words when you use a choice. Do you think we should keep this goal and work on using less supportive prompts, such as a question or a time delay? Or are there other communication goals you have for Brianna?”

If you both feel that the current goals are appropriate, and the parent would like to continue targeting them at home, write them down on the Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38).

If you decide to develop new goals for the child, both you and the parent should complete the SCC (Form 8 for the parent, Form 9 for you) to determine goals in the four core areas. Use a blank copy of the Goal Development Form (Form 10) to structure the goal-setting process by identifying or restating the long-term goals, identifying the child’s current skills, and writing short-term goals that are specific and measurable. Once goals are developed, you can write the short-term goals on the Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38), which you will send home with the parent.

Review and Practice the Project ImPACT Strategies

Review the Project ImPACT Strategies

Briefly review the key points of techniques, using the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18). Give the parent an opportunity to ask any questions she might have about any of the techniques, or about ways to use them at home to address her child’s goals. This sets the stage for demonstrating and coaching on only a few techniques at a time. Choose techniques that are challenging for the parent and that will help the child use the new skill(s) identified.

Demonstrate the Project ImPACT Strategies

Ask the parent if there is a specific goal she would like you to target during the demonstration. Explain how you will move up and down the pyramid to address the targeted goal:

“Watch how I move up and down the pyramid to help Brianna use two words to request. I begin by focusing on her and adjusting my communication to model phrases I would like her to use. If she is not initiating with me, or if I want her to use the new skill, I will move up the pyramid. During times when she is very motivated by the activity, I am going to prompt her to use two words. To give her the opportunity to use her language spontaneously, and to keep her engaged and having fun, I will move back down the pyramid and respond to her spontaneous skills.”

Describe what you are doing as you demonstrate use of *Shape the Interaction* to target any new goals the parent has identified or goals that have presented a challenge at home. Identify the techniques as you use them and the child’s responses. It can be helpful to demonstrate how the parent can respond and expand on the child’s initiation or teach a new skill to address the goal. This explanation helps the parent to continue balancing the use of the techniques. If the parent has reported difficulty with specific intervention techniques or strategies, be sure to demonstrate them with the child.

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What techniques seemed to work to help your child use the new skill we identified?”

“What did I do when he became frustrated?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Have the parent practice the techniques that have been highlighted during the review and demonstration. Remember that feedback should not be provided on too many techniques at once. If you notice that the parent is having difficulty with a particular technique that you have not reviewed, make a note of it and then repeat the steps of review, demonstration, and practice.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions that will help the parent think about the session and about ways to use the Project ImPACT strategies to address her child’s goals. Questions could include these:

“Which techniques are most effective in addressing your child’s goals?”

“What prompts seem to be most effective for increasing the complexity of your child’s communication/play/imitation skills?”

“Do you have questions that have not yet been addressed?”

Help the Parent Complete the Practice Plan

With the parent, complete the Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38). Restate the goals that you identified with the parent and wrote on the Practice Plan earlier in this session. If the session has been spent on demonstration and practice of the strategies with the previous goals, ask the parent if she would like to continue with the same goals or if she has a new goal she would like to address.

Help the parent identify at least two activities for each goal, to help the parent use the strategies across settings. Ask open-ended questions about the activities and the strategies. For example:

“You have a goal to help Brianna increase her spontaneous use of single words to request. Which activities do you think would work best for teaching spontaneous requests? Which strategies do you think you can use to help her use her language spontaneously?”

If the parent has difficulty choosing strategies to work on, you can provide more support by offering choices of techniques from **Focus on Your Child**, **Adjust Your Communication**, **Create Opportunities**, **Teach New Skills**, and **Shape the Interaction**.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about using the Project ImPACT strategies at home and in the community. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for use of the techniques together and use in the community are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables in Unit 6 (pages 226 and 233). Common challenges and solutions for the specific techniques are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of the relevant sessions.

Assign Reflection

Instruct the parent to write down on the Practice Plan what went well and what was hard. Tell her that this will be reviewed during the next follow-up coaching session. The parent may choose to video-record an interaction at some point during the next month and to receive feedback on the interaction during the next follow-up session.

UNIT 8 (OPTIONAL)

Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior

The purpose of this optional unit is to teach the parent strategies to manage her child's challenging behaviors. This unit can be presented at any point if a specific behavior is getting in the way of completing the program, if the behavior is interfering with the parent's ability to complete daily routines, or if the child is still having challenging behavior after the completion of Project ImPACT. The unit can be implemented either as part of ongoing Project ImPACT sessions or as a set of individual behavior management sessions.

The behavior management strategies in this program are based on the theory and practice of *positive behavior support* (PBS). PBS begins with assessment to understand why a child uses a challenging behavior, and continues with the development of a specific plan to help the child use an appropriate behavior to communicate his emotions or needs. PBS fits very well with Project ImPACT, because it is a positive approach to addressing behaviors, focuses on teaching new skills, and discourages the use of punishment. These evidence-based strategies can be used together with Project ImPACT strategies to help the child develop more appropriate skills to get his needs met.

Four topics are covered in this unit: *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* (which is covered in two sessions, subtitled *Gather Information* and *Identify Patterns*), *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*, *Change the Consequences*, and *Teach a Replacement Skill* (see Figure II.8.1). You will begin with providing an overview of the PBS process and helping the parent identify the reason(s) for her child's challenging behavior. Once you identify the reason(s) for the challenging behavior, you will teach the parent strategies to prevent the challenging behavior, alter the consequences maintaining the challenging behavior, and teach a replacement behavior if necessary. The amount

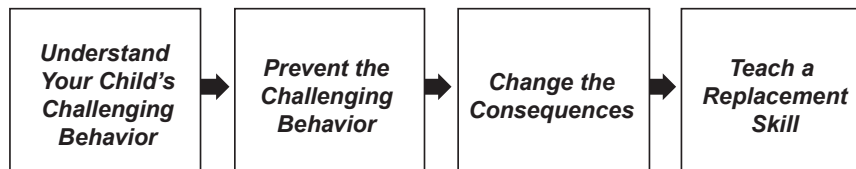


FIGURE II.8.1. The four topics/steps in **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior**. (In this unit, the first topic, *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior*, is covered in two sessions—*Gather Information* and *Identify Patterns*—that are not shown in this figure.)

of time spent on this unit will vary, depending on the intensity of the child's behavior problems, the parent's previous experience with PBS (if any), and the clarity of the challenging behavior's function(s).

- You will begin with a Functional Assessment Interview (Form 25), and then have the parent record the challenging behavior on the Challenging Behavior Record (Form 26), in order to develop the behavior plan. This process may take several sessions if the function of the behavior is not immediately clear.
- You may not need to cover all topics in this unit. For example, minor behavior problems may respond to *Prevent the Challenging Behavior* and/or *Change the Consequences*. *Teach a Replacement Skill* is important to cover when a child has limited communication skills and needs to learn a new skill to replace a challenging behavior. However, it may not be necessary to cover this topic if the child is able to communicate effectively.
- If the child has multiple challenging behaviors, you may need to spend more than one session on some of the topics.

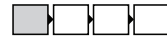
With the exception of the two *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* sessions, the agenda for each session includes coach demonstration and parent practice with the child. If the child's behavior makes it difficult to talk to the parent, you may teach some or all of the topics without the child present. In this case, we recommend that you role-play the relevant techniques with the parent. Once you and the parent have identified all the strategies and completed the Behavior Plan (Form 28), you can then have the child join you for demonstration and parent practice.

Remember, it can be challenging to learn multiple techniques at a time. Take into account the parent's learning style and familiarity with PBS techniques, as well as the severity of the child's behavior, in determining how much information to cover at once. Once you and the parent have identified all of the strategies that the parent will use, you can fill out the Behavior Plan (Form 28).

Consistency is key to addressing challenging behaviors. If the behaviors are severe, the parent may benefit from additional support in order to implement these strategies with consistency.

SESSION 1

Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior— Gather Information



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Understand the PBS process.
- Understand the reasons why children exhibit challenging behavior.
- Describe and measure the child's challenging behavior.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Functional Assessment Interview (Form 25)
- Challenging Behavior Record (Form 26)
- Practice Plan—*Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* (Form 39)
- Preferred toys (if child is present)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Introduce **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior**.
- Introduce *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior—Gather Information*.
- Gather information on the child's challenging behavior.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior*

- Recognize the reasons for challenging behavior.
- Gather information on your child's challenging behavior.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

If the child is present, engage him in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent. Ask how things have gone since the previous session.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The purpose of this unit is to help the parent learn to use techniques to manage her child's challenging behavior. In this session, you will begin by discussing reasons for children's challenging behavior. You will then ask the parent questions to determine which of her child's challenging behaviors to address first (if there are multiple behaviors), and when and why the behavior(s) may be happening. You will also teach her how to collect information on her child's challenging behavior at home. You will use this information in the following session to help her understand the reason for the behavior and to guide the development of a behavior plan.

Introduce **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior**

Positive behavior support (PBS) is an evidence-based approach that begins with assessment to understand why a child uses challenging behavior, and then moves to the development of a specific plan to improve the behavior. PBS fits very well with Project ImPACT, because it uses a positive approach to address behaviors. It focuses on teaching new skills and discourages punishment. The parent can use these strategies together with Project ImPACT strategies to help the child develop more appropriate skills to get his needs met.

There are four steps the parent can use to manage her child's behavior: *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* (which is divided into two parts, *Gather Information* and *Identify Patterns*), *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*, *Change the Consequences*, and *Teach a Replacement Skill*. The number of steps the parent uses will depend on the severity of and the reason(s) for the child's challenging behavior(s).

Introduce *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior*

Explain the Rationale

Many children with social communication delays have difficulty regulating their emotions and communicating their needs appropriately. These limitations often lead to behavioral problems, such as tantrums, aggression, or noncompliance, because children learn to use challenging behaviors to get their needs met. The first step in managing challenging behavior has two parts: (1) gathering information on the behavior and (2) identifying patterns in the behavior to understand the reason(s) why the child is using it.

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to guide your discussion.

RECOGNIZE THE REASONS FOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

The reasons most children use challenging behavior are as follows: (1) to get something tangible, such as food or toys; (2) to gain someone's (often a parent's) attention; (3) to escape, delay, or avoid an activity or task they do not want to do; or (4) to meet a sensory need (i.e., the child simply enjoys how the behavior feels, sounds, or looks).

Challenging behavior is influenced by the situations and events that surround it. Certain situations, called *setting events* (such as the child's being tired or hungry), can make it more likely for problems to happen. Specific events that happen just before the challenging behavior are called *triggers* or *antecedents*. They set off the behavior. Specific events that happen just after the challenging behavior are called *consequences*. They usually keep the behavior going.

Gathering information on, and then looking for patterns in, the situations and events that happen before and after a challenging behavior can help you and the parent identify when the behavior is most likely to happen and the reason for it. This information is necessary for developing an effective behavior plan.

Describe how *Understanding Your Child's Challenging Behavior* can help the parent manage the child's behavior. You can say something like this:

“Brianna has been banging her head a lot, and I know this is concerning. To help her, we first have to understand when and why she is banging her head, in order to be able to teach her another way to communicate that emotion or need.”

GATHER INFORMATION ON THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

Tell the parent that you will interview her to gain a better understanding of the situations surrounding the challenging behavior. You will also ask her to collect some information at home. Once you and she have gathered sufficient information, which is the main objective of this session, you will use the next session to help her identify patterns in her child's challenging behavior, including the situations in which it is most likely to occur, its triggers and consequences, and its likely reason(s).



The amount of time it takes to understand the function of the child's behavior(s) will vary, depending on how many challenging behaviors there are and how clear their reasons or functions are.

Gather Information on the Child's Challenging Behavior

Conduct the Functional Assessment Interview

Interview the parent, using the Functional Assessment Interview (Form 26), and record the answers so that you can refer to them when necessary. Ask follow-up questions as needed to develop a clearer understanding of the situations that may be influencing the behavior.

The information you obtain from the Functional Assessment Interview should help you determine which challenging behaviors the parent would like to address first. Use this information to guide the discussion of what behavior to record on the Challenging Behavior Record (Form 26). Common challenges and tips for identifying a behavior to address can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 255) at the end of this session.

Teach the Parent How to Complete the Challenging Behavior Record

Review the Challenging Behavior Record in Chapter 8 of the parent manual with the parent as you discuss the key aspects of collecting data on the child's challenging behavior at home. Let her know that this information will help both of you identify patterns in the child's behavior that may not be evident when she is thinking back on the behavior.

DESCRIBE YOUR CHILD'S CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

The first step is to develop a clear description of the challenging behavior(s), in order to gather consistent information about what may be influencing it (or them). The description should be specific and should be clear enough that others who know the child can agree on when it happens.

Help the parent develop a clear description of the behaviors that she will be tracking. Write the description down next to “Challenging Behavior(s)” on the Challenging Behavior Record.

RECORD YOUR CHILD'S CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

The next step is to record the child's challenging behavior as it occurs, as well as the situations and events that occur just before and after the challenging behavior.

Talk the parent through how she will record information on the following: what the situation was, what happened just before the behavior occurred, what the behavior looked like, and what happened just after the behavior occurred. You can refer to Figure 8.1 in the parent manual as an example. You can also have the parent fill out the first line of the Challenging Behavior Record with an example based on a recent incident as you discuss this process.

Let the parent know that you will review this information in the following session to help you both identify the reason(s) for the challenging behavior and complete the Summary Statement (Form 27).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the parent's understanding and willingness to complete the Challenging Behavior Record at home. Use this time to answer questions the parent has and to clarify any aspects of *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* that were covered in this session. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How do you feel about recording the information?”

“Do you think it will be challenging?”

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about recording data at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (on the facing page) below. Write this information on the Practice Plan—*Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* (Form 39).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to rate how much the child's challenging behavior interferes with the family's routines between sessions on the “Behavior Tracking” section of the Practice Plan. Let her know that you will review her ratings at each session to determine how the child is responding to the strategies. Ask her to write down what went well and what was hard about recording her child's challenging behavior in the “Reflection” section of the Practice Plan. Have the parent read the rest of the *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* section in Chapter 8 of the parent manual, if she has not done so already.



If the reason or reasons for the child's challenging behavior are clear from the interview and/or your observations, you can continue with the information in Session 2.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty completing the Challenging Behavior Record at home

- Suggest she record behaviors only during certain times of day or particular routines that are challenging.
- Have the parent talk you through several instances of challenging behavior that happened over the week and help her fill out the Challenging Behavior Record based on this information.
- Observe and track the behavior(s) during a session.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Has many different challenging behaviors

- Help the parent identify the behavior that is most distressing or interferes the most with family routines.
- Help her select a behavior that is likely to respond quickly to *Prevent the Challenging Behavior* (Session 3), and then identify another challenging behavior once she has had success.
- Focus on addressing the challenging behavior within a single routine.

Has challenging behavior(s) with no clear function

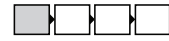
- Have the parent continue to collect data using the Challenging Behavior Record.
- Try to identify the function of the challenging behavior within a single routine.
- Develop a best hypothesis of the function and then revise as necessary.

Has challenging behavior that is very intense or severe

- Introduce how to teach a replacement skill (Session 5) before teaching her to stop rewarding the challenging behavior (Session 4).
- Refer the family to a behavioral specialist.

SESSION 2

Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior— Identify Patterns



Session Goals

- Help the parent identify the reason(s) for the child's challenging behavior.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Completed Functional Assessment Interview (Form 25)
- Challenging Behavior Record (Form 26)
- Summary Statement (Form 27)
- Practice Plan—*Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* (Form 39)
- Preferred toys (if child is present)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review the Challenging Behavior Record.
- Identify patterns in the challenging behavior.
- Complete the Summary Statement.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the parent how things have gone since the previous session. If the child is present, engage him in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

The purpose of this session is to help the parent understand the reason for her child's challenging behavior. You will review the completed Challenging Behavior Record together and discuss the child's behavior since the last session. You will use this information, along with the information obtained with the Functional Assessment Interview, to help the parent develop a hypothesis for why the child is using the challenging behavior. This hypothesis will guide the development of an effective behavior plan.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the parent's rating of how much the child's behavior disrupted the family's routines over the week on the "Behavior Tracking" section of the Practice Plan. Let the parent know that you will keep track of the parent's ratings each week to see how the strategies are working.

Discuss what went well and what was hard about recording the child's challenging behavior at home. If the parent did not record any challenging behavior, explain the importance of gathering this information in order to design an effective behavior plan. If the parent reported difficulty in completing the Challenging Behavior Record, problem-solve with the parent to find ways she can record the behavior. You can refer to the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 255) at the end of the previous session.

Review the Challenging Behavior Record

Look over the incidents the parent has written down on the Challenging Behavior Record. Ask questions to gain a better understanding of the incidents that the parent has recorded. You can ask her to talk you through each incident. For example, if the parent indicates that the child had a tantrum at the store, you might ask:

"What time of day was it?"

"How long were you there?"

"What were you doing just before he got upset?"

"What did his tantrum look like?"

"How did you respond?"

"What did he do after that?"

It is OK if the parent only recorded a few of the instances of the child's challenging behavior for the week. The goal of having her writing them down is to help her begin to see how situations and events, including the ways in which she interacts with her child, may be affecting her child's behavior. If the parent hasn't recorded any behavior or has described only a few instances, you can ask her to talk you through any other instances of challenging behavior that happened over the week.

If the reason(s) for the child's challenging behavior is still not clear, or if you think the parent would benefit from continuing to collect data on the behavior at home, give her another copy of the Challenging Behavior Record (Form 26) to complete over the next week.

Identify Patterns in the Challenging Behavior

Use the information you have obtained from the Functional Assessment Interview and the parent's completed Challenging Behavior Record to help the parent identify patterns in the child's challenging behavior. Ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

Ask the parent: "What are the most common triggers for your child's challenging behavior?"

If she is unsure, help the parent identify the situations that are most likely to trigger the behavior. Depending on the number and range of situations that provoke the behavior, these can be relatively generic (such as “Child is asked to do a task”) or very specific (such as “Child is asked to take a bath”).

Now ask the parent: “What are the consequences of your child’s challenging behavior?” If she is uncertain, help her identify the most common consequences. The consequences can be generic (such as “Mom removes demand”) or more specific (such as “Child gets out of taking a bath”).

Next, ask the parent: “What is the most likely reason for your child’s challenging behavior?” If she is not sure, help the parent identify the reason(s). The reason for the behavior should relate to the functions of challenging behavior that you have reviewed in the prior session: gaining access to a desired item or activity; gaining another’s attention; escaping, delaying, or avoiding a nonpreferred activity or task; or meeting a sensory need. There may be more than one reason for the child’s challenging behavior, and different plans may need to be developed to address the different reasons.

Complete the Summary Statement

Help the parent write the information you discussed in the Summary Statement (Form 27), a copy of which is included in Chapter 8 of the parent manual. This statement will guide the development of the Behavior Plan in Form 28. You can use Figure 8.3 in the parent manual as an example. If you are addressing more than one set of challenging behaviors, use a separate copy of the Summary Statement for each.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Answer any questions the parent has, or clarify any aspects of *Understand Your Child’s Challenging Behavior* that were covered in this session.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

If you are having the parent complete the Challenging Behavior Record again, help the parent brainstorm ways to do it effectively, and write this down on the Practice Plan. If the parent will not be collecting additional data, you can skip the “Planning” section of the Practice Plan.

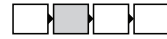
Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to complete the “Behavior Tracking” section of the Practice Plan, to assess how much her child’s behavior interferes with family routines between sessions. If relevant, ask her to write down what went well and what was hard about recording her child’s challenging behavior in the “Reflection” section.

Once you and the parent have completed the Summary Statement, you are ready to introduce *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*. Have the parent read this section in Chapter 8 of the parent manual.

SESSION 3

Prevent the Challenging Behavior



Session Goals

- Help the parent make changes to the child's environment, routines, and interactions to make challenging behaviors less likely.



Materials

- Parent manual
- Completed Summary Statement (Form 27)
- Practice Plan—*Prevent the Challenging Behavior* (Form 40)
- Picture schedule, timer, or other items to aid in making transitions
- Preferred toys
- Materials for nonpreferred tasks (if needed)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*.
- Demonstrate *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.



Key Elements: *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*

- Avoid the trigger.
- Give clear instructions and expectations.
- Make tasks easier or more fun.
- Give choices.
- Follow challenging routines with preferred routines.
- Give information about upcoming events and changes in routines.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the previous session. If the child is present, take a moment to get him engaged in an activity so that you and the parent will be able to talk.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn how to make small changes to the environment, routines, and interactions to make challenging behaviors less likely to happen.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the parent's "Behavior Tracking" rating from the Practice Plan. Determine whether there has been any change in the child's challenging behavior since the previous session. If the behavior has escalated, take time to discuss any changes that have happened at home.

If the parent was asked to record additional data on her child's behavior at home, discuss what went well and what was hard about it, and review the Challenging Behavior Record.

Introduce *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*

Explain the Rationale

One effective strategy for dealing with challenging behavior is to prevent the behavior from happening in the first place. This is done by avoiding the trigger or changing the situation to make it less likely to set off the challenging behavior. The best prevention strategies address the triggers and the reason for the challenging behavior.

This strategy is particularly helpful for children who use challenging behavior to get out of tasks and activities (the escape/avoid function), and may be sufficient to produce improvements in less severe challenging behavior on its own. It can also be effective for other functions of challenging behavior.

Describe how this strategy can be used to address the reason(s) for the child's challenging behavior. You might say something like this:

"Brianna often has tantrums to avoid or get out of tasks that she doesn't like or that she finds hard. For Brianna, an unpleasant task is the trigger that sets off a tantrum. Brianna will be less likely to have tantrums if you make a few small changes to how and when you ask her to do those activities and how you engage her in them."

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

AVOID THE TRIGGER

The easiest way to prevent the challenging behavior is to avoid the situations or events that trigger the behavior. This is often a good technique to use while the child is learning to use a replacement skill. However, this is not always possible and may not be the best long-term solution.

Ask the parent: "How can you avoid the trigger for your child's challenging behavior?" If she is unsure, talk to the parent about the challenging behaviors that may be best addressed with this technique, and help her identify ways she can avoid the trigger. Let her know that you will gradually work to reintroduce the situations that trigger challenging behavior, once the behavior is under better control.

GIVE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Some children may appear noncompliant when they actually do not understand the directions they are given or recognize that they are expected to respond. The parent should make sure she has the child's attention before giving an instruction, and then tell the child exactly what she wants him to do, using simple language.

Give examples of clear instructions ("Pick up your toys") and unclear instructions ("Do you want to put your toys away now?"). Also explain how to give an instruction that tells the child what *to do* ("Use your inside voice") rather than what *not to do* ("Stop yelling"). Help the parent generate some examples of clear instructions she can use with her child. You can also use the information in Chapter 5 of the parent manual (the section on *Prompts for Understanding Communication*) to help the parent understand how to give clear, simple directions and follow through.

MAKE TASKS EASIER OR MORE FUN

Challenging behaviors can also occur when the child feels that a task is too long, hard, or boring. One way to prevent challenging behaviors during an unpleasant task is to make the task shorter or to help with the task if it is difficult. Another way is to bring toys or sing songs to make waiting or doing a boring task more fun.

Ask the parent: "How can you make challenging tasks easier or more fun?" If she is not sure, help the parent identify the length or difficulty of the task in which the challenging behavior occurs. Discuss how long the child is able to participate before becoming disruptive. For example, if the child will not sit at the table during dinner, determine how long he currently does sit before leaving the table. Use this information to help the parent brainstorm ways to make the task easy enough for the child to participate willingly, and then gradually to increase expectations. This may involve shortening the length of the task initially, providing help early on, or adding fun activities.

GIVE CHOICES

Giving choices provides the child with a sense of control, which can help the child become more compliant. Both choices that the parent provides should result in the desired behavior.

Give examples of choices the parent can give within routines in which the challenging behavior occurs. For example, if the child is resistant to getting in the car, the parent might say, "It is time to get in the car. Would you like to walk to the car, or would you like me to carry you?" Help the parent generate some examples of choices she can give her child.

FOLLOW CHALLENGING ROUTINES WITH PREFERRED ROUTINES

Following nonpreferred activities with preferred activities can decrease challenging behavior and increase compliance during challenging routines.

Ask the parent: "How can you reschedule your day to follow challenging routines with preferred routines?" If she is uncertain, help the parent use the Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to create a schedule in which routines the child resists are followed by routines he enjoys.

The child may also benefit from "First . . . , then . . ." directions to learn that the nonpreferred task will be followed by a preferred activity.

GIVE INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS AND CHANGES IN ROUTINES

Some children become upset when there is a change in an event, a routine, or expectations. Providing information about upcoming events can help the child anticipate what is coming and regulate his emotions.

Ask the parent: “How can you help your child understand what is coming next?” If she is not sure, help the parent think of the type of support her child might need to understand changes. This could include a picture schedule, verbal or visual warnings, or timers.

Demonstrate Prevent the Challenging Behavior

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Explain that you will set up a scenario that often triggers the challenging behavior (e.g., a non-preferred task or a transition from a preferred activity) and will demonstrate how to use the techniques with the child. If you are role-playing with the parent, ask the parent to pretend to be the child while you pretend to be the parent in order to demonstrate the technique.

Describe What You Are Doing

Ask the parent to watch for how you use the technique(s) and how the child responds (if he is present). Begin by asking the parent: “Which technique or techniques would you like to try today?” Encourage her to provide input on the technique(s) she thinks might be most effective, based on the reason(s) for the child’s challenging behavior. Here are some examples:

“We know Sam gets really upset when he has to stop a favorite activity. He’s currently playing with his favorite train. So I am going to let him know that it is time to put his train away by giving him first a 2-minute warning, and then a 1-minute warning. Finally, I will give him a clear instruction, ‘All done train,’ and show him the box.”

“Brianna seems to hit us when she wants our attention. We have really noticed this when you and I talk. I am going to try to prevent this behavior in two ways. First, I’ll get Brianna involved in a fun activity before we talk, to avoid the trigger of her being bored. Second, I’ll keep our conversation short. To help her understand, I will use a picture card and timer to show her that you and I will talk for 2 minutes and then play with her. We will work toward increasing the time we can talk, but I want to keep it short at the beginning so that she is successful.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“How did I let Sam know it was time to put away the train?”

“How did Sam respond when I gave him two warnings?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Let the parent know that her child may exhibit more challenging behaviors with her than with you, since he has a longer history with her. If this occurs, you may step in or discontinue practice to discuss additional strategies. If the child is not present, have the parent role-play the techniques while you pretend to be the child.

Manage the Physical Environment

Hand the parent materials to prevent the behavior (e.g., a picture card, a timer, toys) and to keep the child, parent, and the environment safe. If the child's behavior escalates, block the child from hurting himself or the parent or destroying materials.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of the techniques and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing this strategy can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 265). You might say something like this:

“Great use of pictures, simple language, and the timer to let Brianna know how long we were going to talk! She waited for 2 minutes and did not hit you. Let's play with her for a few more minutes and try it again.”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the interaction or role play. If the parent did not have the opportunity to practice, you can use this time to answer questions she has and to clarify any key elements you discussed. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did it feel to get Brianna involved in a fun activity and use a timer to help Brianna wait for your attention?”

“Can you imagine doing this in situations where you need to talk to someone? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“What techniques do you think help Brianna the most?”

Help the Parent Complete the Practice Plan

Review the Summary Statement with the parent, and have her write down the challenging behavior and its triggers on the Practice Plan—*Prevent the Challenging Behavior* (Form 40). Then help her identify the most appropriate prevention strategies she can use, based on the triggers. Write down the key elements she will focus on within the relevant routine or situation.

Ask her how and when she will avoid the trigger, how she will make difficult situations easier, and so on.

The child is likely to benefit from a number of prevention techniques, which may differ, depending on the routine. Be sure to obtain details on the situations in which she will use specific techniques, as well as specific examples. For example, if the parent will give choices when getting her child dressed, have her write down the choices she will use in this routine.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using the techniques she has selected at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for *Prevent the Challenging Behavior* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (on the facing page).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to complete the “Behavior Tracking” section of the Practice Plan, to measure how much her child’s behavior interferes with family routines between sessions. This allows you to collect information on the effectiveness of the technique. In the “Reflection” section, have her write down what went well and what was hard. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have her read the *Change the Consequences* section in Chapter 8 of the parent manual.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Can't avoid the trigger because the child has to complete the activity

- Discuss supports she can use, such as visual schedules to let the child know what to expect.
- Tell her to warn the child of the upcoming change by counting or using a timer.
- Help her think of ways to follow the nonpreferred activity with something the child enjoys.
- Discuss avoiding the trigger until the child's challenging behavior improves, and then gradually reintroducing it.
- Suggest avoiding the trigger while teaching the child to use an alternative skill to communicate his emotions and needs.

Has difficulty gaining her child's attention before giving a direction

- Suggest ways she can use to gain his attention, such as being in his line of sight and interrupting the activity.
- Have her refer to **Create Opportunities** (Chapter 4 of the parent manual) for additional techniques that can be used to gain the child's attention.

Gives directions that are unclear or too complex

- Remind her of the level of complexity of directions she should give before she prompts (e.g., one step, two steps).
- Suggest a specific verbal instruction to use.
- Model directions for her to give by rephrasing her unclear directions in a more appropriate form.
- Ask her how she can make her directions clearer.

Is hesitant to reduce the demands of a task

- Discuss making the task short or easy enough that the child will participate willingly, and then gradually increasing the length or demands.
- Suggest making the task shorter or easier until you and she teach the child how to engage in the task successfully.

Is hesitant to use a schedule

- Discuss how we all use calendars and schedules to let us know what is coming up, and how this can help the child.
- Help her select the type of support that will work best for the child's language level.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Gets frustrated during daily routines

- Help the parent determine activities or items that will be rewarding for the child, and discuss how she can follow the challenging routine with a preferred routine or activity.

(continued)



Troubleshooting Tips *(continued)*

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Gets frustrated during daily routines

- Use the Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent structure the day so that preferred activities follow nonpreferred activities. For example, if the child likes to eat but does not like getting dressed, have the child dress and then have breakfast.
- Suggest that the parent make the routine easier, shorter, or more fun.
- Let the parent know that you will help her teach the child to participate in the activity when you get to *Teach a Replacement Skill*.

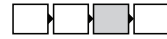
Gets frustrated during transitions, particularly transitions to nonpreferred activities

- Have the parent use visual schedules to help the child see what will come next.
- Have the parent give the child a warning before ending the preferred activity.
- Remind the parent to let the child know what enjoyable activity will follow the nonpreferred task.
- Suggest making the nonpreferred activity easier or shorter until the child is able to make the transition effectively.
- Suggest adding a reward when the child makes the transition without exhibiting the challenging behavior.

Has challenging behavior in response to stimuli in the environment

- Have the parent review information in the *Set Up Your Home for Success* section in Chapter 1 of the parent manual. This can be a great way to discuss how to structure the home and remove items in the environment that cause challenges to increase.
- Help the parent brainstorm ways to reduce sensory input in community settings (e.g., headphones, sunglasses, going places during off-peak hours).

SESSION 4

Change the Consequences**Session Goals**

- Help the parent change her responses to her child's challenging behavior to make him less likely to use it.

**Materials**

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—*Change the Consequences* (Form 41)
- Picture schedule, timer, or other transition items
- Preferred toys
- Materials for nonpreferred tasks, if necessary
- Extra rewards (if needed)

**Session Agenda**

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Change the Consequences*.
- Demonstrate *Change the Consequences*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

**Key Elements:*****Change the Consequences***

- Start rewarding good behaviors.
- Stop rewarding the challenging behavior.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask how things have gone since the previous session. If the child is present, take a moment to get him engaged in an activity so that you and the parent will be able to talk.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn how to change the way she responds to her child's challenging behavior, in order to make it less likely to happen.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the "Behavior Rating" section of the parent's Practice Plan to determine whether there have been any changes in the child's challenging behavior since the previous session. If the behavior has improved with the prevention strategies, determine whether you need to cover this topic. If the behavior has escalated, take time to discuss any changes that have happened at home.

Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Prevent the Challenging Behavior* at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Common challenges and possible solutions for *Prevent*

the *Challenging Behavior* are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 3, Unit 8 (page 266).

Introduce *Change the Consequences*

Explain the Rationale

The consequences a child receives after using a challenging behavior can reward it and keep it going. Thus another effective strategy to help the child stop using the behavior is to change the consequences. This strategy is particularly effective when the parent has been inadvertently rewarding or reinforcing the child's behavior with attention, access to preferred items, and/or removal of demands.

Describe how this strategy can be used to address the reason(s) for the child's challenging behavior. You might say something like this:

“Sam has learned that tantrums get him out of things he wants to avoid or doesn't like, like putting away his toys. In order to teach him that tantrums don't work anymore, we will need to change how we respond to his tantrums. His tantrums may get a little worse before they get better.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss the key elements of how the parent can change the consequences of her child's behavior. As you go, ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual to help the parent apply the information to her child.

START REWARDING GOOD BEHAVIORS

The parent should think about what behaviors she would like the child to use instead of the challenging behavior, and start rewarding these behaviors. When the child receives lots of rewards for using appropriate behaviors, he will be more likely to use these behaviors to express his emotions and get his needs met.

Rewards can be social (e.g., attention, praise, positive touch) or tangible (desired toys, snacks, or activities) and should be motivating. When possible, they should also be related to the reason(s) for the child's challenging behavior. When the reason for the behavior is to obtain access to desired items or activities, or to get the parent's attention, the reward should involve access to these things. For example, if the child screams to get things he wants, the parent should reward him by giving him what he wants when he asks for it appropriately. If the child hits to gain attention, the parent should give him lots of attention when he uses an appropriate behavior (e.g., playing nicely) or when he initiates without hitting.

If the child uses challenging behavior to get out of nonpreferred activities, the parent may need to use extra rewards (such as a favorite toy or activity or a small treat) when the child engages in the activity without using the challenging behavior. Help the parent identify extra rewards that are motivating for the child and manageable for the parent.

Ask the parent: “How can you start rewarding your child’s good behaviors?” If she is uncertain, help the parent brainstorm what she would like the child to do instead of the challenging behavior and decide how she can reward this appropriate behavior. Refer the parent to Table 8.2 in the parent manual for ideas for how to reward the child’s good behavior.

STOP REWARDING THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

To decrease the use of the challenging behavior, the child needs to learn that it no longer works to get his needs met. This means that the parent should stop the consequence that is maintaining the problem behavior (e.g., obtaining access to preferred objects/activities, receiving attention, or getting out of tasks or activities). When the parent stops rewarding the challenging behavior by ignoring it, the behavior may increase briefly before it decreases (this increase is known as an *extinction burst*). This can make ignoring difficult for the parent, particularly in the beginning. But the more consistently the parent ignores the challenging behavior, the faster the behavior will decrease. The parent must be consistent with her response to the child. If the behavior is rewarded even 10% of the time, some children will continue to use it.

Ask the parent: “How can you stop rewarding your child’s challenging behavior?” If she is not sure, help the parent identify ways she can change the consequence to stop rewarding the behavior, based on the reasons(s) she has identified for it. For example, if the child has tantrums to avoid an activity he doesn’t like, the parent should physically guide him through the activity, even if he protests. Refer the parent to Table 8.2 in the parent manual for ideas for how to stop rewarding the child’s challenging behavior, based on its function.

It can be very difficult for a parent to ignore the challenging behavior in public places. Help the parent think of techniques to use to prevent the behavior if she thinks it will be difficult. You can also suggest that she practice a brief but positive verbal response if she gets negative feedback from others when she is using this strategy in the community, such as “Thank you for your concern. We are working on his behavior.”

Demonstrate *Change the Consequences*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Explain that to demonstrate how to use this strategy, you will set up a scenario that often triggers the challenging behavior. This scenario, for example, may involve having a favorite activity or item present but not available; briefly ignoring the child; or having the child complete a nonpreferred task or make a transition from a preferred activity. If the child is not present, ask the parent to pretend to be the child while you pretend to be the parent in order to demonstrate the technique. Ask the parent to watch for how you reward positive behaviors and stop rewarding challenging behaviors, and how the child responds (if present).

Describe What You Are Doing

Remind the parent of the prevention strategies you will use alongside the consequence strategies. For example:

“We know that Sam gets really upset when he has to stop a favorite activity. When he screams or throws things, people usually back off the demand, and he gets to play for longer. So now we’re going to change the consequence. I will start by giving him two warnings, and then use a clear instruction: ‘Clean up.’ I am going to praise him if he stops the activity without screaming or throwing toys. If he does start to have a tantrum, I am going to ignore his screaming and physically guide him to put the toys away in a matter-of-fact way.”

“Brianna seems to hit us when she wants our attention. I am going to try to prevent this behavior by getting Brianna involved in a fun activity, and use the picture card and timer to let her know how long to wait. While she is playing nicely on her own, I will periodically smile at her and say ‘Hi!’ to reward her good behavior. And when the timer goes off, if she has waited nicely, I will play with her for a few minutes to reward her for waiting. If she tries to hit either of us during this time, we will not give her any attention and will reset the timer for 2 more minutes.”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“How did I let Brianna know to wait?”

“How did I reward Brianna when she was playing appropriately?”

“How did I respond when she tried to hit me?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Let the parent know that her child may exhibit more challenging behaviors with her than with you, and that if this occurs, you may step in or discontinue practice to discuss additional strategies. If the child is not present, you can have the parent role-play the techniques while you pretend to be the child.

Manage the Physical Environment

Hand the parent items she needs to reward the child for good behavior (e.g., toys, snacks, or other preferred items). Remove items that the child is trying to access while using a challenging behavior. Step in to physically guide the child through a task, if necessary (e.g., help the child put toys away while he is throwing them). Be sure to keep the child, the parent, and the environment safe if the child’s behavior escalates (e.g., block the child from hitting himself or the parent).

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of the techniques and the child’s response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing this strategy can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 272). Here is an example:

“I know it’s really hard, but let’s try not to give Brianna any eye contact if she hits you to get your attention. Just stand up and turn around. As soon as she moves toward you, but doesn’t hit you, smile and say ‘Hi!’”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the interaction or role play. If the parent did not have the opportunity to practice, you can use this time to answer questions she has and to clarify any key elements you have discussed. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How does it feel to physically guide Sam through an activity even when he is screaming?”

“Can you imagine doing this in situations where Sam needs to do an activity he doesn’t like? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

Help the Parent Complete the Practice Plan

Review the Summary Statement with the parent, and have her write down the challenging behavior and its maintaining consequences on the Practice Plan—*Change the Consequences* (Form 41). Help her identify how she will change the consequences to address the reason(s) for the behavior. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes.

Ask the parent what good behaviors she will start rewarding, and how she will do so. Then ask her how she will stop rewarding challenging behaviors. Be sure to have her provide details regarding the situations in which she will use specific techniques and specific examples.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about carrying out the practice at home. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for this technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 272).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to complete the “Behavior Tracking” section of the Practice Plan, to assess how much her child’s behavior interferes with family routines between sessions. In the “Reflection” section, have her write down what went well and what was hard. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next session. Have her read the *Teach a Replacement Skill* section in Chapter 8 of the parent manual.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Change the Consequences*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty rewarding the positive behavior

- Help her identify times the child uses appropriate behaviors that she can reward.
- Help her identify types of rewards she can give when the child uses the appropriate behavior.
- Suggest that she reward the child for taking a break rather than using a challenging behavior. Over time, she can gradually increase demands.

Is hesitant to ignore the behavior in public places

- Help the parent identify prevention strategies, such as using a visual schedule and following the nonpreferred activity with a preferred activity.
- Suggest that she have many small rewards available and begin rewarding the good behavior from the beginning of the outing.
- Help her identify a brief response to say to strangers if they make comments, such as “We are working on using our words. Thank you for your concern.”
- Suggest going to difficult public places during off-peak hours, when there are fewer people present.
- Suggest ways she can remove her child from public places quickly and safely without rewarding the challenging behavior.

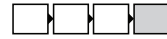
If the child . . .

You can . . .

Uses a behavior that causes injury to the child or others, or that damages or destroys property

- Help the parent identify strategies to keep the child and others safe while ignoring the behavior, such as removing items that can be thrown, finding a safe space in the home, or blocking the child from hitting himself or others.

SESSION 5

Teach a Replacement Skill**Session Goals**

- Help the parent teach her child to use a new skill to replace the challenging behavior.

**Materials**

- Parent manual
- Completed Summary Statement (Form 27)
- Practice Plan—*Teach a Replacement Skill* (Form 42)
- Picture schedule, timer, or other transition items
- Preferred toys
- Materials for nonpreferred tasks (if needed)
- Extra rewards (if needed)
- Behavior Plan (Form 28)

**Session Agenda**

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Introduce *Teach a Replacement Skill*.
- Demonstrate *Teach a Replacement Skill*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

**Key Elements: *Teach a Replacement Skill***

- Choose a replacement skill.
- Use prompts and rewards to teach the replacement skill.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the last session. If the child is present, take a moment to get him engaged in an activity so that you and the parent will be able to talk.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will learn how to teach her child a new skill that he can use instead of the challenging behavior to meet his needs.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the “Behavior Tracking” section of the Practice Plan to determine whether there have been any changes in the child’s challenging behavior since the previous session. If the behavior has improved significantly, determine whether the family would benefit from learning *Teach a*

Replacement Skill. If the behavior has escalated, take time to discuss any changes that have happened at home.

Ask the parent to talk you through how she used *Change the Consequences* at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 4 in this unit (page 272).

Introduce *Teach a Replacement Skill*

Explain the Rationale

Some children may continue to use challenging behavior because they do not yet know a more appropriate way to communicate their needs. One effective strategy for such children is to teach them a new skill that can help them communicate their emotions and needs more appropriately. This strategy is also helpful for children who resist activities because they do not have the skills or tolerance to complete them. For example, if a child is frustrated because he cannot get his shirt on easily, the parent can use this technique to teach the child to dress himself.

Describe how this strategy can be used to address the reason(s) for the child's challenging behavior. You might say something like this:

“Sam uses tantrums to get out of things he doesn't like to do. We can teach him to use a more appropriate skill, such as saying the phrase ‘All done’ to tell us he wants to stop an activity. We can also teach him how to do the activities he avoids more independently, by starting small and using extra rewards.”

Discuss the Key Elements

Use the parent manual to discuss *Teach a Replacement Skill*. Ask the Think About It! questions in the parent manual as you present the information.

CHOOSE A REPLACEMENT SKILL

First, have the parent identify a more appropriate behavior the child could use to get his needs met. The behavior/skill she chooses should serve the same function or reason as the challenging behavior, be easy for the child to use, and easily understood by all individuals who interact with the child.

Ask the parent: “What replacement skill can you teach that serves the same purpose as the challenging behavior?” If she is unsure, use Table 8.3 in the parent manual to help the parent identify the new skill she would like to teach her child to use to have his needs met.

USE PROMPTS AND REWARDS TO TEACH THE REPLACEMENT SKILL

Chapter 5 of the parent manual discusses how to use prompts and rewards effectively. It also has information on specific prompts to use to teach the child to use new communication skills. Pull the pertinent information from this section when you are teaching the parent.

Discuss how the parent can set up a situation to practice teaching the replacement skill when the child is not upset. Discuss how the parent will use prompts to help the child use the skill. She may need to start with the most supportive prompt to avoid triggering the challenging behavior. Over time, the parent will use less supportive prompts to help the child use the replacement skill independently.

Discuss how the parent will reward the child's use of the replacement skill immediately. The reward should be related to the function of the child's behavior (e.g., obtaining a preferred item/activity, asking for attention, or getting out of a task). For example, if the child uses the request "I need a break" to get out of a task, the parent should immediately remove the demand. In the beginning, the parent should reward the child immediately every time he uses the replacement skill. As the child's challenging behavior improves, the parent can respond less frequently or immediately to the replacement skill. For example, she can gradually increase the amount of time he has to participate in an activity before getting a break.

Help the parent identify the steps needed to teach the replacement behavior, including using the most appropriate prompts and effective rewards, and gradually fading prompts and rewards over time.

Demonstrate *Teach a Replacement Skill*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Explain that you will set up the scenario that triggers the challenging behavior and demonstrate how to teach new skills. If the child is not present, ask the parent to pretend to be the child while you pretend to be the parent in order to demonstrate the technique.

Describe What You Are Doing

Remind the parent of the prevention and consequence strategies you will also use. Ask the parent to watch for how you use these strategies and how the child responds (if present).

"We're going to teach Brianna to tap people's arms to get their attention rather than hitting them. So I am going to tell Brianna: 'I need to talk to Mom. If you want to play, tap my arm,' and model tapping my arm. We'll talk for a few minutes. When she walks over to me, I am going to use physical guidance to help her tap my arm. As soon as she does, I am going to give her lots of positive attention. Once I do this a few times, I will then model tapping my arm as she moves toward me, to see if she can tap my arm without physical guidance. If she hits me, I will not give her any attention. Instead, I will wait a moment, and then use physical guidance again to help her tap my arm."

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: "What did you notice during the interaction?" If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

"How did I prompt Brianna to tap my arm?"

"How did I respond when she did?"

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow to teach the child the new skill; for example, “Remember to tap your arm as she moves toward you, so she knows what to do to get your attention.” If the child is not present, you can have the parent role-play the techniques while you pretend to be the child.

Manage the Physical Environment

Hand the parent needed materials, and remove items as necessary. If needed, step in to physically guide the child to use the new skill. For example, help him tap the parent to get her attention, if he is about to hit her. As usual, help keep the child, the parent, and the environment safe (e.g., block the child from hitting himself or the parent). If the child’s behavior becomes too aggressive or dysregulated, you may need to discontinue parent practice.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of *Teach a Replacement Skill* and the child’s response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing this strategy can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 278). As always, emphasize the positive in your feedback. For example, you might say:

“Great use of modeling a tap to help Brianna tap your arm while we were talking! She tapped your arm, and you gave her attention right away. Let’s play with her for a few more minutes and try it again.”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the interaction or role play. Use this time to answer questions she has and to clarify any key elements of *Teach a Replacement Skill*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How does it feel to teach Brianna to tap your arm for your attention?”

“Can you imagine doing this at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“What types of strategies do you think help her most?”

Help the Parent Complete the Practice Plan

Review the Summary Statement (Form 27) with the parent, and have her write down the challenging behavior and its reason(s) on the Practice Plan—*Teach a Replacement Skill* (Form 42).

Help her identify what replacement skill or skills she will teach that serve the same purpose as the challenging behavior.

Help the parent complete the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan for an example of how she will teach a replacement skill. First, have her write the replacement skill next to the target.

Ask the parent how she will set up a situation to practice teaching the skill. Remind her of prevention strategies she might use, such as giving clear instructions and expectations or making tasks easier.

Next, ask the parent what prompts she will use to help her child use the new skill. Have her write the prompts in the numbered prompt boxes. Depending on the child's skill level, you and she may choose to start with the most supportive prompt. If so, the parent can write the most supportive prompt in the first box, and the less supportive prompts that she will eventually use in the subsequent boxes.

Finally, ask the parent how she will reward her child for using the new skill.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using these strategies. Common challenges and potential solutions for this strategy can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 278).



Once you and the parent have identified all of the strategies the parent will use, you and she can write out the full plan on the Behavior Plan handout (Form 28).



Troubleshooting Tips for *Teach a Replacement Skill*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty using prompts or rewards effectively

- Have her review the information from the *Prompts and Rewards* section of **Teach New Skills** (Chapter 5 of the parent manual). Review the *Prompts for Using Communication* section of Chapter 5 as well. Help her choose a prompt that you know will help the child use the new skill.
- The parent should use most-to-least prompting to ensure that the child is successful.
- Remind the parent that the reward increases the likelihood the child will use the new skill again. Even if she uses physical guidance to help the child use the skill, it is important to reward him immediately.
- Help the parent develop a plan for gradually reducing prompts.

Is hesitant to reward the replacement skill

- Remind her to reward the replacement skill immediately until the child's challenging behavior is under control. Once it is, she can gradually have the child wait longer and longer before she rewards the replacement skill (e.g., "You can have a break in 1 minute," "We can play in 1 minute").
- Help the parent develop a plan for gradually reducing rewards.

Needs child to complete a routine

- Suggest that she practice teaching the replacement skill during times when the routine does not need to be completed (e.g., practice asking for a break while brushing teeth several times a day, when there is extra time).
- Help the parent identify an extra reward that is highly reinforcing (e.g., a favorite toy or activity, a small treat) that she can give him for staying in the activity without using the challenging behavior.
- Help the parent teach the child to complete the task more independently. Help her break down the task into small steps (task analysis), and then teach these skills one step at a time (chaining), using prompts and extra rewards. Consult with an appropriate specialist if the parent needs assistance with task analysis and chaining for specific routines.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Becomes frustrated before the parent prompts the skill

- Have the parent remind the child of the replacement skill often before the child needs to use it (e.g., "If you need me, tap my arm").
- Suggest that the parent begin prompting earlier.
- Have the parent start with the most supportive prompt.
- Have the parent and child practice for short periods several times a day when the child is not upset.
- Have the parent ignore the challenging behavior and wait until the child is calm to reward him, then try again.
- Suggest that the parent use extra rewards for using the replacement skill.

PART III

Group Parent Coaching Model Guidelines

Part III of this manual provides a step-by-step guide to conducting a group parent coaching program. This model is most appropriate for providers who serve children in a group setting and/or who are interested in providing a group experience for families. It should be used in combination with the Project ImPACT parent manual, which describes each technique.

Participation Requirements

Because the strategies build upon each other, it is important that the same (primary) parent be present for all group and individual coaching sessions. This requirement does not preclude additional family members from attending sessions with the primary parent as their schedule permits. However, attendance without the primary parent is not recommended, because the other family members will not have the background knowledge on previously taught strategies.

Conduct an intake session (see Part I, Chapter 4), using the Intake Questionnaire (Form 2), before the first group session to determine whether the Project ImPACT group is appropriate for the family and to develop the parent's expectations for the program. The intake session may be conducted as part of ongoing services, via an initial in-person meeting, or over the phone.

It is important to consider the size and makeup of the group in order for the families to have a positive experience. We have found the ideal group size to be 6–8 parents. We recommend keeping the group size no larger than 12 participants, in order to have time for all parents to participate. Groups are often most cohesive when the children are at a similar developmental level and the parents are at a similar point in the diagnostic process. However, the most important factor to consider is whether the parents are able to support each other and avoid significant conflict.

Number and Sequence of Sessions

The group model is designed to be implemented in 12 sessions; 6 of these are 2-hour group sessions, and the other 6 are 60-minute individual coaching sessions with the child. Ideally, the pro-

gram is conducted over the course of 12 weeks, with the group and coaching sessions alternating each week. Each of the six units consists of one group session and one individual coaching session. Parent practice with feedback is essential for helping parents learn to use intervention strategies; thus we do not recommend the group model without individual coaching.

See Part I, Chapter 2 for recommendations on ways to adapt the group model while maintaining fidelity to Project ImPACT. Table III.I.1 lists the topics and the recommended sequence for the group and coaching sessions.

Upon completion of this program, we recommend that you provide follow-up sessions once a month for up to 6 months, to encourage each parent to maintain her use of the intervention, address any new concerns, and help her understand how the techniques can address new goals. These follow-up sessions are particularly helpful for families receiving the group coaching model, as they will have had fewer opportunities to practice and receive feedback than families who receive individual coaching.

TABLE III.I.1. Recommended Sequence of Topics for Group and Individual Coaching Sessions in the Group Program

<u>Unit 1. Getting Started</u>	
Session 1 (Group)	<i>Overview of Project ImPACT and Set Up Your Home for Success</i>
Session 2 (Coaching)	<i>Develop Goals for Your Child and Review of Set Up Your Home for Success</i>
<u>Unit 2. Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication</u>	
Session 3 (Group)	Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication
Session 4 (Coaching)	Review of Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication
<u>Unit 3. Create Opportunities</u>	
Session 5 (Group)	Create Opportunities
Session 6 (Coaching)	Review of Create Opportunities
<u>Unit 4. Teach New Communication Skills</u>	
Session 7 (Group)	Teach New Communication Skills
Session 8 (Coaching)	Review of Teach New Communication Skills
<u>Unit 5. Teach New Imitation and Play Skills</u>	
Session 9 (Group)	Teach New Imitation and Play Skills
Session 10 (Coaching)	Review of Teach New Imitation and Play Skills
<u>Unit 6. Shape the Interaction and Moving Forward</u>	
Session 11 (Group)	Shape the Interaction and <i>Plan for Continued Success</i>
Session 12 (Coaching)	Review of Shape the Interaction and <i>Update Your Child's Goals</i>

Session Format

Group Sessions

Parents attend the six group sessions without their children. The group sessions are conducted to introduce the intervention techniques, to enable parents to identify and problem-solve challenges as a group, and to allow parents to share their experiences with and support each other. Most group sessions have a standard format, with the approximate percentage of session time spent on each component as follows:

1. Check in and set the session agenda (5% of the session).
2. Review the Practice Plans (10% of the session).
3. Introduce the new techniques, show video examples, and facilitate discussion (70% of the session).
4. Plan for practice and coaching (15% of the session).

The group sessions should be taught with the PowerPoint slide presentations and video clips included on the Project ImPACT companion website (see the box at the end of the table of contents). Notes and sample scripts for these slides are provided in the guidelines for each group session. The notes and scripts can also be found in the “notes” sections of the PowerPoint slides.* The slides are animated, and an arrowhead is used to indicate the sample script text that corresponds to the animation.

Take a short break about halfway through each group session, to allow parents to absorb the information, meet other parents, and ask specific questions. The session guidelines for the group session in each unit suggest a stopping point for the break; however, you may find it better to break at a different point in the presentation.

Each chapter in the parent manual refers to one or more Practice Plans for the strategy set covered in that chapter or for individual techniques. These Practice Plans are available both in the parent manual and as forms on the companion website (see above). Have the parents complete the relevant Practice Plan for each session in group. At the end of each group session, complete the Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7) to make sure you are implementing the Project ImPACT group coaching procedures as designed.

Individual Coaching Sessions

Each primary parent attends the six individual coaching sessions with her child. These sessions are conducted to give parents an opportunity to practice and receive feedback on the techniques they are learning in the group sessions, as well as to recognize the parents’ strengths and efforts, and to help them identify and problem-solve specific challenges. Most coaching sessions have a standard format, with the approximate percentage of time spent on each component as follows:

* A word on pronouns in the sample scripts and PowerPoint slides is in order: Unlike our usage in other Project ImPACT materials, we use “he or she” for a child with social communication challenges in this material, which is intended to be spoken/presented to parents.

1. Check in and set the session agenda (5% of the session).
2. Review the Practice Plan (15% of the session).
3. Briefly review the technique(s) (5% of the session).
4. Demonstrate the technique(s) (10% of the session).
5. Have the parent practice, and give feedback (45% of the session).
6. Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice (20% of the session).

There is an outline at the start of each session, which lists the goals of the session, materials, session agenda, and key elements of the technique(s). Additional information provided in the sessions includes descriptions of how to teach the techniques, examples of language to use with parents, and questions to facilitate discussion and parent learning. Each unit includes at least one Troubleshooting Tips table, which lists common challenges that arise during in-session and between-session practice and suggests solutions. The parent completes another Practice Plan at the end of each coaching session. More detail on each of the session components can be found in Part I, Chapter 3.

After each individual coaching session, complete the parent Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4) and the Session Data Sheet (Form 12) or session notes, to monitor the parent and child's progress and determine how to proceed. You should also complete the Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6). These data will help ensure high-quality implementation.

UNIT 1

Getting Started

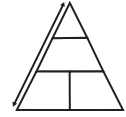
The purposes of this unit are to provide an overview of Project ImPACT, to help each parent set individualized goals for the child, and to help each parent set up her home for success. Parents are more likely to implement an intervention at home if they understand the program’s rationale, participate in goal development, and understand the steps used to address the goals. This is particularly important in Project ImPACT, as the strategies are taught one at a time to help the parents learn effectively. A parent will also be more successful if she is able to create an environment in the home that will help her child engage with her and is conducive to learning.

Before the first group session begins, make sure that the materials are ready, and that the seating in the group space is arranged in a U shape so that all parents can see you and each other. Warmly greet the parents as they enter, and give them a few minutes to meet each other before getting started.

- During the group session, you will begin with group introductions and develop group expectations. You will then use the PowerPoint slides and video clips to introduce *Overview of Project ImPACT* and *Set Up Your Home for Success*. At the end of the group session, you will ask the parents to complete the Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) and read **Getting Started** (Chapter 1 of the parent manual) before the individual coaching session. The sample scripts for the group sessions can also be found in the “notes” sections of the PowerPoint slides. A guide to the key elements for each of the video clips is included in these notes.
- During the coaching session, you will begin by helping the parent develop individualized goals for her child via a collaborative goal-setting process. This process is likely to require the majority of the coaching session. If you have time, you will then briefly review *Set Up Your Home for Success* and the parent’s completed Daily Activity Schedule. You will then help the parent develop a Practice Plan for *Set Up Your Home for Success* for the next week. You will end by asking the parent to complete the reflection and read **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** (Chapters 2 and 3 of the parent manual) before the next group session.



SESSION 1

***Overview of Project ImPACT
and Set Up Your Home for Success (Group)*****Session Goals**

Help the parents:

- Develop group expectations.
- Understand the benefits of Project ImPACT.
- Understand the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.
- Identify needed supports to make the program successful.
- Set up their homes for successful interactions.

- Introduce the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. (Slides 9–10).
- Take a break.
- Introduce *Prepare Yourself for Success* (Slides 11–12).
- Introduce *Set Up Your Home for Success* (Slides 13–15).
- Plan for practice and coaching (Slide 16).

**Materials**

- Slides/video clips
- Whiteboard or large sheets of paper
- Parent manuals
- Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11; multiple copies)
- Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7)

**Key Elements: *Prepare Yourself for Success***

- Make time to practice.
- Talk to your coach about your needs.
- Gather support from your team.
- Plan ahead for what will be hard.
- Recognize your family's accomplishments.

**Session Agenda**

- Set the session agenda, make introductions, and develop group expectations (Slides 1–4).
- Introduce *Overview of Project ImPACT* (Slides 5–7).
- Introduce the skills each child will learn (Slide 8).

**Key Elements: *Set Up Your Home for Success***

- Make your routines predictable.
- Identify daily activities for practice.
- Make time for play.
- Set up a space to play.
- Limit distractions.
- Rotate toys and materials.

**Set the Session Agenda, Make Introductions,
and Develop Group Expectations****SLIDE 1**

Welcome the parents as they enter the room. Hand out the slide handouts, and make sure every parent has a space to sit where she can see you and the other parents, as well as a space to write. Once everyone is settled, you can begin the presentation.

Sample Script

Welcome. Thank you for coming to our first Project ImPACT group session. It's really nice to have you all here. It's not very often that parents are able to get together and meet

one another, and so we are excited to offer this group to you. You are all here because you have a child with social communication challenges. Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty engaging and initiating social interactions with others, learning to communicate, using language in a meaningful way, imitating others, and playing with toys creatively. They also may repeat sounds, words, and actions repetitively, and may engage in challenging behaviors. As part of the Project ImPACT group, each of you will be learning a set of strategies that you can use with your child across a number of daily activities to promote your child's social communication development.

SLIDE 2

Briefly go over the session agenda to provide information on the goals and structure of the session. Wrap up with a quick overview of what you'll be doing in the next session. If you need to make adjustments to this agenda for the sake of time, indicate it on the slide.

Sample Script

- ▶ We will start with introductions so that we all get to know each other. And then we will decide together on group guidelines that we should follow over the next 12 weeks.
- ▶ After that, we'll introduce Project ImPACT—including how this program can help your family, what the program involves, what skills Project ImPACT teaches, and what intervention strategies you will learn. We will also discuss some ways you can prepare yourself for success with this program.
- ▶ Next, we'll talk about setting up your home for success. This includes identifying good times to use the intervention during routines that you are already doing, and learning ways to arrange your home to make it easier to use Project ImPACT with your child.
- ▶ At the end, we'll plan how you can begin to set up your home over the next week to make it easier to interact with your child.

SLIDE 3

Introduce yourself and briefly describe your professional experience. Have each parent briefly introduce herself, give her child's name, describe one strength and one challenge her child has, and state what she hopes to gain from the program. Use this information to develop expectations for the program. If parents bring up goals related to improving their children's social communication skills, let them know how this program will address these goals. If they bring up goals that involve decreasing problem behaviors, such as tantrums, mention that this program does not directly address behavior management, but that improving social communication skills can often decrease problem behaviors. You could also let them know that you may address behavior problems at the end of the program if you plan to use the optional behavior management unit (see Part II, Unit 8). If they mention goals that are outside the scope of this program, such as academic skills, toilet training, or feeding issues, let them know that this program will not address these issues, but that you can identify resources to help them with these concerns.

Sample Script

Because we will be spending so much time together, it's really important that we start by getting to know each other. To help us get to know each other, I would like to have each of you introduce yourself.

- ▶ Please tell everyone your name and something about yourself.
- ▶ I would also like you to tell us your child's name, and describe one of your child's strengths and an area in which he or she struggles.
- ▶ Finally, tell us what you hope to gain from this program.

SLIDE 4

Lead a brief discussion of behaviors that will help develop a cohesive and supportive group environment. Allow the parents to discuss things that group members should and should not do, in order for all group members to have a positive experience. Let the parents know about your confidentiality policy and any guidelines you have regarding sharing personal information, giving advice to each other, and discussing topics not on the agenda. Let the parents know that since there is a lot of information to cover, you may sometimes need to cut off discussion or put longer questions on hold until the break to keep the group on track. Write down the guidelines the parents generate where they can be seen, and display them at each group session.

Sample Script

Before we discuss the Project ImPACT program, it is important to set up some guidelines for this group. One of the best things about being in a group is that there will be lots of opportunities for you to support each other in learning and using Project ImPACT. Parents often tell us that the best support they receive is from other parents of children with social communication challenges. Because the goal of this group is to provide support, there are also things that we should avoid doing, even if they are tempting at times. Because of that, we are going to spend a few minutes drafting some guidelines for the group—both things that we should do to support each other, and things we should probably avoid. We'll make sure to keep these up each group to hold us all accountable, myself included.

- ▶ What are some things you think we should do to support each other?
- ▶ What about things we should avoid?

Introduce Overview of Project ImPACT**Explain the Rationale for Parent Coaching****SLIDE 5**

Introduce Project ImPACT, and describe how this program can lead to positive outcomes for a child and family.

Sample Script

What children learn in their families is often more important than what they learn in school. That's because the goal is for them to be able to interact and communicate with the people most important to them. When you learn the strategies in this program, you can use them during your everyday activities to help your child learn. When you do, it leads to positive outcomes for the whole family.

- ▶ Using these strategies at home will give your child many more hours of learning and practice, because you can teach your child throughout the day during time you already

spend together. Research shows that more hours of intervention can help children develop better social communication and lead to fewer behavior problems.

▶ When you use the strategies at home, your child will learn during meaningful activities like play, meals, bathtime, and bedtime. You can make the most of these moments. This will help your child use the skills where they matter most. It will also help your child use them in new situations and keep using them over time. This is called *generalization*.

▶ Learning these strategies can make you more confident in your ability to help your child develop and grow. It can also make interacting with your child more enjoyable. Parents who participate in programs like Project ImPACT report less parenting stress and more positive interactions with their child.

▶ Once you know the strategies, you can teach them to other important people in your child's life, such as grandparents and siblings, so they can support you and your child.

Describe the Parent and Coach Roles

SLIDE 6

Introduce the roles of the parent and coach. Ask the parents about their prior experience with parent coaching, if they have received it, and what their experience was. Use this information to help develop expectations for the program as you introduce Project ImPACT. If parents have received other parent coaching interventions or some other type of parent training, describe how Project ImPACT may be similar to or different from what they have already experienced.

Sample Script

Project ImPACT stands for Improving Parents As Communication Teachers, which reflects the fact that it is a parent coaching program. This program does not teach parenting skills; rather, it teaches you special techniques or tools that you can use to help your child develop and learn social communication. Coaching you to teach your child may be a little different from other services your child has received, where the therapist works primarily with your child. Have any of you received parent coaching or parent training before? If so, what was your experience with it?

▶ In this program, the role of the coach will be to collaborate with you to develop goals for your child, and to help you learn to use intervention strategies that can help your child reach those goals.

▶ Your role will be to learn and then use the intervention strategies during your daily routines and interactions with your child in the home and community. This means that you will be the primary person working and interacting with your child.

▶ By working together in this way, we will help your child develop better social communication skills.

Describe the Format of Group and Coaching Sessions

SLIDE 7

Review the overall structure of the program and the format the group and coaching sessions. Allow opportunities for parents to ask questions.

Sample Script

This is a 12-session program that includes 6 group sessions and 6 individual coaching sessions, which alternate each week.

▶ During each group session, we will review how your practice went with your child over the past week, and we will work together to discuss successes and problem-solve challenges. Then we will learn one to two new intervention strategies through a combination of lectures, video examples, and group discussions. At the end of each group session, each of you will develop a plan for practicing at home with your child.

▶ The following week, you will each have an individual coaching session with your child and your coach. During each coaching session, you will review your Practice Plan from the previous week. The coach will help you problem-solve any challenges that came up when you used the strategies at home with your child. Then the coach will briefly demonstrate some of the techniques you have learned in group with your child, and then you will have the opportunity to practice with your child while the coach provides you with feedback and support. Each coaching session ends with developing a Practice Plan for you to try at home, which you will discuss at the following group session. Both group and individual sessions are important for learning the intervention. Because the strategies build on each other, the same parent or caregiver should come to all of the sessions. However, other caregivers can attend portions of the program as they are available.

Introduce the Skills the Child Will Learn

SLIDE 8

Describe the four sets of skills this program targets, and let parents know that you will help them set goals in these areas during the first coaching session. As you do this, you may want to give examples of specific skills in each of these areas that are most relevant, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on these skills and how they develop, as well as how each parent will set goals for her child during the coaching session.

Sample Script

Now let's talk a little bit about the goals of this program. Project ImPACT helps you encourage your child's skills in four areas, all of which are key building blocks for learning: social engagement, communication, imitation, and play.

▶ *Social engagement* is the foundation for the development of social communication skills. Children engage with others by sharing their emotions and attention through eye contact and facial expressions, then gestures, and eventually language. When children have difficulty interacting with people in these ways, they have fewer opportunities to learn from others. The starting point of this program is to help you increase your child's social engagement with you so that your child can learn from you.

▶ *Communication* involves understanding and using facial expressions, gestures, sounds, words, and sentences for a variety of reasons. Children begin to communicate nonverbally (by using eye contact, sounds, and eventually gestures) before they begin using verbal language (such as words and sentences). Children who do not communicate effectively on

their own have trouble expressing their needs and may develop problem behaviors to get their needs met. This program will help you teach your child to communicate better by using gestures, words, and sentences, depending on his or her current skills. It will also help your child understand you better and follow your directions.

► *Imitation* is important because children use it to show that they are interested in other people and to learn new skills. When children have difficulty imitating, it makes interacting and learning new skills much harder. This program will help your child imitate you during play to improve his or her social engagement, play skills, and gestures.

► *Play* involves interacting with toys, other objects, and activities for fun. Play skills are important because children develop and practice new language and social skills through play. Play is also an excellent way to work on problem solving, perspective taking, imagination, and motor skills. Pretend play and language both involve *symbolic thinking* (understanding that one thing can stand for another); thus teaching pretend play can help children develop better language skills. This program will help you teach your child how to play more creatively and in more complex ways. Your coach will help you set goals for your child in each of these areas during your first coaching session. The specific goals you choose will depend on your child's current skill level. You will work together to understand where your child is in each of these areas and what skills your child should learn next. Based on this information, your coach will help you choose goals that are meaningful and important for you and your child, and that your child can reach over the 12 weeks of the program.

Introduce the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.

Introduce the F.A.C.T.S.

SLIDE 9

Introduce the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, and provide an overview of the intervention strategies. Refer to the parent manual for additional information on how the strategies work together. If you have time, you may wish to walk the parents through the sequence graphic examples in the parent manual. Emphasize that parents will learn to increase their child's engagement and then capitalize on that engagement to teach new skills.

Sample Script

You will help your child meet his or her goals by using Project ImPACT strategies within your daily routines and interactions with your child. Project ImPACT has five sets of intervention strategies that build on each other: **Focus on Your Child, Adjust Your Communication, Create Opportunities, Teach New Skills, and Shape the Interaction.** We use the acronym F.A.C.T.S. as a way to remember all of the strategies. Each time we meet as a group, we will cover a new strategy set. By the end of the program, you should be able to use all of them together to help your child reach the goals you have set for him or her.

► First, we'll learn the strategies at the base of the pyramid: **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication.** These strategies help your child engage with you and an

activity, and together they are the starting point for successful interactions. You will use these strategies the most.

▶ Next, we'll learn the strategy set in the middle of the pyramid: **Create Opportunities**. This strategy set helps your child *initiate*, or start an interaction with you. If your child doesn't initiate independently, you will use these strategies to help your child initiate and to gain his or her attention before you teach a new skill.

▶ Then we will learn the strategy set at the top of the pyramid: **Teach New Skills**. This strategy set involves using prompts and rewards to help your child communicate or play in new and more complex ways. We will spend one session learning how to teach new communication skills, and one session learning how to teach new imitation and play skills. Using new skills will challenge your child, which is good. But your child may get frustrated if you use this strategy too often. For that reason, you will use **Teach New Skills** less often than you will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

▶ By the end of the program, you will learn how to **Shape the Interaction** by moving up and down the pyramid, based on how your child is responding. You will shift between strategies that are more playful and keep your child engaged and having fun, and strategies that are more supportive and teach your child new skills.

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 10

Show video examples of Before and After Project ImPACT. The two clips provide examples of parents interacting with their children before receiving coaching in Project ImPACT, and after they have learned the intervention. These clips are designed to provide an example of what Project ImPACT looks like in action, and to illustrate the positive changes in each parent and child as a result of making small changes in daily activities. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for what the parent is doing and how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight for each video clip is described below the sample script.

Sample Script

The following two clips provide examples of parents interacting with their children before receiving coaching in Project ImPACT, and then after learning the intervention. These clips can show you what Project ImPACT looks like in action. As you may notice, the intervention probably looks a lot like what you are already doing with your child. The ImPACT strategies are really just small changes or adjustments in your behavior that can make interactions with your child easier and more enjoyable, and help your child develop better social communication skills.

▶ [*Before showing each clip*] Pay attention to how the parent interacts with the child before and after learning the Project ImPACT strategies. Also, look for how the child responds.

▶ [*After showing each clip*] What did you notice during that interaction? What were some of the differences in the way the parent interacted with the child before and after Project ImPACT? What were some of the changes in the child's social communication?

Clip 1: Before and After Project ImPACT, First Words

The mother is completing a familiar daily activity (snack) with her son before and after receiving coaching in Project ImPACT. Before learning the Project ImPACT strategies, the mother is attentive to her son and offers to help feed him his snack; however, there is minimal interaction between them. After learning the Project ImPACT strategies, the mother is able to engage with her child much more effectively. She uses the Project ImPACT strategies to help her child initiate and use language while choosing and preparing the snack. She then joins her son at the table and uses the Project ImPACT strategies to encourage him to engage with her. The son is highly engaged with the activity and his mother, and uses spontaneous language to request and engage with his mother throughout. Notice that the mother makes only a few small changes to the snack preparation she is already doing to involve her son. She is face to face and follows his lead to activities (the snack itself, and pretend play while eating the snack); she imitates his actions, and talks about what he is doing in an animated way. She then creates multiple opportunities for him to communicate (she holds items or only gives him the cone), and uses questions and other Project ImPACT techniques to teach new language, imitation, and play skills. These small changes make the activity far more interactive and fun for the child and parent, and encourage the child to use more complex social communication (eye contact, positive affect, language, pretend play).

Clip 2: Before and After Project ImPACT, Word Combinations

The mother is playing with her daughter before and after receiving coaching in Project ImPACT. Before coaching, the mother attempts to engage with her daughter as she plays with a pop-up toy. The mother is using some nice techniques, such as watching and waiting, and commenting on her daughter's play, but has difficulty engaging her daughter in a back-and-forth interaction. Her daughter counts the animals and labels the colors, and occasionally imitates her mother's language, but does not direct her language to her mother or attempt to engage with her further. After learning the Project ImPACT strategies, the mother is able to play and engage with her child much more effectively. Her daughter is highly engaged with the play activity (play with stuffed animals), and shares her engagement with her mother by using eye contact and language. Notice that the mother makes only a few small changes to the way she interacts with her daughter to encourage this engagement. Some of these changes include being face to face, imitating and expanding on her daughter's play and language, talking about what she is doing, and using questions and comments to help her daughter make choices and expand her play. These small changes make playtime far more fun and interactive, and encourage the child to use much more complex social communication (eye contact, positive affect, language, pretend play).

Take a Break

Introduce Prepare Yourself for Success

SLIDE 11

Discuss how parents can prepare themselves for success with this program. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information.

Sample Script

Parent coaching is probably a little different from the individual services you may be receiving for your child. So it helps to think about things you can do to prepare yourself for success.

▶ You will give yourself the best chance of success if you set aside a little time to practice the strategies with your child each day. We recommend 15–20 minutes. It may be easier to practice for shorter periods spread throughout the day. Your coach will help you figure out when and where to practice. Eventually, the strategies will become part of your daily life. Talk with your coach about supports you might need to make time for learning and practicing the techniques.

▶ Some parents learn best by reading, others by listening or discussing, and still others by watching. Let your coach know how best to support you in learning or using the intervention. If you are having difficulty with any part of this program, tell your coach so he or she can help you problem-solve.

▶ Parents benefit when they have a team that can support them while learning the intervention. Your team members could include your family, friends, and/or other service providers. Reach out to your team members to let them know how they can help. For example, they might be able to provide child care for your other children while you are practicing with your child, or to take over some of your responsibilities so you can attend sessions. You can talk with your coach about how to involve your family and friends in the program.

▶ If you plan ahead for what will be hard, you will be more likely to have success if problems come up. Think ahead about things that might get in the way of doing this program—for example, transportation to sessions, scheduling conflicts, child care for siblings, finding time, or getting family members on board. Talk to your coach about any challenges you think might come up and brainstorm possible solutions.

▶ There may be times during this program when you feel overwhelmed or frustrated. We all feel this way sometimes! Don't be too hard on yourself. Take note of something good your child does every day, even if it is small. These accomplishments can remind you that your child is making progress every day. Recognize your own accomplishments. Remind yourself of all of the things you do for your child every day, and give yourself credit for learning new ways to interact with your child!

SLIDE 12

Have the parents discuss how to prepare themselves for success, using the Think About It! questions shown in this slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. If parents seem comfortable with each other, you can have them discuss their responses in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. If the parents are not comfortable yet, or if you are running short on time have the parents prepare to discuss these issues with their coach during the first coaching session.

Sample Script

Now let's take a few minutes to think about how you can prepare for success with this program.

▶ Take a moment to think about how you learn best, who you might ask for support, and anything that might make it hard to complete this program.

▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Introduce *Set Up Your Home for Success*

SLIDE 13

Introduce the rationale for *Set Up Your Home for Success*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address and for which children it is most helpful, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty interacting with others. By making a few small changes at home, you can make it easier for your child to interact with you and can increase the number of meaningful learning opportunities your child has throughout the day.

- ▶ This can increase your child's engagement with you and the length of time you can play together. It also makes it easier for you to learn and use the Project ImPACT intervention strategies.
- ▶ *Set Up Your Home for Success* is particularly effective if your child is upset by changes in routine; is easily distracted by sounds, sights, and other materials in your home; or moves quickly from one activity or place to another throughout the home.

SLIDE 14

Discuss the key elements of *Set Up Your Home for Success*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents can use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information.

Sample Script

Let's discuss some ways to set up your home for successful interactions.

- ▶ By making your daily routines predictable, you help your child know what is coming next. This can reduce frustration, reduce any challenging behaviors, and make it easier for your child to interact with you. Try to make your major routines happen at about the same times each day. These are routines such as getting up, mealtimes, naps, bathtime, and going to bed. Try to carry out routines in a similar way each time, and repeat them every day so your child can get used to them. If your child has difficulty playing with you, make playtime predictable. For example, always play immediately after lunch, when your child wakes up from a nap, right after school, or after dinner. This will help your child get used to playing with you.
- ▶ The best routines for using Project ImPACT are ones that are familiar, meaningful to your child, and manageable for you. Good routines for teaching are ones that you and your child do most days, and that your child knows well and enjoys. By adding 5–10 minutes to existing routines to use the Project ImPACT strategies, you can create additional learning opportunities without significantly changing your caregiving responsibilities. Think about routines where you can add some time and can focus on your child.
- ▶ The Daily Activity Schedule in Chapter 1 of your parent manual can help you start

thinking about which routines you do with your child on a daily basis. You will complete the Daily Activity Schedule before your coaching session. As you do, you'll notice just how much time you already spend interacting with your child during the day. Our goal is to teach you intervention strategies that you can use during these times to help your child engage and communicate better.

- ▶ One very important routine for young children is playtime. Children develop social communication skills during play with others. Therefore, it is very important to make time to play with your child each day. Try to plan at least 15–20 minutes each day to sit down and play with your child. Give your child your full attention, and try to avoid interruptions. If this is too long, start with several shorter play interactions spread out throughout the day.

- ▶ The closer you and your child are to each other, the easier it is for you to interact. If your child has difficulty staying near you during play, set up a smaller, more intimate space in your home to keep your child close to you. The space you choose will depend on your child and home. It can be a permanent space that stays set up, like a small room or a rearrangement of your furniture to create physical boundaries. Or it can be something temporary that you put up only when you want to use it, like making a tent. As play becomes easier, you can move to larger spaces.

- ▶ It is easier for your child to pay attention to you when *you* are the most interesting thing in the room. Limit distracting sounds, sights, and other sensations as much as possible. When you are playing together, turn off electronics (such as the TV, tablets, phones, video games, or the computer), and put away clutter and other distracting items (like extra toys). If necessary, remove distracting items or cover them with a sheet. You can then bring out just a few of your child's favorite toys to help your child attend to you while you are playing together.

- ▶ Many children are interested in a toy or materials for a few weeks and then lose interest. One way to keep things interesting is to rotate toys, so that your child has “new” play materials available every few weeks. Separate your child's toys into a few sets. Each set should have some toys your child loves, and some your child likes a little. Choose one set to have available, and put the other toys away in the closet, garage, basement, or bins. Once your child loses interest in a set of toys, put them away and bring out the next set.

SLIDE 15

Have the parents discuss how they can set up their home for success, using the Think About It! questions shown in this slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then you can have them discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. If the parents are not comfortable yet, or if you are running short on time, have the parents prepare to discuss these issues with their coach during the first coaching session.

Sample Script

Now let's take a few minutes to think about how you could set up your home to make it easier to play with your child.

- ▶ What space in your home you can set up to play with your child? What sounds, sights, or items make it hard for you to play your child in that space? How can you limit

distractions, especially during playtime? Last, which of your child's toys can you put into sets for a toy rotation?

- ▶ [*After a minute or two*] Now let's talk about it.

Plan for Practice and Coaching

SLIDE 16

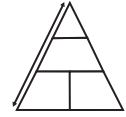
Remind the parents to read Chapter 1 of the parent manual and complete the Daily Activity Schedule. Let them know what to expect during their individual coaching session. Have parents sign up for their first coaching session if they haven't already been scheduled.

Sample Script

Your next session will be a one-on-one session with your coach and your child. During this session, you will work with your coach to develop goals for your child in each of the four core areas of Project ImPACT, and to develop a plan for setting up your home for success.

- ▶ If you haven't already, please read through Chapter 1 in the parent manual, which covers what we've learned in group today.
- ▶ Think about the goals you have for your child, and be prepared to discuss them with your coach.
- ▶ Please complete the Daily Activity Schedule and come prepared to talk to your coach about it. You will use this information to think about how you can make your routines more predictable if needed, and which routines will be best for practicing the intervention. For each routine, provide a brief description; then note how long it takes, how often you do it with your child, and how much time you can add to it. In the last column, indicate whether your child [E]njoys, [T]olerates, or [R]esists the routine. In the meantime, you can try some of the strategies we've talked about today.

SESSION 2

Develop Goals for Your Child and Review of Set Up Your Home for Success (Coaching)**Session Goals**

Help the parent:

- Develop appropriate social communication goals for her child.
- Set up the home for successful interactions.

**Materials**

- Parent manual
- Favorite toys
- Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8)
- Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) (Form 9)
- Goal Development Form (Form 10)
- Parent consent form for video recording
- Practice Plan—*Set Up Your Home for Success* (Form 29)
- Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5)

**Session Agenda**

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the skills the child will learn.
- Gather information on the child's skills.
 - Have the parent complete the Social Communication Checklist
 - Interact with the child and complete the Social Communication Checklist
 - Observe and record a 10-minute parent–child interaction
- Help the parent develop goals for the child.
 - Identify long term goals
 - Understand the child's current skills
 - Identify short-term goals
- Review the Daily Activity Schedule.
- Plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda**Check In with the Family**

Ask the parent how things have gone since the first group session. If this is your first meeting with the child, introduce yourself and spend a few minutes engaging him in play, to establish rapport prior to introducing the information. Tell the parent that you would like to begin with a brief interaction with the child, and then you will explain the session goals and agenda.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Let the parent know that the majority of the session will be spent developing social communication goals for the child. You will end the session with a brief review of the Daily Activity Schedule and discussion of the Practice Plan for *Set Up Your Home for Success*.

Let the parent know that goals will be developed on the basis of a parent-completed skill checklist, your interaction with the child, and your observation of a parent–child interaction.

Let the parent know that you would like to record the parent–child interaction. Be sure to obtain the parent’s written consent, in accordance with your own or your clinic’s confidentiality policies. If the parent is hesitant, suggest that she keep the video or that it be destroyed as soon as it is reviewed.

Let the parent know that the first coaching session will include more discussion than subsequent sessions, because you will be setting goals together and preparing for successful implementation of the program.

Ask the parent: “Would you like to discuss the ways you learn best, or things that might make it hard to complete the program?” Listen to the parent and help her problem-solve major challenges.

Review the Skills the Child Will Learn

Use the parent manual to review the skills the child will learn, and provide examples of skills that are relevant for the child. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions. Have the parent manual with the tables on the stages of development (Tables 1.1–1.4 there) available if the parent has questions.

Gather Information on the Child’s Skills

Have the Parent Complete the Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version)

Ask the parent to complete the parent version of the Social Communication Checklist or SCC (Form 8) to gather information on her perception of her child’s social engagement, communication, imitation, and play skills at home. If the parent has low literacy or difficulty understanding the content, you can use the SCC to interview the parent. Let the parent know that the skills are listed in the order they usually develop. However, it is common for children with social communication challenges to have some later-emerging skills but to be missing some earlier-emerging skills. The SCC covers a range of developmental levels, so some skills may not be expected for the child’s age.

For each skill, have the parent indicate whether the child uses it (1) “rarely or not yet,” (2) “sometimes, but not consistently,” or (3) “usually (at least 75% of the time).” For items 32–36, if the child uses the skills “usually” or “sometimes,” the parent should indicate the type of strategy (nonverbal strategy or language) the child uses more often. If the child used to perform a behavior, but no longer does because he is now using a more complex skill, the parent should check the box for “usually.” When two parents are present, ask them whether they want to complete a checklist together or independently. It is OK for parents to have different perceptions of the child’s skills, as the child may in fact use different skills with each parent.

Be available to respond to any questions that may arise, and to obtain clarification of any responses that may be vague or difficult to interpret.

Interact with the Child

While the parent completes the SCC, interact with the child to gain a brief understanding of the skills the child can use with and without support, as well as the techniques that are likely to be most effective with the child. Say something like this to the parent:

“While you fill out the SCC, I’m going to interact with Sam and get to know him a little better. I am also going to try out some of the strategies that I will teach you. This will help me see how he uses his skills with me on his own and with more support, and will give me an idea of which techniques he may respond to best.”

Begin with techniques to build rapport prior to assessing the child’s skills. These would include techniques in **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. Use **Create Opportunities** strategies if the child is not responding or initiating with the first two types. These techniques will show you what the child can do without prompts to increase the complexity of skills.

Once you have determined the child’s spontaneous skills, use the prompts from **Teach New Skills** to see what the child can do with support. For example, if he cannot respond to “what” questions, can he respond to a fill-in-the-blank sentence or a choice? If he cannot engage in functional play with toys, can he do so when you give him a direction or model a new skill?

Use the coach version of the SCC (Form 9) to record information on the child’s use of skills with you and with the parent. Note any Project ImPACT techniques the parent might already be using, and watch how the child responds. This information will be useful when you are describing the strategies in subsequent sessions

Observe and Record a 10-Minute Parent–Child Interaction

Tell the parent that you would like to observe her playing with her child, to obtain information on her child’s social communication skills with her. She should play or interact with her child as she typically would at home. This observation will provide you with information on the child’s skills with the parent, as well as the parent’s interaction style with the child. You can say something like this to the parent:

“Now I’d like to watch you and Brianna play together for about 10 minutes or so. This will help me see what Brianna can do with you and what you are already doing to support her social communication. This way I can help you build on what you both are already doing. Play with her the way you usually would at home, while I take some notes.”

If you are not in the family home, make sure that you ask the parent for input on the types of toys or materials the child plays with at home.

When two parents are present, allow each one to interact individually with the child for 5 minutes. Clearly announce transitions between each parent’s interactions with the child. A clear transition statement sets the precedent for separating parents throughout the program, so that each parent has time to practice and receive feedback.

“Molly, you can play with Sam. Jim, you can come stand with me and observe the interaction. . . . Thank you, Molly. Jim, now it is your turn to play with Sam. Molly, come stand with me to watch them play.”

Video-record the parent–child interaction if the parent has given you permission. This allows you to go back and review to collect additional baseline data.

After the interaction, ask the parent whether the interaction was typical of play with the

child at home. If it was different, have her explain the differences. This information is important to obtain before you and the parent begin developing goals.

Help the Parent Develop Goals for the Child

You will use a collaborative approach to develop goals. Goals should (1) fit within the parent's goals for her child, (2) follow developmentally from the child's current skill level, (3) be specific and measurable, and (4) be met within the duration of the program.

Tell the parent that you will develop goals together, as the parent knows her child best and knows which goals will have the greatest positive impact on her family. Your role as the coach is to provide feedback on the skills necessary to achieve the broader parent goals.

You will develop social communication goals by identifying the parent's goals, identifying long-term goals, determining the child's current skills, and writing specific short-term goals that can be measured. Complete the entire process for one skill area before moving to the next.

Use the Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5) to ensure that you develop collaborative goals consistent with the Project ImPACT goal criteria outlined in Part I, Chapter 3.

Identify the Parent's Goals

Begin by restating the parent's goals from the Getting Started Questionnaire (Form 3, assigned at intake) or your prior discussions, and asking follow-up questions if needed. This step ensures that the specific and measurable goals *fit with the parent's goals for the child*. You will use these goals as a starting point and then identify more specific skills that are necessary to reach the parent's goals.

You might start by asking the parent a question like this: "I noticed on the Getting Started Questionnaire that you would like Brianna to be able to talk. Are there other goals you would like to work on with Brianna?"

The parent's goals may be broad, such as "I want my child to talk," rather than specific and measurable. A parent may also have unrealistic expectations for her child, such as wanting a non-verbal child to have a conversation. That is OK; your role as a coach is to help the parent learn the skills the child needs in order to achieve this long-term goal. Discussion of the typical developmental sequence of skills can help the parent see the building blocks of skills required.

After you review the child's current skills, you will help the parent make the goals specific, measurable, and developmentally appropriate.

Write the parent's goals next to "Parent Goals" on the Goal Development Form (Form 10).

Identify Long-Term Goals

Use the parent's goals and the SCC to help the parent identify long-term goals in each of the four core areas. You might say something like this:

"Talking, playing together, and saying hello and goodbye when people come over are great goals for Brianna. We want to make sure that Brianna can meet her goals over the 3 months of the program. Let's look at the SCC to think about skills that might help her achieve these goals."

Solicit input from the parent on the goals she has for her child in each skill area. For example, if you are beginning with social engagement, ask the parent: “Are there any social engagement goals that you would like to work on with Brianna?” If the parent has difficulty identifying goals, you can make suggestions. Be sure to check with the parent to confirm that she is in agreement with the goals you suggest:

“I notice that Brianna often leaves the interaction when you join in her play. Is this something you would like to address? . . . For social engagement, what would you think of a goal to increase the length of the interaction?”

Once you and the parent agree on these goals, write them under “Long-Term Goals” on the Goal Development Form (Form 10).

Understand the Child’s Current Skills

The next step is to help the parent understand her child’s current level of functioning in each area. This step will help you both to develop short-term goals that *follow developmentally from the child’s current skill level*. Use your own and the parent’s completed versions of the SCC, as well as your own interaction with the child and your observation of the parent–child interaction, to gain a better understanding of the child’s current skills in the areas in which you are setting goals. You might begin in this way:

“Let’s look at your SCC and see how long Brianna currently plays with you. You noted that she remains actively engaged with you for at least 2 minutes some of the time. . . . Is this pretty typical of how she plays with you at home? (*Parent nods.*) Under ‘Current Skills,’ I will write that she currently plays for 1–2 minutes and then leaves the interaction.”

If you and the parent agree on the child’s current skills write this on the Goal Development Form under “Current Skills.” If there are differences, these need to be reconciled before goals can be developed.

Explore any differences in the parent’s and your own SCC by asking open-ended and probing questions. Such questions can help clarify the parent’s responses and inform you whether the observation is typical of the child’s performance. Here are some examples:

“Did this seem to be typical of play at home with your child? If not, how was it different?”

“I noticed you reported that your child uses two to three words to communicate at home. He seemed to be fairly quiet today. Can you give me some examples of his language at home?”

“Today your child appeared to repeat language he heard. I did not hear him say anything without you saying it first. Do you see this at home?”

“Your child seems to ask questions even when he knows the answers. Do you see this at home?”

Once you agree on the child’s current skills, write them under “Current Skills” on the Goal Development Form, and relate them to the parent’s goals.

Identify Short-Term Goals

Use the information you have gathered to help the parent break down her long-term goals into short-term goals that can be measured. This step will ensure that the goals *follow developmentally from the child's current skill level*, and that they can be *met within the duration of this program*. Use the parent's goals as a starting point, and restate each of them as a specific goal that can be measured.

“The next step is to write a goal so we can measure progress. You said you would like Brianna to talk. Under ‘Current Skills’ here, and on the SCC, we noted that she sometimes uses gestures and vocalizations to request. What would you think about the following goal?: ‘Brianna will use a point, vocalizations, or single words to request spontaneously at least three times during a motivating activity.’ This will help her communicate her needs and wants more easily, and move her toward her long-term goal of talking.”

Once you and the parent agree on the goals, write them down under “Short-Term Goals” on the Goal Development Form. The short-term goals should be consistent with your current method of data collection so that you can document the child's progress.

Have the parent record her child's goals on the Child Goals form in the parent manual. Make a copy of the Child Goals form to bring with you to each session in the event the parent does not have her parent manual. You will refer to these goals when completing the practice plan. The goals should be written to meet the parent's individual learning style. Some parents may prefer specific and measurable short-term goals as written in the example above; other parents may prefer more general goals, such as “Brianna will request,” or “Brianna will point, make a sound, or use a word to request.” Seek input from the parent if you are unsure about her preference. Let the parent know that you will refer to these goals when you introduce each technique and when you plan for practice at the end of each section. Tables I.3.2 through I.3.5 in Part I, Chapter 3 provide examples of specific, measurable goals for each of the core areas.

Common challenges that come up while developing goals can be found in the first Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 303).

Review *Set Up Your Home for Success*

Review the Rationale

Setting up the home environment will provide more meaningful learning opportunities for the child and will help him engage with the parent.

Review the Daily Activity Schedule

Tell the parent that the Daily Activity Schedule (DAS) will give you a better understanding of the family's daily routine and of how the child currently participates in it. Let her know that you will use this information throughout the program when you help her plan for practice. If the parent has not completed the schedule, take the opportunity for her to fill it out or talk through it with you. Make a copy of the completed DAS. You will use this when completing the practice plan after each session.

Ask the parent: “What routines do you think will work best for teaching your child?” Using

the DAS, help her identify several daily routines that she does with her child in which she can practice using the intervention techniques. Routines that the parent has marked as “[E]njoys” are good to begin with, since the child is already motivated by these activities.

Briefly Review the Key Elements

Ask the parent: “Have you tried any techniques to set up your home for success?” If she has, ask what she has done and how it went. If the parent reports significant difficulty, you may consider scheduling a home visit to assist the parent. Use the parent manual as necessary to review the key elements of *Set Up Your Home for Success*, and provide examples that are relevant for the family.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent further questions about making changes in the home environment, especially if she has not yet tried to do so. Use this time to answer any questions she has, or to clarify any key elements of *Set Your Home Up for Success*.

“Can you imagine making some of the changes to your home that we discussed?”

“Do any of the suggestions seem too difficult? What might make it easier to make some of these changes?”

“How do you think your child will respond to some of the changes we talked about? Do you think they will help him engage with you more easily?”

Help the Parent Select Specific Changes to Her Home Environment

Ask the parent to record how she will implement the technique on the Practice Plan at the end of Chapter 1 in the parent manual (Form 29 in the online forms for coaches). For example, under “Limit distractions,” she might indicate “Turn off the dishwasher and reduce all other sounds before playing in the kitchen.” If the child does not need a specific place to play, cross off this item and tell the parent that the strategy is not required.

Make sure that the parent indicates when she will make time for play, and have her begin playtime before the next group session.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about making the changes on her Practice Plan. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Potential challenges and possible solutions are listed in the second Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 304).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down on the Practice Plan what went well after she after she made changes to her home environment. Ask her also to write down any challenges under “What was hard?” Let the parent know that you will review the Practice Plan for *Set Up Your Home for Success* at the next group session. Have the parent read Chapter 2, **Focus on Your Child**, and Chapter 3, **Adjust Your Communication**, in the parent manual.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Develop Goals for Your Child*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Is hesitant to provide input on goals

- Be patient and avoid taking over the process. Some parents are used to deferring to expert opinion and need time to adjust.
- Emphasize the parent's expertise on the child and the family.
- Have the parent write down goals after the session in consultation with other family members.
- Have parent identify home routines that are challenging and suggest goals that can help.

Reports that the child has more or less developed skills than you observed

- Acknowledge that children use different skills in different situations.
- Provide additional description of social communication development.
- Ask parent for concrete examples of the skills the child uses at home.
- Suggest that the parent bring in a video of the child using the skills at home.
- Ask the parent how much help she provides to get the child to use the skill.
- Suggest starting with an easier goal and setting a more challenging goal in a few weeks as the child becomes more comfortable in sessions.
- Point out skills the child used during the interaction with you or the parent.

Is not motivated for a goal you see as important

- Ask questions to understand the parent's perspective.
- Provide information on how the goal would help to address other goals the parent has for the child.
- Be willing to accept the parent's view. Remember, the parent is not likely to practice for a goal she does not see as important.
- Suggest adding the goal after a few weeks, once the parent is having some success.

Has goals that are not addressed in the program (e.g., toileting)

- Suggest how a social communication goal might help the child achieve other skills (e.g., the child needs to be able to initiate to use the toilet independently).
- Suggest working on other goals after the program is completed.
- Make referral for concurrent treatment.

Becomes discouraged during the parent-child interaction

- Point out positive behaviors you observed the parent using.
- Point out skills the child is using that the parent can build on.
- End the parent-child interaction early if the parent is struggling or the child is very upset.



Troubleshooting Tips for *Set Up Your Home for Success*

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

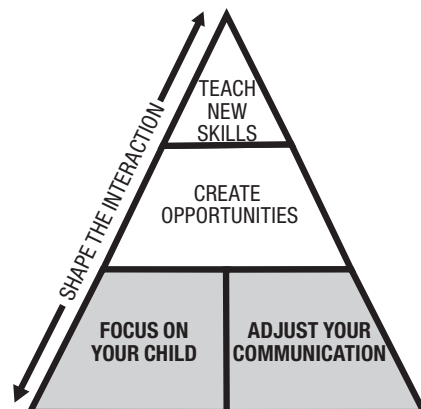
Has trouble fitting play into daily schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the challenge, reiterate the importance of play, and help the parent identify a short period of time for play. • Review the DAS to see if play can be scheduled into existing activities, such as bathtime. • Help her identify activities her child may be able to get involved with, such as meal preparation or dishwashing (putting hands in water). • Help her identify an activity the child likes (e.g., balloons, bubbles) that she can do after major routines (e.g., 5 minutes after meals before cleanup).
Does not have a consistent schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help her outline things that occur each day and see whether particular routines could happen at the same time. • Suggest that she select a single activity she and her child enjoy and make sure it happens every day. • Ask how she can carry out one of her routines the same way each day.
Has difficulty identifying a space to play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help her think creatively about setting up a space (e.g., tent, walk-in closet, area under a table). • Schedule a home visit to observe the space and problem-solve. • Have the parent draw a sketch of the environment.
Has too many toys available or lots of clutter in the home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help her identify ways to store materials to reduce clutter in a small area for play. • Help her go through her toys and put them in sets.
Does not have appropriate play materials or toys in the home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let her know that play does not need to involve toys. • Help her identify other materials the child can play with. • Suggest types of toys the child may enjoy.
Has difficulty interacting with the child because siblings are present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether the siblings could be involved in play. • Suggest she schedule a 10-minute period to play with each child separately. • Help her identify a time when siblings are busy (naps, school, other activities). • Find out whether she can ask family or friends to watch the siblings during playtime.
Is overwhelmed by suggested changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select the technique that will have the greatest impact. • Help the parent make changes gradually over the course of the program. • Schedule a home visit to help the parent make suggested changes.

UNIT 2

Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication

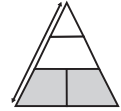
The purpose of this unit is to teach the parents to **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. These two strategy sets are the **F** and **A** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S., and they lay the foundation for Project ImPACT. These strategies make parent–child interactions fun, and they also help a child actively engage with a parent and an activity by increasing the parent’s responsiveness to her child’s behavior. This, in turn, can help the child understand and use non-verbal and verbal language.

- During the group session, you will begin with a review of the parents’ Practice Plans for *Set Up Your Home for Success*. You will then use slides and video clips to introduce **Focus on Your Child** and its two techniques: *Follow Your Child’s Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*. Next, you will do the same for **Adjust Your Communication** and its two techniques: *Use Animation* and *Model and Expand Communication*. At the end of the group session, you will help each parent develop a Practice Plan to carry out before the individual coaching session. Again, a guide to the key elements for each of the video clips is included in the slide notes.
- During the coaching session, you will begin by reviewing the parent’s Practice Plan from the group session. You will then demonstrate and have the parent practice **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** while you provide feedback. Given the large number of techniques in this unit, you will need to simplify and choose specific elements to highlight and coach. Focus on the techniques and key elements that are best suited for the child’s goals, the activities in which the parent practices, and the parent’s interaction style. You will then help the parent reflect on the in-session practice and develop a Practice Plan for the next week. You will end by asking the parent to complete the reflection and read **Create Opportunities** (Chapter 4 of the parent manual) before the next group session.



SESSION 3

Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication (Group)



Session Goals

Help the parents:

- Increase their responsiveness to their child's behavior.
- Increase their child's engagement with them during play.
- Improve their child's use and understanding of nonverbal and verbal language.



Materials

- Slides/video clips
- Practice Plan—**Adjust Your Communication** (Form 31; multiple copies)
- Whiteboard or large sheets of paper
- Group guidelines
- Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda (Slides 1–2).
- Review the Practice Plans (Slide 3).
- Introduce **Focus on Your Child** (Slide 4).
- Introduce *Follow Your Child's Lead* (Slides 5–10).
- Introduce *Imitate Your Child* (Slides 11–15).
- Take a break.
- Introduce **Adjust Your Communication** (Slide 16).
- Introduce *Use Animation* (Slides 17–21).
- Introduce *Model and Expand Communication* (Slides 22–27).
- Plan for practice and coaching (Slides 28–29).



Key Elements: *Follow Your Child's Lead*

- Stay face to face with your child.
- Let your child lead the activity.
- Join in your child's play.
- Avoid questions and directions.
- Be sensitive, but persistent.
- Set limits.
- Wait and watch for your child's response.
- Respond to all your child's actions.



Key Elements: *Imitate Your Child*

- Imitate your child's gestures, facial expressions, and body movements.
- Imitate your child's vocalizations.
- Imitate your child's play with toys and objects.
- Only imitate positive behaviors.



Key Elements: *Use Animation*

- Be excited about the activity.
- Exaggerate your gestures.
- Exaggerate your facial expressions.
- Exaggerate your vocal quality.
- Use attention-getting words.
- Adjust your animation to help your child stay regulated.
- Wait with anticipation for your child to respond.



Key Elements: *Model and Expand Communication*

- Talk about what your child is seeing, hearing, or doing.
- Use simple language.
- Use gestures and visual cues.
- Speak and gesture slowly.
- Stress important words.
- Be repetitive.
- Avoid questions.
- Expand your child's communication.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

SLIDE 1

Warmly greet the parents as they enter, and give them a few minutes to check in with each other before getting started. Then briefly introduce the topic for the day's group session.

Sample Script

Welcome back! If you remember from our last group session, we learned about the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Today we'll be learning about the F and the A of that acronym, which stand for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. These strategies are really the foundation of the Project ImPACT program.

SLIDE 2

Briefly go over the session agenda, to provide information on the goals and structure of the session. If you need to make adjustments to this agenda for the sake of time, explain this to the group.

Sample Script

- ▶ We'll begin today by reviewing your Practice Plans from the past week. Then we'll begin learning the two sets of strategies that make up the base of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid.
- ▶ First, we'll discuss **Focus on Your Child** and two techniques you can use to do this: *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*.
- ▶ Next, we'll discuss **Adjust Your Communication** and two techniques you can use to do this: *Use Animation* and *Model and Expand Communication*. For each technique, we will discuss what skills it can teach, talk about how to use it, and watch some video examples. Then we'll have a brief discussion of how you can use the technique with your child.
- ▶ At the end of today's session, we'll plan how you can practice one or more of these techniques with your child over the next week.

Review the Practice Plans

SLIDE 3

Use a whiteboard to draw three columns headed "What Went Well?", "What Was Hard?", and "Possible Solutions." Ask each parent to report how she set up her home. As each parent reports, briefly write down the information on the whiteboard in the appropriate columns. Help the parents identify commonalities across their experiences. After each parent has reported, identify one or more common challenges that the parents experienced with *Set Up Your Home for Success*. Ask questions and give suggestions to help them find potential solutions as a group. Write the best potential solution for each challenge in the "Possible Solutions" column, next to the specific challenge in the "What Was Hard?" column. Common challenges and possible solutions for this topic are described in the second Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 2 (page 304).

Sample Script

Let's talk about how it's gone at home with the strategies we've learned so far. In the past week, each of you should have had an individual coaching session, where you worked with your coach to set social communication goals for your child and talked through how to set up your home for success. The coach should have helped you set meaningful goals for your child, helped you decide how to set up your home, and helped you choose some during daily routines in which to teach.

▶ Let's have everyone go around and briefly share how practice at home has gone. What I am looking for specifically is one thing you did to set up your home for success, what went well when you played with your child, and maybe one thing that was challenging.

▶ [After all parents report on their practice] Now let's think about some possible solutions for those challenges.

Introduce **Focus on Your Child**

SLIDE 4

Introduce the **Focus on Your Child** strategy set, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic. Emphasize that the goal is not for the parents to use all of the techniques that you discuss today, but to pick the ones that work best for their child within the activity they are doing. Also, emphasize that the parents will learn to prompt for new skills in subsequent sessions, but that for now they will focus on skills their child already has.

Sample Script

▶ We will start with the first strategy set at the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, **Focus on Your Child**. This strategy set is the starting place for building interactions with your child. It gives you and your child a fun way to play together and will help your child engage with you and get ready to learn. We will learn two techniques that you can use to focus on your child: *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*. Both of these techniques involve joining your child in a fun way during play. The technique you use will depend on the activity you are doing and the materials available. You can use this strategy throughout your interaction with your child.

▶ You will always begin an interaction by focusing on your child and then waiting and watching for your child's response. At this point in the program, your child can respond in any way: using eye contact; sharing emotions; watching or imitating what you are doing; using gestures such as reaching, pushing, or pointing; making sounds; or using language. You will then respond to these actions in a logical way. This teaches your child that his or her behavior carries meaning and gets a response from you.

Introduce *Follow Your Child's Lead*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 5

Introduce the rationale for *Follow Your Child's Lead*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty engaging or interacting with others. In *Follow Your Child's Lead*, you follow your child's actions, ideas of what to do, and feelings during play. When your child gets to show you what is interesting to him or her, your child will have fun and be more likely to interact with you.

- ▶ You can use this technique to increase your child's engagement and the length of time you can play together. It may also help your child initiate or start an interaction with you.
- ▶ You can use *Follow Your Child's Lead* during activities in which it is OK for your child to direct the interaction. These include play, trips to the park, walks in the neighborhood, and even bathtime if your child enjoys the tub.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 6

Discuss the first four key elements of *Follow Your Child's Lead*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Let's look at how to use *Follow Your Child's Lead*.

- ▶ The first step is to stay face to face with your child and be at your child's level. This way you can become part of your child's play, notice where he or she is looking, and respond to how your child is feeling. This will also make it easier for your child to make eye contact, and see your facial expressions and what you are doing. If your child is very active and moves around a lot, move with him or her so that you can remain face to face as much as possible. You can also hold objects your child is interested in near your face, to encourage the child to look at you.
- ▶ If being face to face is hard for your child, try looking into a mirror together.
- ▶ Let your child choose what to do, and let his or her interests lead the activity. This means letting your child decide how to play, even if this seems unusual (such as lining up or spinning toys, or opening and closing a door). Your child is more likely to engage with you if your child is having fun.
- ▶ Once you see what and how your child wants to play, join in the play by becoming a needed part of it. This shows your child that you are interested in what he or she is doing. For example, if your child is building a tower, give your child the blocks or take turns putting a block on the tower.
- ▶ Some children respond better to sensory play or active play. If this is the case, join your child in sensory exploration. For example, if your child likes to climb, engage in rough-and-tumble play. If your child likes to spin, spin him or her in a chair. If your child likes to touch textures, give him or her dried beans or rice to feel.
- ▶ For now, avoid asking questions and giving directions, because this takes the lead away from your child. Instead, comment on your child's play to show your interest in what your child is doing. Later in the program, you will learn how to ask questions and give instructions to teach new skills.

SLIDE 7

Discuss the remaining key elements of *Follow Your Child's Lead*. As you go, continue to provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. If there are children who are not likely to respond to this technique (or other techniques at the bottom of the pyramid), let the parents know that they should focus on staying close and observing how their child communicates, and that they will learn additional techniques that will help their child respond in **Create Opportunities**.

Sample Script

- ▶ Some children may need to disengage from the interaction briefly, in order to self-regulate or calm down. Be sensitive to your child's emotional state, but be persistent in interacting with your child. If your child turns or moves away, acknowledge how he or she is feeling by labeling it, but don't leave. Give your child a moment to reengage with you. If this doesn't happen, follow your child's lead to the new activity and engage your child again. Your child will learn to have fun with you if you are persistent!
- ▶ If your child protests, try joining the play in a different way. For example, if your child starts to fuss when you touch his or her toy, get a different toy of the same type and make a comment such as "My train is driving fast!"
- ▶ You get to determine which behaviors are OK for your child, and set limits as necessary. If your child engages in an unsafe or destructive behavior, don't let it continue. Make it clear to him or her that this behavior is not OK by stating this in a firm but calm voice and removing the toys or objects that are causing a problem.
- ▶ Be consistent with your rules and consequences.
- ▶ Once you have followed your child's lead, wait and watch for signs that your child is engaging with you. These could include looking at you, gesturing, vocalizing, or moving away from the activity. Any of these actions may be how your child communicates when you are not helping him or her.
- ▶ Respond to any and all of your child's actions in a logical way. This teaches your child that these behaviors have meaning and can be used to communicate with others. For example, if your child looks at or reaches toward a toy, hand it to him or her. If your child looks at you after you tickle him or her, do it again.
- ▶ Sometimes you may need to guess what your child wants. Use clues from the environment and your child's behavior to help you figure out what he or she wants.

SLIDE 8

Walk the parents through this slide's example of how to use *Follow Your Child's Lead*, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

Here is an example of a mom using *Follow Your Child's Lead* to increase her son's engagement. Johnny is playing with blocks by lining them up. His mom follows his lead by moving face to face, and she joins his play by handing him a block. She then waits and watches to see how Johnny will respond. Johnny responds by looking at the block. His mom responds to this action by giving Johnny the block and watching him place it in the line.

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 9

Show video examples of *Follow Your Child's Lead*. There are two clips illustrating how the parent can follow the child's lead in play to increase the child's engagement. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Follow Your Child's Lead* and to notice how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some video examples of parents using *Follow Your Child's Lead* to help their children engage with them during play.

- ▶ [Before showing each clip] Watch for how the parent gets face to face and joins the child's play, waits for the child to respond, and responds to the child's actions in a logical way.
- ▶ [After showing each clip] What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent join the child's play? How did the child respond when the parent joined the play? How did the parent respond to the child's actions?

Clip 3: Follow Your Child's Lead, Preverbal

The mother follows her child's lead while he is playing with blocks. Notice how she gets down on his level, stays face to face, and follows his lead to the blocks. At first she tries to direct his play by getting him to stack the blocks. He knocks down the tower, but then loses interest in the interaction and moves away. Then she follows him and lets him lead the play. She joins him by handing him the blocks one at a time when he reaches. Notice how she makes comments, but does not ask questions or give directions. Now he stays in the interaction, and eventually she is able to take turns with him, creating a back-and-forth interaction. This is the starting point of the program: making sure that the child is engaged and motivated.

Clip 4: Follow Your Child's Lead, Sentences

The mother follows her child's lead while he is playing with umbrellas. Notice how she gets down on his level, stays face to face, and follows his lead with the umbrellas. She joins in her son's play with her own umbrella, and then joins him with his umbrella by pretending that she needs to share it. She makes comments ("It's raining; I need an umbrella; I'm getting all wet!") centering around her son's play. She waits and watches to see how he responds (eye contact, gestures, and language), and responds to these behaviors by making comments or helping him when he needs assistance (opening his umbrella).

SLIDE 10

Have the parents discuss how they could use *Follow Your Child's Lead* with their child, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 2 of the parent manual for examples of how to use *Follow Your Child's Lead* during various routines.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how each of you could use *Follow Your Child's Lead* with your child.

- ▶ Take a moment to think some of the ways your child likes to play.
- ▶ Then think about some ways you could join this play. Remember, it's OK if your child plays in ways that seem unusual, such as running sand through his or her fingers, or splashing in the sink.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Introduce *Imitate Your Child*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 11

Introduce the rationale for *Imitate Your Child*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Another way you can focus on your child, have fun, and play together is to imitate your child. This means copying your child's movements, gestures, play actions, sounds, and words.

- ▶ You can use this technique to increase your child's engagement with you and the length of time you can play together. Many children really enjoy being imitated and will use more vocalizations and try different play actions to see if you will imitate them. Imitating your child's behavior can also help your child realize that his or her behavior affects how you act. Your child may look at you or change some actions when you use *Imitate Your Child*, to see if you copy him or her.
- ▶ *Imitate Your Child* is easiest when you have two of the same or similar items to play with, or when your child is not playing with toys.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 12

Discuss the key elements of *Imitate Your Child*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Let's look at different ways you can use *Imitate Your Child*.

- ▶ You can imitate your child's gestures, facial expressions, and body movements, to teach him or her that these nonverbal behaviors are meaningful and can affect how you act. These movements do not need to be purposeful. For example, you can imitate dropping a toy, looking around the room, or lying down. Exaggerate your imitation of these behaviors, to help him notice that you are copying him.

- ▶ Imitating gestures and body movements is especially helpful when your child is not engaged with a toy.
- ▶ You can also imitate your child's sounds and words, to capture your child's attention and show that his or her vocalizations are meaningful. If your child does not use words yet, imitate any sounds your child makes, matching the emotion and the sounds themselves. If your child is using words or sentences, only imitate language that is related to what you are doing together.
- ▶ Finally, you can imitate your child's play with toys or other objects as another way to join the play. It may also encourage your child to use new or different play actions to see if you copy him or her.
- ▶ This technique works best when you have two of the same or similar objects, because you can imitate your child's play at the same time he or she is playing. This can increase the child's awareness that you are imitating him or her.
- ▶ Imitating your child can increase the behavior that you are imitating. So don't imitate behaviors that you are trying to decrease, such as throwing objects or aggressive behaviors. Instead, you can imitate the action while showing your child a more appropriate way to play, such as throwing a soft ball if your child is throwing a truck. You can also match your child's emotion instead of the action. For example, if your child is engaging in hand flapping to show excitement, imitate the excitement—but express it by clapping your hands. After you imitate your child, wait and watch for your child's response, just as in *Follow Your Child's Lead*. Look for eye contact, shifts in body posture, gestures, vocalizations, words or sentences. Respond to any of these behaviors in a logical way.

SLIDE 13

Walk the parents through the slide's example of how to use *Imitate Your Child*, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

This slide shows an example of a dad using *Imitate Your Child* to increase his son's engagement. Michael is playing with a car by rolling it back and forth. His dad moves face to face, gets another car, and rolls it back and forth in front of Michael. He then waits and watches to see how Michael will respond. Michael responds by looking at his dad. His dad responds to this action by smiling and continuing to roll the car back and forth.

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 14

Show the video examples of *Imitate Your Child*. There are two examples, to emphasize different ways in which a parent can imitate a child's behavior to increase engagement during play. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Imitate Your Child* and to notice how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using *Imitate Your Child* to help their children engage with them during play.

- ▶ [Before showing each clip] Watch for how the parent (or older sibling, for Clip 5) gets face to face and imitates the child's actions, waits and watch for the child to respond, and responds to the child's actions in a logical way.
- ▶ [After showing each clip] What did you notice during that interaction? What behaviors did the parent (or older sibling) imitate? How did the child respond when the parent imitated the play? How did the parent respond to the child's actions?

Clip 5: Imitate Your Child, First Words

The older sister imitates her younger sister's body movements and gestures to encourage her sister to engage with her. Notice how the older sister stays face to face and imitates the younger girl's body movements, by falling down, lying on her back, touching her little sister's face, and spinning. The younger child responds with eye contact, laughter, and positive touch. She also changes her actions (gets up and spins) to see if her older sister will follow her.

Clip 6: Imitate Your Child, Word Combinations

The mother imitates her daughter during a drawing activity to encourage interaction. The mother sits face to face with her daughter and joins the activity. The girl draws a face and labels what she is doing. The mom responds by imitating her daughter's actions and language, and then waiting after each imitation to see what she does next. The girl responds by watching her mother's actions, and eventually begins to direct the mother on what to draw. Notice how the mom follows the three-step sequence of focusing on her child, waiting for her child to respond, and then responding her daughter's actions in a logical way.

SLIDE 15

Have the parents discuss how they could use *Imitate Your Child* with their children, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help each of them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 2 of the parent manual for examples of how to use *Imitate Your Child* during various routines. The end of this discussion is usually a good point in the presentation to take a break.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how you could use *Imitate Your Child* with your child.

- ▶ Take a moment to think of what body movements or sounds you can imitate. Remember, the movements and sounds don't need to be purposeful.
- ▶ Then think about what play actions you can imitate. Remember, it can help to have two sets of toys for this.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Take a Break

Introduce **Adjust Your Communication**

SLIDE 16

Introduce **Adjust Your Communication**, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic.

Sample Script

▶ Now we are going to talk about the second strategy set that forms the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid: **Adjust Your Communication**. This strategy set also encourages social engagement and helps your child understand and use verbal and nonverbal communication. We will learn two techniques for adjusting your communication. *Use Animation* involves adjusting your nonverbal communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice to make the interaction fun and help your child understand these more subtle aspects of communication. *Model and Expand Communication* involves adjusting your verbal language to help your child understand your language and learn new ways to communicate.

▶ You will use both **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** throughout your interaction with your child. You will adjust your communication as you focus on your child. You will continue to wait for your child to respond and respond to your child's actions in a logical way. In addition, you will expand on your child's response.

Introduce *Use Animation*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 17

Introduce the rationale for *Use Animation*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty recognizing and making sense of gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice. *Use Animation* involves adding more or less energy to these nonverbal aspects of communication. This makes the interaction more fun and can make these often subtle aspects of communication stand out.

▶ You can use this technique to increase your child's ability to share enjoyment with you and to initiate, as well as to increase your child's understanding of nonverbal communication such as gestures, facial expressions, and body posture.

▶ You can combine *Use Animation* with the other techniques to highlight what you are doing.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 18

Discuss the key elements of *Use Animation*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Let's look at how to engage in *Use Animation* with your child.

- ▶ Show your child that you are excited about the activity by using big gestures, facial expressions, and words, even if what your child is doing seems boring or repetitive to you. The more you share enjoyment with your child, the more likely your child will be to begin sharing enjoyment with you through eye contact and facial expressions.
- ▶ Use big gestures when communicating with your child, to help your child pay attention to the nonverbal aspects of communication and to make your meaning clear. For example, wave, point, or shrug your shoulders in an exaggerated way. If your child becomes too wound up or upset, slow down your movements and make them smaller.
- ▶ Exaggerate your facial expressions, to help your child pay attention to them and learn what they mean. Use gestures to help your child notice your facial expressions. For example, point to the corners of your mouth when you frown, to show that you are sad.
- ▶ Exaggerate the speed, tone, and volume of your speech, to help your child understand how the changes in vocal quality change the meaning of what you are saying. You can also exaggerate inflection differences that change the meaning of a sentence from a question to a comment, or that indicate different emotions.
- ▶ Use attention-getting words such as “Wow,” “Ready,” and “Here we go,” while you are joining your child’s play. This can cue your child that you have something to share and can encourage the child to look at you. If your child uses any similar words or sounds, react in an exaggerated way to show that the words are meaningful and that you understand what the child is telling you.
- ▶ Adjust your animation to help your child stay regulated—in a balanced state of arousal, neither too up or too down. If your child is becoming quiet, withdrawn, or sleepy while playing with you, your child may be underaroused. In this case, use more animation to help your child engage with you. If your child becomes too “revved up” when you use a lot of animation, use less animation to help your child calm down. You can also slow down your speech and lower your voice.
- ▶ Add an expectant look and exaggerated gestures when you wait for your child to respond. Using these cues can increase your child’s awareness that you are expecting a response. Be sure to respond to your child’s behavior in a logical way.

SLIDE 19

Walk the parents through the *Use Animation* example on the slide, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

This slide shows an example of a mom using animation to increase her daughter's engagement and understanding of nonverbal communication. Jessica is stacking blocks. Her mother sits face to face and joins her play by adding a block to the tower. Her mom then exaggerates her gestures and facial expressions to show excitement and describe the size of the tower. She then waits with anticipation to see how Jessica will respond. Jessica responds by looking at her mom and smiling. Her mom responds to Jessica with a smile and continues to use big gestures as she plays.

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 20

Show the video examples of *Use Animation*. There are two clips to demonstrate different ways parents can use animation to increase their child's engagement and emphasize nonverbal communication. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Use Animation* and to notice how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using animation to help their children engage and understand and use nonverbal communication.

- ▶ [Before showing each clip] Watch for how the parent exaggerates nonverbal communication, waits with anticipation, and responds to the child's actions in a logical way.
- ▶ [After showing each clip] What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent exaggerate nonverbal communication? How did the child respond when the parent used animation? How did the parent respond to the child's actions?

Clip 7: Use Animation, Preverbal

The mother uses animation as she and her son play with a collapsible ball. She sits face to face, uses big facial expressions, exaggerates her vocal quality, and uses attention-getting sound effects to encourage her child to look at her face. Her child responds with increased attention and eye contact as well as positive affect. After establishing a routine around opening and closing the ball, the mother then waits with anticipation before opening the ball. Her child responds by looking, gesturing (reaching for the ball), and eventually vocalizing after several turns.

Clip 8: Use Animation, Sentences

The mother uses animation as she and her son play with a balloon. The mother sits face to face with her son. Notice how she exaggerates her gestures, facial expressions, and vocal quality when blowing up the balloon and letting it go. Her animation is contagious and encourages her son to direct his excitement about the activity toward her.

SLIDE 21

Have the parents discuss how they could engage in *Use Animation* with their child, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 3 of the parent manual for examples of ways to practice *Use Animation* during various activities.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how you could engage in *Use Animation* with your child.

- ▶ Take a moment to think of what gestures you can exaggerate.
- ▶ Also think about what attention-getting words or sound effects you can use.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Introduce Model and Expand Communication

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 22

Introduce the rationale for *Model and Expand Communication*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address and when and for which children it is most helpful, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. If necessary, let parents know that they will learn additional strategies to help their child understand and use new communication skills later in the program. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Some children have difficulty understanding language when we use too many words or speak too quickly. By changing the way you speak, you can help your child understand what you say and learn new communication skills. *Modeling* involves talking about what your child is doing, seeing, and hearing. *Expanding* involves adding language or gestures to your child's communication.

- ▶ This technique can help your child learn new gestures, words, and sentences, and can expand the reasons why your child communicates.
- ▶ You can use this technique during any activity.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 23

Discuss the first four key elements of *Model and Expand Communication*. As you go, provide specific examples of communication parents can model and expand, based on your knowledge of the communication skills of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how to use *Model and Expand Communication*.

- ▶ Talk about the things your child is paying attention to by commenting on, labeling, or describing what your child sees, hears, or does as it happens, almost as if you were a sports commentator. This includes what you are doing when your child is watching. Model how language can be used for a variety of reasons, such as commenting, gaining attention, requesting, protesting, or gaining information. Do not comment on every action your child does, because that may be too much information.

- ▶ When you talk to your child, use simple language to make it easier for your child to understand. Model communication skills that are only slightly more complex than how your child already communicates. For example, if your child uses mostly gestures, model gestures and single words.

- ▶ The table on the slide suggests simple language you can model, based on your child's skills.

- ▶ Use gestures and visual cues together with your words, to help your child understand your meaning. For example, tap on the door and say the word "Door" or "Open" as you open the door. This is particularly important for children who are not yet using verbal communication, because it gives additional information and a model of another way to communicate.

- ▶ Children with social communication challenges often require extra time to process information. Speak slowly while exaggerating your gestures, to make it easier for your child to understand your communication.

SLIDE 24

Discuss the last four key elements of *Model and Expand Communication*. As you go, provide specific examples of communication parents can model, based on your knowledge of the communication skills of the children in the group.

Sample Script

- ▶ Emphasize important words in a sentence to draw your child's attention to them. You can also add a gesture when you say important words to emphasize the word and its meaning. For example, say, "You have a *big* ball!" while making your arms into a big circle.

- ▶ Children learn better when they hear something many times. Model gestures, words, or language concepts that you would like your child to use multiple times each day. You can also use the same word, phrase, or gesture repetitively while playing with your child. For example, "Down it goes. Down it goes." Or repeat specific important words, such as "The car is rolling. Roll, roll. Rolling fast."

- ▶ Avoid filling up the space with questions that don't require an answer, such as "Are you being silly?" Also, avoid asking questions that simply test your child's knowledge, such as "What color is the block?" These questions do not help your child use back-and-forth communication. Instead, make comments and label objects and actions.

- ▶ The first table on the slide has some examples of how you can rephrase questions into comments.

- ▶ After your child responds, expand on this communication by repeating your child's

speech and adding new words or appropriate grammar. By adding more words, you revise and complete your child's speech, without directly correcting it. At the same time, respond to your child's communication in a logical way.

- ▶ The second table on the slide has some examples of how you can expand your child's communication.

SLIDE 25

Walk the parents through the example of how to use *Model and Expand Communication*, using the sequence graphic. Ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

This slide shows an example of a mom using *Model and Expand Communication* to improve her son's vocabulary. Mom is helping Jimmy get dressed. She focuses on her child by moving face to face, and uses simple language to label Jimmy's clothes as she puts them on. She says the word "Shirt" and then waits to see what he does. Jimmy responds by imitating the word "Shirt." His mom responds to him by putting his shirt on, and then she expands his communication by saying "Shirt on."

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 26

Show the video examples of *Model and Expand Communication*. There are three clips with children at different phases of language development, to show how parents can model communication and expand their child's communication, based on their child's current skills. You may choose to show a subset of these clips. If you do, be sure to choose the clips that are most appropriate, given your knowledge of the children in the group. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Model and Expand Communication* and how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using *Model and Expand Communication* to help their children understand and use verbal communication.

- ▶ [Before showing each clip] Watch for how the parent uses simple language to talk about what the child is doing, hearing, or seeing; waits for the child to respond; and expands on the child's communication while responding in a logical way.

- ▶ [After showing each clip] What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent simplify his or her language? How did the child respond when the parent talked about what the child was doing? How did the parent expand the child's communication?

Clip 9: Model and Expand Communication, Preverbal

The mother models and expands communication while she and her son play with sunglasses. Notice how the mother follows her son's lead, stays face to face, and uses animation. Her child is using gestures

and word approximations to communicate. So she uses simple and repetitive language (single words and short phrases) to talk about his focus of interest. Her son responds with increased attention, eye contact, smiling, and more vocalizations. At one point, when her son vocalizes (“Ga ga”), she expands his communication by saying, “Ga ga, glasses.”

Clip 10: Model and Expand Communication, *First Words*

The father models language for his son while they play with toy food. The father stays face to face and uses animation along with simple and repetitive language to describe the toys and what he and his son are doing. The child is using single words to communicate. Therefore, the father models mostly single words (“Peas,” “Corn”) and simple phrases (“Eat the peas,” “Daddy eats peas”). His son responds by imitating his father’s language and using some words spontaneously. Notice how the father responds to his son’s communication as meaningful by giving him the peas when his son says the word “Peas” spontaneously.

Clip 11: Model and Expand Communication, *Sentences*

The mother models and expands her son’s language during a handwashing routine. She uses exaggerated vocal quality and simple language to describe what her son is doing (“Let’s get some soap,” “Wash, wash, wash,” “You’re washing your hands”). She also expands her son’s spontaneous language. For example, when her son says, “And a towel,” she expands by saying, “Now we need to dry them on the towel.” She also gets her son’s attention and uses simple language to describe what she is doing: “Mommy’s washing her hands, Ayden.” Her son is attentive and uses language throughout the interaction, sometimes imitating her language and sometimes using his own spontaneous language.

SLIDE 27

Have the parents discuss how they could use *Model and Expand Communication* with their child, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help each of them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to several of the tables in Chapter 3 of the parent manual for examples of how to use *Model and Expand Communication* during various routines.

Sample Script

Now let’s discuss how you could use *Model and Expand Communication* with your child.

- ▶ Take a moment to think of what gestures, words, or sentences you can model. Remember to think about your child’s language level, and to model communication that is only slightly more complex.
- ▶ Also think about how you can expand your child’s communication.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let’s talk about it.

Plan for Practice and Coaching

SLIDE 28

Have each parent develop a plan for how she will practice over the week. It is extremely important that the parents have time to complete the Practice Plan during the group session. At a minimum, the

parents should complete the goals, activities, and sequence graphics in their Practice Plans before they leave. If you are running short on time, you may need to shorten the group discussion. Give the parents several minutes to write the following down on their Practice Plans: (1) one or two goals they would like to target, and (2) a play activity and a daily routine in which to practice. Next, have each parent write down a positive example of how she will use one or more of the techniques to address her child's goal during a selected activity, using the sequence graphic. You may want to ask one of the parents to complete the sequence graphic with you in front of the group as an example. If you have time, have the parents discuss their Practice Plans with each other, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. After the parents have completed their Practice Plans, ask the parents to think about what might be hard about using the technique at home. Depending on time, you can have them discuss possible solutions, again either in pairs or as a full group. Common challenges and potential solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 4 (page 328).

Sample Script

I would like each of you to think of one or two goals that you will target this week. These goals should be related to increasing your child's social engagement, such as making eye contact while interacting with you or increasing the length of time your child engages with you. Write your goals on your Practice Plan. Next, think about a play activity and a daily routine during which you can practice these techniques. Remember that you will need to add several minutes to your daily routines to have time to use the techniques. Once you decide on the activities, write them down on your Practice Plan. Next, think about the techniques that we have talked about today for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. These include *Follow Your Child's Lead*, *Imitate Your Child*, *Use Animation*, and *Model and Expand Communication*. Choose one or more techniques that you will use to help your child engage with you and understand your communication, and write these down on the sequence graphic in the Practice Plan. Think about what will be hard when you use your plan. What are some possible solutions that will make it easier? You should plan to practice these strategies for 15–20 minutes per day during play, as well as during one or two daily activities.

SLIDE 29

Remind the parents to read Chapters 2 and 3 of the parent manual and to practice over the next week. Let them know what to expect during their individual coaching sessions. Have parents sign up for the coaching sessions if they haven't already been scheduled.

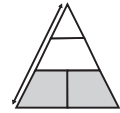
Sample Script

Next week, each of you will have an individual coaching session.

- ▶ If you haven't already, please read through Chapters 2 and 3 of the parent manual, which cover what we learned in group today.
- ▶ Over the next week, I would like you to try out your Practice Plan at home and write down how it went in the "Reflection" box of your Practice Plan form. You will discuss your Practice Plan during your coaching session. So please come with any questions you have about any of the techniques in **Focus on Your Child** or **Adjust Your Communication**. You will also get the opportunity to get individual feedback and support as you work with your child. Come ready to practice!

SESSION 4

Review of Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication (Coaching)



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Increase her responsiveness to her child's behavior.
- Increase her child's engagement with her during play.
- Improve her child's use and understanding of nonverbal and verbal language.

- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Focus** and **Adjust** (Form 14)
- Favorite toys
- Two pairs of some toys
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Adjust Your Communication** (Form 31)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review **Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication**.
- Demonstrate **Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication**.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the group session. If needed, take a moment to engage the child in an activity to help him occupy himself while you speak with the parent.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will have the opportunity to practice some techniques from **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** with her child, while you provide feedback and support. These strategies increase the child's engagement with the parent during play and help the child understand and use verbal and nonverbal communication. Review the session agenda outline to provide the parent with clear expectations for the coaching session.

Ask the parent: "Do you have questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?" Adjust the session agenda as needed if the parent has questions or indicates that there is a topic she would like to address.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the Written Plan from the Group Session

Ask the parent to talk you through the technique(s) she used at home. Discuss the child's response, what went well, and what was hard.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Challenges

Common challenges with **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 328) at the end of this session.

Review **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**

Briefly Review the Rationale and Key Elements

Use the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid in the parent manual to review these two sets of strategies. Highlight the key elements across techniques that are likely to have the greatest impact on the interaction. You can write these down on the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Focus** and **Adjust** (Form 14) for the parent to take home as a reminder.

Ask the parent: "Which techniques would you like to try today?" Encourage the parent to provide input on the technique(s) that she thinks might be most effective for helping her child engage with her, and that she feels most comfortable using.

If the parent has difficulty joining her child's play or is highly directive, you may wish to focus on *Imitate Your Child* as a primary way to join the child's play. If the parent uses a lot of language, you may wish to focus on *Model and Expand Communication*.

Explain the Steps of the Technique(s)

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual to describe how to use the technique(s) to address one of the child's goals. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use the key elements of the techniques you have highlighted, how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions. Given that you have limited time to teach these four techniques, and that they can be used together quite easily, you can demonstrate using them together.

Describe What You Are Doing

Be sure to point out to the parent how you are using the key elements of the different techniques together. Point out any behaviors the child uses to respond, especially if his behaviors are subtle. The parent needs to be able to recognize and interpret the child's communication before she can respond to it. Here are two examples:

“Brianna is rolling a car back and forth. I am moving so that I can stay face to face and rolling another car next to hers. She just looked at me! So I am going to respond by rolling more and saying the word ‘Roll.’”

“Sam is lining up his cars. I'm joining him by lining up cars with him. Each time he or I add a car, I'm pointing to the car and saying, ‘More cars.’ Notice that I am using simple language and lots of animation.”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What did you notice when I imitated Brianna's play with toys?”

“How did she respond when I used simple and repetitive language?”



If the parent is having difficulty recognizing the important elements of the different techniques, you may choose to model each one separately for a few minutes.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the steps she should follow, using specific examples based on the child's play and skill level. Have the parent watch what her child does once she uses these techniques. Make sure that the parent has the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on at least one technique in each strategy set.

Manage the Physical Environment

Give the parent items that she can use (e.g., a favorite toy, a similar toy for imitation). Help put away play materials that are not being used or distracting items, so that the parent can focus more easily on the interaction.

Provide Feedback

Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing this strategy can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 328). If the parent seems to be searching for ideas or struggling, you might make a recommendation such as this:

“I wonder what would happen if you gave Sam a dump truck to put his blocks in. Let’s see if he looks at you or builds on your play.”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings the parent has, and to help the parent generate her own ideas for how she can use what she has learned at home. Take the time to answer any questions. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did that interaction feel?”

“Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“Which of the techniques we practiced today seemed to work best for helping your child engage with you?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child’s Goals from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record her selections on the Practice Plan. Good child goals for this unit include staying actively engaged during play, using eye contact during play or communication, initiating activities, or taking turns.

Good activities include toy and active play and daily routines, such as dressing, meals, and bath time. **Focus on Your Child** is usually only effective if the child enjoys an activity. **Adjust Your Communication** can be effective during both preferred and nonpreferred activities. The Try This at Home! tables in the parent manual have suggestions for how to use the techniques during different activities.



Remind the parent to try to include time in the schedule for play every day. If 15 minutes is too long, help the parent identify shorter periods in which she can focus on her child and adjust her communication.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of one or more techniques she could use during one of the activities she has identified. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what elements of **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** will be most effective for the goal and activity she has identified.

Then ask the parent what her child’s response to the technique is likely to be. Remind her that the child can respond in many ways. Tell the parent that she can write down the child’s response next to the child icon located under the “Wait” box on the Practice Plan.

Finally, ask the parent how she will respond and expand on her child’s response. The child’s response should guide the parent’s response.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about using the technique at home and brainstorming possible solutions. Common challenges associated with each technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table for this session.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes at home between sessions. Remind her to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know you will review this at the beginning of the next group session. Have the parent read Chapter 4, **Create Opportunities**, in the parent manual before the next group session.



Troubleshooting Tips for Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty staying face to face

- Recommend a specific distance for the parent to sit from the child.
- Suggest making sitting face to face a game.
- Arrange furniture so that the parent and child can sit face to face.
- Encourage the parent to move with the child when he moves.
- Offer a mirror so that the parent and child can make eye contact without having to face each other.

Has difficulty letting her child lead

- Ask her to observe how her child plays for a few minutes before joining.
- Encourage the parent to change activities with the child when he changes activities.
- Remind her that directing the child's play makes him a responder and does not allow the child to initiate.
- Let her know that you will help her expand her child's play later in the program.

Has difficulty joining or imitating the child's play

- Give specific examples of ways to join the child's play.
- Hand the parent items or a similar toy she can use to join or imitate the child's play.
- Describe specific behaviors the child is doing for her to imitate.
- Ask her how she can join the child's play in the specific activity.

Is uncomfortable joining or imitating nonfunctional or repetitive behavior

- Remind the parent that the goal of these strategies is to increase engagement and attention. Later in the program, she will learn to increase functional play.
- Encourage her to see if it increases his engagement. If it does, she should keep imitating. If the child "tunes her out," she should try joining his play in a different way.
- Suggest that she imitate the child's emotion as she slightly changes the behavior to make it more appropriate.

Has difficulty waiting and watching

- Suggest counting to 5 in her head after she makes a comment or attempts to join in his play again.

Has difficulty responding to the child's actions in a logical way

- Describe the child's behavior and the meaning it might carry.
- Ask her, "What do you think your child is telling you right now?"
- Help her use cues in the environment to interpret the meaning of her child's communication.
- Record several minutes of the interaction, and review the video with the parent, to help her recognize the way the child is communicating.

<i>If the parent . . .</i>	<i>You can . . .</i>
Has flat affect or is uncomfortable being animated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge that it may feel really funny to exaggerate her actions, but that she does not look as “silly” to others as she may feel. • Have her pretend to communicate to someone from across the street who cannot hear what she is saying. • Suggest concrete ways to make the facial expressions and gestures bigger and easier to see. For example, surprise can be exaggerated with raised eyebrows and an O-shaped mouth. • Suggest that she try keeping her expressions and gestures small for a few minutes and then making them big for a few minutes, to see if it helps her child respond to her.
Uses language that is too complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give an example of what to say. For example: “In this activity, let’s use the word ‘Ball.’” • Model simple language for her to use.
Is very quiet and rarely models language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest that she practice a “play-by-play” narration of her child’s play in isolation, without worrying about using other techniques or simplifying her language, to help her become more comfortable talking. • Model language for her to use.
Asks lots of questions or prompts her child to use more complex language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind her to wait and watch for what the child does on his own to help him initiate. • Model language for the parent to use by rephrasing her questions as comments. • Remind her that the goal is to increase engagement and attention. Later in the program, she will learn to teach more complex language. • Ask her how she can turn questions into comments and model new information.
Has difficulty using the key elements of these strategies together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest only one to two elements at a time for her to use.
<i>If the child . . .</i>	<i>You can . . .</i>
Is not engaged with toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a wide variety of materials for sensory exploration. • Encourage gross motor or active play. • Let the parent know that play does not need to involve toys. • Help the parent recognize other ways the child likes to play. • Encourage the parent to imitate all of the child’s movements and vocalizations in an exaggerated way.

(continued)



Troubleshooting Tips *(continued)*

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Moves frequently
between activities

- Limit the number of toys available for the child to move between.
- Help the parent identify a smaller space for play, to limit the area he can move around in.
- Offer a chair or beanbag, to help the child sit for longer.

Becomes frustrated
or moves away when
the parent joins or
imitates his play

- Acknowledge that this can be hard. Suggest giving the child a moment to calm down and then trying again.
- Suggest other ways the parent can join the play.
- Offer other toys or materials that may be easier for the child to share.

Becomes too wound
up when the parent is
animated

- Point out signs that the child is getting dysregulated.
- Suggest that the parent use smaller gestures and a softer voice, and slow down her speech.

Does not increase
his engagement in
response to these
strategies

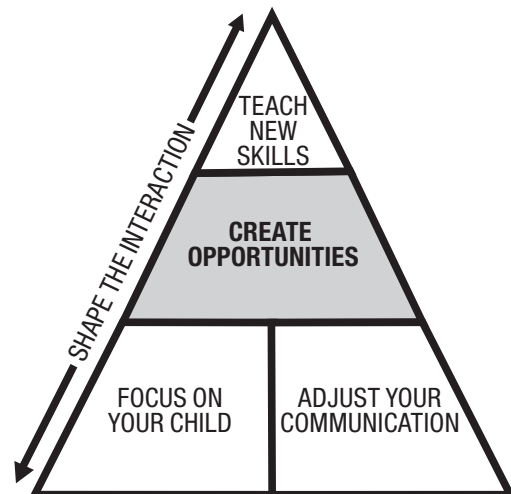
- Encourage the parent to engage her child in highly motivating activities such as tickles or chase.
- Explain that subsequent sessions will focus on techniques that encourage back-and-forth play.

UNIT 3

Create Opportunities

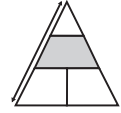
The purpose of this unit is to teach the parents to **Create Opportunities**. This strategy set is the **C** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S., and is used to help the child initiate if he does not do so on his own or to gain the child's attention when needed. This can improve the child's back-and-forth interactions, initiations, and reasons for communication.

- During the group session, you will begin by reviewing the parents' Practice Plans for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. You will then use the slides and video clips to introduce **Create Opportunities** and its three techniques: *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*. At the end of the group, you will help each parent complete a Practice Plan to carry out before the individual coaching session. Again, a guide to the key elements for each of the video clips is included in the slide notes.
- During the coaching session, you will begin by reviewing the parent's Practice Plan from the group session. You will then demonstrate and have the parent practice **Create Opportunities** while you provide feedback. Given the number of techniques, you will need to highlight and coach those techniques and key elements that are best suited for the child's goals and the activities in which the parent practices. Be sure to solicit the parent's input on the techniques she would like help using. You will then help the parent reflect on the in-session practice and develop a Practice Plan for the next week. You will end by asking the parent to complete the reflection and read the first three sections of Chapter 5, **Teach New Skills**, in the parent manual (*Prompts and Rewards*, *Prompts for Using Communication*, and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*) before the next group session.



SESSION 5

Create Opportunities (Group)



Session Goals

Help the parents:

- Increase their child's back-and-forth interactions.
- Increase opportunities for their child to initiate.
- Expand the reasons their child communicates.
- Gain their child's attention when needed.



Materials

- Slides/video clips
- Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32; multiple copies)
- Whiteboard or large sheets of paper
- Group guidelines
- Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda (Slides 1–2).
- Review the Practice Plans (Slide 3).
- Introduce Create Opportunities (Slide 4).
- Introduce *Playful Obstruction* (Slides 5–9).

- Introduce *Balanced Turns* (Slides 10–14).
- Take a break.
- Introduce *Communicative Temptations* (Slides 15–19).
- Plan for practice and coaching (Slides 20–21).



Key Elements: *Playful Obstruction*

- Help your child anticipate an interruption.
- Playfully block your child's activity.



Key Elements: *Balanced Turns*

- Help your child anticipate turns.
- Take a turn.
- Model play during your turn.



Key Elements: *Communicative Temptations*

- Put fun things in sight and out of reach.
- Control access to items.
- Give small portions.
- Use items that require your assistance.
- Have an item missing.
- Present a silly situation.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

SLIDE 1

Warmly greet the parents as they enter, and give them a few minutes to check in with each other before getting started. Then briefly introduce the topic for the day's group.

Sample Script

Welcome back! In our last group session, we learned how to **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**—the **F** and the **A** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. This week we are going to build on those techniques and learn the **C** of F.A.C.T.S., which stands for **Create Opportunities**.

SLIDE 2

Briefly go over the session agenda, to provide information on the goals and structure of the session. If you need to make adjustments to this agenda for the sake of time, explain this to the group.

Sample Script

- ▶ We'll be starting off by reviewing your Practice Plans from the past week.
- ▶ Then we'll discuss three techniques that you can use to **Create Opportunities**. For each technique, we'll talk through what skills it can teach, discuss how to use it, and watch some video examples. Then we'll have a brief discussion of how you can use the technique with your child.
- ▶ At the end, we'll plan how you can practice one or more of these techniques with your child over the next week.

Review the Practice Plans

SLIDE 3

Use a whiteboard to draw three columns labeled “What Went Well?,” “What Was Hard?,” and “Possible Solutions.” Ask each parent to report what technique she practiced and how her child responded. As each parent reports, briefly write down the information on the whiteboard in the appropriate columns. Help the parents identify commonalities across their experiences. After each parent has reported, identify one or more common challenges that the parents experienced. Ask questions and give suggestions to help them find potential solutions as a group. Write the best potential solution for each challenge in the “Possible Solutions” column, next to the specific challenge in the “What Was Hard?” column. Common challenges and possible solutions relevant for this topic are described in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 4 (page 328).

Sample Script

Let's talk about how it's gone at home with the strategies we've learned so far. In the past week, each of you should have had an individual coaching session where you worked with your coach to practice **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. The coach should have modeled the techniques and supported you in practicing and thinking through how to use them at home.

- ▶ Let's have everyone go around and briefly share how practice at home has gone. What I am looking for specifically is what technique or techniques you practiced, what went well when you practiced with your child, and maybe one thing that was challenging.
- ▶ [After all parents report on their practice] Now let's think about some possible solutions for those challenges.

Introduce Create Opportunities

SLIDE 4

Introduce the **Create Opportunities** strategy set and explain how it relates to the previous strategies the parents have learned, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic. Emphasize that the

goal is not for parents to use each of the techniques that you discuss today, but to pick the ones that work best for their child within the activity they are doing. Also, emphasize that the parents will learn to prompt for new skills in subsequent sessions, but that for now they will continue to focus on skills the child already has.

Sample Script

▶ Today we will be moving from the base of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to its middle by learning the strategy set called **Create Opportunities**. It is important to keep using the **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** strategies, because they make the interaction fun and increase your child's engagement with you. However, sometimes these strategies, by themselves, are not quite enough to get your child to initiate or respond to you. That's where **Create Opportunities** comes in. You will use **Create Opportunities** when your child does not initiate on his own, or when you need to get his attention. Since these techniques increase your child's initiations and attention, they also provide opportunities for you to model a more complex response. We will be learning three techniques that you can use to create opportunities: *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*. You will choose the technique that fits your activity the best and that causes the least frustration for your child. You may also use different techniques, depending on your child's goals and the activity. This strategy places more demands on your child than the previous strategies, so it should be used for only about two-thirds of an interaction to keep your child from getting too frustrated. Right now, we're going to concentrate on creating opportunities to use the skills your child already has. In our next two group sessions, we will learn how to help communicate and play in new ways.

▶ To use these techniques, begin the interaction by focusing on your child and adjusting your communication as you have already learned to do. If your child does not initiate independently when you do this, or if you need to get your child's attention, use one of the **Create Opportunities** techniques. Next, wait for your child's response, and then respond and expand your child's behavior in a logical way.

Introduce *Playful Obstruction*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 5

Explain the rationale for *Playful Obstruction*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty engaging or initiating with people when they are involved in an activity. With *Playful Obstruction*, you join in your child's activity and then interrupt it in a playful way, to give your child a reason to initiate with you to continue the activity. You can do this with your body, toys, objects, or motor activities.

- ▶ You can use this technique to increase your child’s verbal and nonverbal initiations, back-and-forth play, and ability to request and protest, as well as to gain your child’s attention.
- ▶ *Playful Obstruction* is helpful when your child is not ready for turn taking just yet, gets very upset when you take a turn, or is not involved with toys.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 6

Discuss the key elements of *Playful Obstruction*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Let’s look at how to use *Playful Obstruction*.

- ▶ Before interrupting your child’s play, use a consistent phrase, such as “One, two, three, stop,” “Here I come,” or “I’m going to get you,” and big gestures. This helps your child anticipate the interruption and makes it less frustrating. It also gives your child a chance to tell or show you “No.”
- ▶ If your child protests at this point, respond in a meaningful way and model “No” or “Stop.”
- ▶ Next, playfully block your child’s activity. You can do this in a variety of ways. The simplest way is to block your child’s play with your hand. For example, if your child is putting a ball in a ball chute, you could cover the hole in the chute with your hand so that your child can’t put the ball down. If your child is pushing a car, you could put your hand over the car so that your child can’t move it. The key is to keep it playful and make the obstruction part of the play activity. For example, if your child is pushing a car, you can place your leg in front of the car and tell the child, “A log fell in the road!”
- ▶ Sometimes children get frustrated when another person blocks their play. In this case, it can help to use a puppet, blanket, or another toy to block your child’s play instead.
- ▶ If your child is wandering aimlessly or running back and forth, you can playfully get in the way of where your child wants to go and turn it into a game. For example, you could briefly stop him from running and say the word “Stop,” wait for him to look at you, and then let him go while saying “Go.” Once you have used *Playful Obstruction*, wait for your child’s response. Look for eye contact, shifts in body posture, gestures, vocalizations, words, or sentences. Respond to any of these behaviors by letting your child continue the activity, and then expand on this communication.

SLIDE 7

Walk the parents through this slide’s example of how to use *Playful Obstruction*, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

This slide shows an example of a dad using *Playful Obstruction* to increase his son’s engagement and communication. Paul is pushing a train around the track. His dad focuses

on his child and adjusts communication by joining in his play and using simple language to talk about what Paul is doing. His dad then creates an opportunity by using *Playful Obstruction*. He helps Paul anticipate the interruption by saying, “Here comes the cow,” and blocks Paul’s train with a toy cow. Paul’s dad then waits to see how Paul will respond. Paul responds by making a sound to protest. His dad then responds by moving the cow and expands by saying the word “Move.”

Show Video Clip and Discuss

SLIDE 8

Show the video example of *Playful Obstruction*. Before showing the clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Playful Obstruction* and to notice how the child responds. After the clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clip is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch an example of a parent using *Playful Obstruction* to help her child interact with her during play.

- ▶ [Before showing the clip] Watch for how the parent helps the child anticipate the interruption, playfully blocks the child’s activity, waits for the child’s response, and responds to the child by letting the child continue the activity and expanding on the child’s communication.
- ▶ [After showing the clip] What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent help the child anticipate the interruption? How did the parent playfully block the child’s activity? How did the child respond when the parent interrupted the play? How did the parent respond to the child’s communication?

Clip 12: Playful Obstruction, First Words

The parent uses *Playful Obstruction* to help her child interact with her during play with trains. The mother sits face to face with her son and joins his play with the train by imitating what he is doing. She uses simple language to describe what he is doing and seeing. He looks at her but does not respond, so she creates an opportunity by using an anticipatory phrase (“Here comes the police car; he is going to tell you to stop”), and then playfully stops the train. He responds with a verbalization (“Go police”). She continues with this play routine, and each time he responds with a different verbalization.

SLIDE 9

Have the parents discuss how they could use playful obstruction with their children, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help them think through how this technique would work best for their children. You can refer parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 4 of the parent manual for examples of how to use *Playful Obstruction* during various routines.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how each of you could use *Playful Obstruction* with your child.

- ▶ Take a moment to think some of the ways your child likes to play. Think about some phrases you can use during these activities to help your child anticipate an interruption.
- ▶ Now think about some ways you could playfully block this play. Remember, think about ways you can make it playful by making it part of the play activity.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Introduce *Balanced Turns*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 10

Explain the rationale for *Balanced Turns*. As you do this, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. Toddlers may not be ready for turn taking with toys, so if you are working with families of very young children, you may want to deemphasize this technique. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty sharing and taking turns with other people. They also can have difficulty playing with toys appropriately. With *Balanced Turns*, you help your child take turns during play. This gives your child the opportunity to communicate for a turn. It also gives you an opportunity to show your child new and interesting ways to play during your turn.

- ▶ This technique can be used to teach turn taking, requesting, and play skills.
- ▶ Balanced turns are most helpful when you are playing with materials that support turn taking, such as a ball chute, cars, or musical instruments. It is also helpful if your child benefits from seeing new ways to play and when turn taking is a goal.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 11

Discuss the key elements of *Balanced Turns*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. Emphasize that the parents are not prompting their children to use new play skills yet, but rather giving them the opportunity to observe new ways of playing.

Sample Script

Let's discuss how to use *Balanced Turns*.

- ▶ Before taking a turn, use a consistent phrase, such as "Mommy's turn" or "My turn," paired with a gesture such as tapping your chest. This helps your child anticipate the

interruption and makes it less frustrating. When it's your child's turn, tap your child's chest and say, "Your turn."

- ▶ Next, take a turn. You should do this even if your child protests.
- ▶ Keep your turn short to prevent your child from becoming frustrated. As your child becomes more comfortable with taking turns, you can increase the length of your turns and take turns more often.
- ▶ Sometimes children get frustrated when someone else takes a turn. In this case, you can start by trading toys instead of taking turns with one toy.
- ▶ Once your child is able to take turns with you, model a fun play action during your turn.
- ▶ This can show your child new ways to play. Your parent manual gives suggestions for different types of play actions you can model, based on your child's current play skills. Once you have taken a turn, wait for your child's response. Look for eye contact, shifts in body posture, gestures, vocalizations, words or sentences. Respond to any of these behaviors by giving your child a turn, and expand it by saying, "Your turn."

SLIDE 12

Walk parents through the slide's example of how to use *Balanced Turns*, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

This slide shows an example of a mother taking a balanced turn to increase her daughter's turn taking and communication. Heather is playing with a ball. Her mother focuses on her by moving face to face, and adjusts communication by saying the word "Ball." Her mother then creates an opportunity by using *Balanced Turns*: She gestures and says, "My turn," and then takes a quick turn with the ball. She then waits to see how Heather will respond. Heather responds by reaching toward the ball. Her mother gives the ball back to Heather, and expands her communication by tapping Heather's chest and saying the word "Turn."

Show Video Clip and Discuss

SLIDE 13

Show the video example of *Balanced Turns*. Before showing the clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Balanced Turns* and to notice how the child responds. After the clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch an example of a parent using *Balanced Turns* to help her child interact with her during play.

- ▶ [*Before showing the clip*] Watch for how the parent helps the child anticipate her turn, takes a turn and models play, waits for the child's response, and responds to the child by letting the child have a turn and expanding on the child's communication.

► [After showing the clip] What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent help the child anticipate the parent's turn? What did the parent do during her turn? How did the child respond when the parent took a turn? How did the parent respond to her child's communication?

Clip 13: Balanced Turns, First Words

The mother uses *Balanced Turns* with her daughter while playing with bracelets. The mother joins her child's play with the bracelets and adjusts her communication by modeling simple language. The mother uses an anticipatory phrase ("My turn") to help her daughter prepare for the interruption, and then takes a turn. During the mother's turn, she models a new way to play while keeping her turn short. The child responds by using eye contact, a gesture (reaching), and language ("My heart"). The mother responds to these behaviors as meaningful and returns the bracelets to the daughter for her turn. The mother then takes another turn, and the child imitates her language ("On").

SLIDE 14

Have the parents discuss how they could use *Balanced Turns* with their children, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help each of them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 4 of the parent manual for examples of how to use *Balanced Turns* during various home activities. The end of this discussion is usually a good point in the presentation to take a break.

Sample Script:

Now let's discuss how you could use *Balanced Turns* with your child.

- Take a moment to think about an activity or toy that would work well for taking turns with your child. If turn taking is really hard for your child, think about how you could trade toys instead.
- What new play actions could you model when you take a turn? Remember to think about your child's current play skills.
- [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Take a Break

Introduce *Communicative Temptations*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 15

Introduce the rationale for *Communicative Temptations*. As you do this, you may want to give examples of specific goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. Emphasize that the parents are not prompting their children to use new communication skills yet. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty initiating and seeking out others when they want or need something. With *Communicative Temptations*, you will set up natural situations for your child to initiate with you for things your child wants.

- ▶ *Communicative Temptations* are used to increase your child's initiations and gain attention. Different temptations can be used to expand the reasons your child communicates.
- ▶ *Communicative Temptations* are easy to use during daily routines, such as meals and snacks, dressing, bathtime, and bedtime. It is frequently helpful to set these up in advance. *Communicative Temptations* can be used in place of *Playful Obstruction* and *Balanced Turns* during play activities, particularly if your child gets upset if you interrupt his or her play.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 16

Discuss the key elements of *Communicative Temptations*. As you go, provide concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. When appropriate, show materials that can be used (such as clear containers and bins), and discuss where they can be purchased. Emphasize that the goal is not for parents to use all of the temptations, but to pick those that work best for their children. You can also refer the parents to Chapter 4 in the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Let's talk about how to use *Communicative Temptations*. There are many different temptations within this technique; don't feel that you need to use all of them. It is more important to pick the one that works best for you and your child within a particular activity.

- ▶ Put your child's favorite things where the child can see them but not get them, such as on a high shelf or in a clear container that your child can't open. This will encourage your child to get your attention to show you what he or she wants and ask for help.
- ▶ Keep control of items your child likes, to gain his or her attention and help your child ask for things he or she wants. By holding the item near your eyes, you can encourage your child to look at you. You should give your child the item if he or she reaches for it, but don't let your child grab it out of your hand.
- ▶ Give your child a piece or small amount of an item he or she has requested, to help your child ask for more. For example, give your child one cracker for a snack, or pour your child a small amount of juice and wait for your child to let you know he or she wants more. Make sure you keep the item in sight and stay face to face, so your child knows he or she can ask you for more.
- ▶ Use items, materials, and activities that require your assistance, to encourage your child to request help. Play with toys your child needs your help to use, such as bubbles, balloons, and wind-up toys. These toys are especially good to use with children who get very frustrated when you try to interrupt their play. You can also give your child items that he or she will need your help to open, like a snack still in the wrapper.

► Leave out a piece or part of a favorite activity, to encourage your child to ask where the missing piece is. For example, give your child train tracks without the train, or a cup without the juice. For this temptation to work, your child must know what particular piece is missing. If your child does not know the routine or the parts of the activity, use small portions instead.

► Complete a familiar activity or routine in a silly, obviously wrong way. This encourages your child to show or tell you the right way to do something. For example, put one of your child's shoes on a hand instead of a foot, or pretend to blow up a balloon with your ear. If your child doesn't respond to the silly situation, exclaim that it is silly, and complete the routine as expected. For example, "That's silly; shoes go on our feet, not our hands!" If your child doesn't understand the right way to complete the routine, use another temptation. After you have presented a temptation, wait for your child's response. Respond to any verbal or nonverbal communication by letting your child have the item or continue the activity.

SLIDE 17

Walk parents through the slide's example of how to use *Communicative Temptations*, using the sequence graphic. Note that this example is slightly different from *Playful Obstruction* and *Balanced Turns*, because the parent sets up the temptation ahead of time. The parent then focuses on her child and adjusts communication by following him to the shelf and responding to his interest in the favorite toy. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

Here is an example of a mother using in sight and out of reach to create an opportunity for her son to communicate. Todd's mom follows Todd's lead and gets face to face. Todd's mom has put his favorite toy in a jar that he cannot open and placed it near on a nearby shelf that he can see. Todd responds by handing his mother the jar and saying the word "Open." His mother responds to Todd by opening the jar and expands by saying, "Open jar."

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 18

Show the video examples of *Communicative Temptations*. There are seven clips of parents using different temptations to help their children initiate with them during play and daily activities. You may choose to show only a subset of these examples. Choose clips that are most appropriate, given your knowledge of the skills and interests of the children in the group. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Communicative Temptations* and to notice how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using *Communicative Temptations* to help their children initiate with them during play and daily routines.

- ▶ *[Before showing each clip]* Watch for how the parent uses the particular temptation, waits for the child's response, and responds to the child by letting the child have the item or continue the activity and expanding on the child's communication.
- ▶ *[After showing each clip]* What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent use the specific temptation? How did the child respond when the parent used the temptation?

Clip 14: Put Fun Things in Sight and out of Reach, First Words

The mother uses in sight and out of reach to encourage her daughter to communicate with her in order to get what she wants. The mother has set up the situation by placing the bubbles and the stroller on shelves that are visible but out of reach. Notice how the mother waits and watches for her daughter to initiate. The child says the word "Bubbles," but does not direct her communication at her mother. The mother continues to wait, and her daughter then directs her communication toward her. The mother responds by blowing bubbles with her daughter. The child then initiates again to request a baby and stroller. Throughout the interaction, the mother responds to her daughter's words and gestures as meaningful by giving her what she requests and modeling appropriate language ("Bubbles," "All done," "Baby").

Clip 15: Control Access to Items, Sentences

The father controls access to a box of toy food to encourage his daughter to ask for what she wants. After the child opens the box of toy food, the father picks up the box, holds it back, and waits. The child responds by using words to indicate what she wants. The father gives her the items she requests and models language around what she is doing.

Clip 16: Give Small Portions, Word Combinations

The mother uses small portions to encourage her daughter to request different-colored crayons while they are coloring together. The mother controls access to the crayons and waits. The child responds by requesting the color of crayon she wants. The mother responds by giving her the crayon she requests and expanding on her daughter's communication. Notice how the mother encourages her daughter to make eye contact by holding up the crayons near her eyes.

Clip 17: Use Items That Require Assistance, First Words

The mother uses the need for assistance to encourage her daughter to ask for help while they are at the park. The mother follows her child's lead to the child's activity of choice at the park and then waits. The child needs assistance to get on the chair to spin. The mom moves face to face and waits for her child to communicate. The child responds by saying, "Help, Mommy," and the mom immediately puts her on the chair to spin.

Clip 18: Use Items That Require Assistance, Sentences

The mother uses the need for assistance to encourage her child to ask for help during snacktime. She places a drink that he cannot open on the table and waits. He tries to open it himself, but then realizes that he cannot. He then hands the drink to his mother. She waits for him to direct his communication at her. He then looks at her and says, "Here, you open too." She responds by opening drink and models, "I will open it."

Clip 19: Have an Item Missing, Sentences

The mother has an item missing during a snack routine, to encourage her son to ask where the missing item is. She sets of the situation by having the crackers available, but not the plate. Her son initiates by saying, “I’m missing the plate.” He then goes into the kitchen to get it. His mother responds to his communication, and they work together to find plates for the snack.

Clip 20: Present a Silly Situation, Sentences

The mother uses a silly situation to encourage her child to tell her the right way to put his shoes on when they are getting ready to go outside. The mother presents the silly situation by pretending to put her son’s shoe on his hand and then on her own foot, instead of on his foot. Her child responds by using language multiple times to correct his mother’s silly mistakes. Notice how she uses animation when he begins to get frustrated, to explain why the situation is silly (“Oh, it goes on *your* feet!”) and then responds.

SLIDE 19

Have the parents discuss how they could use *Communicative Temptations* with their children, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 4 of the parent manual for examples of how to use *Communicative Temptations* during various routines.

Sample Script

Now let’s discuss how you could use one or more *Communicative Temptations* with your child.

- ▶ Take a moment to think about some daily routines that your child likes or at least tolerates. You may want to refer back to your Daily Activity Schedule.
- ▶ What temptations could you use during these activities? Remember to think about which temptations would work best for you and your child, based on your child’s skills.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let’s talk about it.

Plan for Practice and Coaching

SLIDE 20

Have each parent develop a plan for how she will practice over the week. It is extremely important that the parents have time to complete their Practice Plans during the group session. At a minimum, the parents should complete the goals, activities, and sequence graphics in their Practice Plans before they leave. If you are running short on time, you may need to shorten the group discussion. Give the parents several minutes to write the following down on their Practice Plans: (1) one or two goals they would like to target, and (2) a play activity and a daily routine in which to practice. Next, have each parent write down a positive example of how she will use one of the techniques to address their child’s goal during a selected activity, using the sequence graphic. You may want to ask one of the parents to complete the sequence graphic with you in front of the group as an example. If you have time, have the parents discuss their Practice Plans with each other, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full

group. After the parents have completed their Practice Plans, ask them to think about what might be hard about using the technique at home. Depending on time, you can have them discuss possible solutions, again either in pairs or as a full group. Common challenges and potential solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 6 (page 350).

Sample Script

I would like each of you to think of one or two goals that you will target this week. These goals should be related to increasing your child's social engagement, such as eye contact during play, and communication, such as using a gesture or words to request. Write your goals on your Practice Plan. Next, think about a play activity and a daily routine during which you can practice these techniques. Remember that you will need to add several minutes to your daily routines in order to have time to use the techniques. Once you decide on the routines, write them down on your Practice Plan. Next, think about the techniques that we have talked about today for **Create Opportunities**. These include *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and a number of different *Communicative Temptations*. Choose one or more techniques that you will use to help your child initiate, and write these down on the sequence graphic in the Practice Plan. Think about what will be hard when you use your plan. What are some possible solutions that will make it easier? You should plan to practice these strategies for 15–20 minutes per day during play as well as during one or two daily activities.

SLIDE 21

Remind the parents to read Chapter 4 of the parent manual and to practice over the next week. Let them know what to expect during their individual coaching sessions.

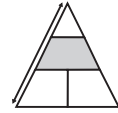
Sample Script

Next week, each of you will have an individual coaching session.

- ▶ Please be sure to read Chapter 4 of the parent manual, if you haven't done so already. It covers what we learned in group today.
- ▶ Over the next week, I would like you to try out your Practice Plan at home and write down how it went in the "Reflection" box of your Practice Plan form. We will discuss your Practice Plan during your coaching session. So please come with any questions you have about *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, or *Communicative Temptations*. You will also get the opportunity to get individual feedback and support as you work with your child. Come ready to practice!

SESSION 6

Review of Create Opportunities (Coaching)



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Increase her child's back-and-forth interactions.
- Increase opportunities for her child to initiate.
- Expand the reasons her child communicates.
- Gain her child's attention when needed.

- Toys that are good for turn taking (such as cars, balls, or a ball chute)
- Toys that require assistance (such as bubbles, balloons, or spinning tops)
- Toys that have multiple pieces or parts
- Favorite snacks that can be served in small portions
- Clear containers
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Create Opportunities** (Form 32)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Create Opportunities** (Form 15)
- Puppets and other objects that can be used to block play



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review **Create Opportunities**.
- Demonstrate **Create Opportunities**.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the group session, and take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Let the parent know that she will have the opportunity to practice several **Create Opportunities** techniques with her child while you provide support. This strategy set can improve the child's back-and-forth interactions, initiations, and reasons for communication. It can also be used to gain the child's attention when needed. Remind the parent of the session agenda. This is the same format as was used in the previous coaching session.



There are a lot of techniques to cover in this session. The goal is for the parent to get support in using the techniques that are likely to be most effective for her and her child.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the Written Plan from the Group Session

Ask the parent to talk you through the technique(s) she used at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Challenges

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 350). These challenges are often intensified at home, because the child may not be used to the parent’s interrupting his play or controlling access to items or activities.



Practice is important! If the parent did not practice, problem-solve barriers and brainstorm solutions.

Review Create Opportunities

Briefly Review the Rationale and Key Elements

Using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the parent manual, explain how **Create Opportunities** is used with the previously learned strategies. Highlight the key elements across techniques that are likely to be most effective for the child. You can write these down on the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Create Opportunities** (Form 15) for the parent to take home.

Playful Obstruction and *Balanced Turns* are most effective when the child is so engaged in an activity that he has difficulty engaging with the parent. Both of these strategies work best during play. The *Communicative Temptations* techniques also work well during play, but have the added benefit of being easily incorporated into daily routines.

Ask the parent: “Which techniques would you like to try today?” Encourage the parent to provide input on the technique(s) she thinks might be most effective for helping her child initiate, and that she feels most comfortable using.

Explain the Steps of the Technique(s)

Use the sequence graphic in the parent manual to describe how to address one of the child’s goals with the technique(s). Provide an opportunity for the parent to ask questions about the techniques.

Demonstrate Create Opportunities

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent to watch for how you use the technique(s), how the child responds, and how you respond to the child's actions.

Describe What You Are Doing

Point out the behaviors the child uses to initiate and the reasons he is initiating. The parent needs to be able to recognize and interpret the child's communication in order to respond to it appropriately. You might say something like this:

“Sam is running around the room, so I'm going to say, ‘I'll get you,’ and catch him. . . . I'm waiting to see what he does. . . . He said the word ‘Go,’ so I'm letting him go. . . . I expanded his communication by saying ‘Let me go.’”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” Ask more specific questions if the parent is unable to respond. For example:

“What did you notice about the number of times Brianna communicated with me?”

“What did she do when I used a puppet and big gestures to help her anticipate the interruption?”



If the parent has chosen several different techniques to practice, demonstrate them one at a time, and allow the parent to practice in between.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Have the parent practice the technique(s) she has chosen during several activities. Remind her of the steps she should follow, using specific examples based on the child's skill level and the routine. In the clinic setting, this practice could include play with toys, a snack, or putting on the child's jacket and shoes at the end of the session. In the home setting, this could include a variety of caregiving routines.

Manage the Physical Environment

Give the parent items that she can use for the technique (e.g., a puppet or toy to block play, specific toys that work well for turn taking, or materials that require assistance). Remove distracting items from the environment.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent's use of the technique(s) and the child's response. Suggestions for giving feedback for common challenges that come up while practicing this strategy can be found

in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 350). If the parent seems to be searching for ideas or struggling, you might make a recommendation such as this:

“Let’s see what happens if you use in sight and out of reach with the crackers. Place the cracker box in Sam’s line of sight but out of his reach, and wait for him to communicate with you.”

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings. Help the parent generate her own ideas for how she can use what she has learned at home. Take the time to answer any questions she has. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did that interaction feel?”

“Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“Which of the techniques we practiced today seemed to work best for helping your child initiate?”



The parent’s interaction with her child should guide your question selection.

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child’s Goals from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record her selections on the Practice Plan. Good child goals for this unit include staying actively engaged during play; using eye contact during play or communication; initiating activities; taking turns; using verbal or nonverbal communication to request, protest, or gain attention; and asking questions for information or conversational repair.



Remind the parent to plan extra time during these daily routines to use these strategies to enhance the child’s communication.

Good activities for this unit include toy and active play and daily routines, such as meals, dressing, and bathtime. These strategies are only effective if the child enjoys an activity. Refer to the Try This at Home! tables in the parent manual for suggestions of how to use the techniques during different activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of a technique she could use during one of the activities she identified. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent how she will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

Then ask the parent what **Create Opportunities** technique(s) she thinks would be most effective for the goal and activity she has identified.

Ask the parent what responses she will look for from her child. Remind her that the child can respond in many ways. Let her know that she can write down how the child responds next to the child icon under the “Wait” box on the Practice Plan.

Finally, ask the parent how she will respond and expand on her child’s response. The child’s response should guide the parent’s response.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Help the parent problem-solve potential challenges by asking what might be hard about using the technique at home and brainstorming possible solutions. Common challenges associated with each technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session.

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down how practice goes at home between sessions. Remind her to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that this will be reviewed at the beginning of the next group session. Before the next group session, have the parent read the first three sections of Chapter 5, **Teach New Skills**, in the parent manual (*Prompts and Rewards*, *Prompts for Using Communication*, and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*).



Troubleshooting Tips for Create Opportunities

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Does not use an anticipatory phrase

- Give an example of a specific phrase to use.
- Remind her that using the phrase can decrease frustration.

Is hesitant or unsure about how to block the child's play

- Suggest how she can block the play with her hand.
- Hand her a puppet or other toy she could use to block the play.

Does not respond to the child's protests or requests

- Remind her that the focus is on increasing initiations. If the child communicates before she interrupts the play, she should respond by stopping the interruption and model "Stop" or "No."
- Remind her to respond to all types of appropriate communication by stopping the obstruction or giving her child the object back.
- Help her recognize how the child protests or requests.

Tries to prompt more complex language or play skills

- Remind her that the focus is on increasing initiations. She will focus on teaching language and play later in the program.
- Remind her to wait and respond to any initiation.
- Help her recognize how the child communicates.

Uses this strategy set too frequently

- Remind her that it should only be used for about two-thirds of an interaction. If it is used too often, the child is likely to get frustrated.
- Remind the parent to return to **Focus on Your Child** after using **Create Opportunities**.

If the child . . .

You can . . .

Becomes frustrated when the parent interrupts play, takes a turn, or controls access

- Suggest that the parent use a puppet or toy to interrupt the play or take a turn, instead of her hand.
- Suggest increasing the time between the anticipatory phrase and the interruption, to give the child enough time to protest or anticipate her turn.
- Ask her how she can make the obstruction more fun or part of the play.
- Suggest that the parent take shorter turns. She may even begin by immediately returning the toy.
- Suggest that she trade identical or similar objects instead of taking a turn with one toy.
- Help her identify structured activities that lend themselves to turn taking, such as throwing a balloon or ball back and forth or rolling it.
- Suggest that the parent use in sight and out of reach instead.

<i>If the child . . .</i>	<i>You can . . .</i>
Attempts to climb to get an object in sight and out of reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have the parent place the object in a clear container that the child cannot open.• Suggest that the parent use a lock on the cupboard or refrigerator where the item is kept, so that child can initiate communication to the parent for access.
Grabs the toy from the parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suggest that the parent stand up or hold the item out of the child's reach.
Does not initiate for items that require assistance or a missing item	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the parent to activate the toy once, or to show the child the missing object, place it within the child's reach, and wait to see if he initiates.• Suggest that the parent hand the child the item in a clear container he cannot open, and see if he initiates.• Suggest using small portions instead.

UNIT 4

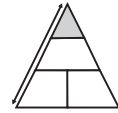
Teach New Communication Skills

The purpose of this unit is to teach the parents to **Teach New Communication Skills**. **Teach New Skills** (which combines **Teach New Communication Skills** and the topic of Unit 5, **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**) is the **T** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. This strategy set uses prompts and rewards to teach the child to use new and more complex communication skills (including both gestures and verbal language), and to improve the child's ability to understand communication and follow directions.

- During the group session, you will review the parents' Practice Plans for **Create Opportunities**. You will then use the slides and video clips to introduce **Teach New Communication Skills** by using *Prompts and Rewards* and specific *Prompts for Using and Understanding Communication*. At the end of the group, you will help each parent develop a Practice Plan to carry out before the individual coaching session. As usual, a guide to the elements for each video clip is included in the slide notes.
- During the coaching session, you will begin by reviewing the parent's Practice Plan from the group session. You will then briefly review, demonstrate, and have the parent practice **Teach New Communication Skills** while you provide feedback. Given the limited amount of coaching time, we recommend focusing on *Prompts for Using Communication*. However, if following directions is an important goal, you may wish to spend a portion of this session focusing on *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. Encourage the parent to identify the communication goal she would like to target, and to focus on the most appropriate prompts for the child's goal and abilities. You will then help the parent reflect on the in-session practice and develop a Practice Plan for the next week. You will end the session by asking the parent to complete the reflection and read the next two sections of Chapter 5, **Teach New Skills**, in the parent manual (*Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play*) before the next group session.



SESSION 7

Teach New Communication Skills (Group)**Session Goals**

Help the parents:

- Teach their child to use new gestures and verbal language skills.
- Teach their child to follow directions.

**Materials**

- Slides/video clips
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34; multiple copies)
- Whiteboard or large sheets of paper
- Group guidelines
- Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7)

**Session Agenda**

- Check in and set the session agenda (Slides 1–2)
- Review the Practice Plans (Slide 3).
- Introduce **Teach New Skills** (Slide 4).
- Introduce *Prompts and Rewards* (Slides 5–7).
- Introduce *Prompts for Using Communication* (Slides 8–13).
- Take a break.
- Introduce *Prompts for Understanding Communication* (Slides 14–19).
- Plan for practice and coaching (Slides 20–21).

**Key Elements:*****Prompts and Rewards***

- Make sure your child is motivated.
- Prompt a more complex skill related to what your child is doing.
- Use clear prompts.
- Wait after giving a prompt.
- Give more support as needed.
- Give less support over time.
- Make sure your child does what you ask.
- Give the reward immediately.
- Use a natural reward.
- Only reward positive behaviors.

**Key Elements: *Prompts for Using Communication***

- Use a time delay.
- Ask a question.
- Use a fill-in-the-blank sentence.
- Give a choice.
- Model language for your child to imitate.
- Use a verbal routine.
- Model a gesture for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

**Key Elements: *Prompts for Understanding Communication***

- Use a verbal instruction.
- Use a gesture prompt.
- Model the action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda**SLIDE 1**

Warmly greet the parents as they enter, and give them a few minutes to check in with each other before getting started. Then briefly introduce the topic for the day's group.

Sample Script

Welcome back! In our last group session, we learned how to **Create Opportunities**, the **C** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. This week we are going to build on those techniques and learn the **T** of F.A.C.T.S., which stands for **Teach New Skills**. Today, we'll discuss the first part of this strategy set, **Teach New Communication Skills**. Next time, we'll talk about the second part of this strategy set, **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**.

SLIDE 2

Briefly go over the session agenda, to provide information on the goals and structure of the session. If you need to make adjustments to this agenda for the sake of time, explain this to the parents.

Sample Script

- ▶ We'll be starting off by reviewing your Practice Plans from the past week.
- ▶ Then we'll discuss the next strategy set, **Teach New Skills**. We'll start with an overview of how to use prompts and rewards, and then discuss two sets of prompts you can use to teach your child communication: one set for teaching your child to use communication, and one set for teaching your child to understand communication and follow your directions. For each set of prompts, we'll talk through what skills it can teach, discuss how to use it, and watch some video examples. Then we'll have a brief discussion of how you can use these strategies with your child.
- ▶ At the end, we'll plan how you can practice teaching specific communication skills to your child over the next week.

Review the Practice Plans

SLIDE 3

Use a whiteboard to draw three columns labeled “What Went Well?”, “What Was Hard?”, and “Possible Solutions.” Ask each parent to report what technique she practiced and how her child responded. As each parent reports, briefly write down the information on the whiteboard in the appropriate columns. Help the parents identify commonalities across their experiences. After each parent has reported, identify one or more common challenges that the parents experienced. Ask questions and give suggestions to help them find potential solutions as a group. Write the best potential solution for each challenge in the “Possible Solutions” column, next to the specific challenge in the “What Was Hard?” column. Common challenges and possible solutions relevant for this topic are described in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 6 (page 350).

Sample Script

Let's talk about how it's gone at home with the strategies we've learned so far. In the past week, each of you should have had an individual coaching session where you worked with your coach to practice **Create Opportunities**. The coach should have modeled the techniques and supported you in practicing and thinking through how to use them at home.

- ▶ Let's go around and have everyone briefly share how practice at home has gone. What I am looking for specifically is what technique or techniques you practiced, what went well when you practiced with your child, and maybe one thing that was challenging.
- ▶ [After all parents report on their practice] Now let's think about some possible solutions for those challenges.

Introduce Teach New Skills

SLIDE 4

Introduce the **Teach New Skills** strategy set and explain how it relates to the previous strategies the parents have learned, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic. Emphasize the importance of only teaching new skills every 1–2 minutes as a way to strike a balance between having fun and teaching new skills. Between prompts, parents can go back to using **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

Sample Script

▶ Today we will be moving to the top of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, where we will be staying for both this group session and our next group. The strategies you have already learned—**Focus on Your Child**, **Adjust Your Communication**, and **Create Opportunities**—help your child engage and initiate. So far, you have been responding immediately and expanding on these initiations without requiring your child to use new or more complex skills. For many children with social communication challenges, these strategies are not enough to learn new skills. That's when we use **Teach New Skills**. Only use this strategy set about one-third of the time during an interaction, though, to make sure your child doesn't get discouraged. The rest of the time, you will continue to respond to the child's initiations without prompting a new skill.

▶ You will begin an interaction the same way you have already learned: by using **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, and then moving to **Create Opportunities** if your child does not initiate independently and you need to get his or her attention. Now, rather than responding to any action your child does, you will use a *prompt*—that is, a cue—to help him or her use a specific new skill, and wait to respond until your child does use it. When your child uses the specific skill, you will provide a reward. When you begin to prompt a new skill and wait before giving the reward, your child may become frustrated because you have changed the rules. If this happens, don't worry! Most children become less frustrated as soon as they understand that they now need to use a specific skill. The more consistently you follow through with these techniques, the faster the frustration will decrease.

Introduce *Prompts and Rewards*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 5

Introduce the rationale for using *Prompts and Rewards*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific social communication goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the

children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Let's briefly discuss the set of techniques you will use together to teach your child new skills: *Prompts and Rewards*. A *prompt* is a cue that helps your child respond with a new skill. Prompting helps your child know how to respond, and prevents the child from getting frustrated. A *reward* is a positive consequence you give your child after he or she succeeds at using the new skill. It can be anything your child likes, including getting your attention, doing a fun activity, or playing with a favorite toy. Rewards increase the chances that your child will use the new skill again.

- ▶ You will use prompts and rewards to help your child learn skills that he or she does not yet use independently.
- ▶ Prompts and rewards are very helpful when your child is learning a new skill. Once your child becomes more successful at using the new skill, you will gradually fade out the extra support you provide so that your child is able to use the new skill without your help.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 6

Discuss the key elements of prompts. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on these techniques. You can also let the parents know that you are highlighting specific key elements here, but the parent manual discusses some additional key elements of both prompts and rewards that may be helpful. Let the parents know that you will give them more specific examples of these elements when you discuss how to teach new language skills.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss some ways to make your prompts most effective.

- ▶ First, it's important to think about when to prompt. The best time to prompt your child to use a new skill is when your child is highly motivated by the activity and in a good mood.
- ▶ If your child loses interest in the activity, or is unhappy, tired, or sick, the child may become frustrated or leave the activity if the prompts get too hard. If your child isn't motivated, try offering different activities and going back to **Focus on Your Child**.
- ▶ You need to think about what skills to prompt. Your child is most likely to be successful if you prompt a skill that is only slightly more complex than his or her current skills. Your child will also be more likely to respond if you prompt a skill related to what your child is already doing. So prompt your child to use a slightly more complex skill related to the material, toys, and activities he or she is engaged with. For example, if your child is playing with blocks, prompt your child to say the word "Block" or stack the blocks before you provide another one. The language and play skills you have been modeling are great skills to prompt your child to use now.
- ▶ It is also important that your child understands exactly what you want him or her to do, so that your child doesn't get frustrated. So make sure to be clear when you are giving a

prompt. Pause, gain your child's attention, and use simple language. Only use one prompt at a time. Avoid using several prompts together that require different responses, such as "Do you want this block?" . . . "What should I do?" . . . "Tell me, 'I want the block.'"

▶ Then, just as in **Create Opportunities**, wait after a prompt to give your child enough time to respond. Try counting in your head to 5 slowly before giving another prompt. Some children may need even longer to respond.

▶ Prompts range in the amount of support they give, from the most to the least helpful. To help your child become independent, start with the least supportive prompt necessary for your child to respond correctly. If your child is not successful with this prompt, give him or her more support. We do this through what we call the "three-prompt rule": Try to make sure your child is successful by the third prompt by giving more support if he or she needs it.

▶ To help your child learn to point to request, start with the least supportive prompt. For example, show your child the bubbles and ask your child, "What do you want?" If your child does not respond, use a more supportive prompt. For example, model pointing to the bubbles. If your child is still not getting it, give more support so that your child can be successful. For example, help your child point to the bubbles. The prompts you use will depend on your child's skills, motivation, and mood. If you are prompting an easy skill, and if your child is highly motivated and not too frustrated, you can start with a less supportive prompt, and you may be able to prompt more than three times to get your child to respond successfully. However, if you are working on a harder skill, or if your child is not very motivated or is highly frustrated, you may need to make sure that your child is successful with fewer prompts.

▶ As your child learns, you will give less and less help, until your child uses the new skill independently. After your child is able to respond successfully at one level of prompt, start using a less supportive prompt. In a little while, we will discuss different levels of communication prompts that you can use to help your child use more complex communication skills.

SLIDE 7

Now discuss the key elements of rewards. You can refer to the parent manual for additional information on these techniques. You can also let the parents know that you are highlighting specific key elements here, but the parent manual discusses some additional key elements of both prompts and rewards that may be helpful. Let the parents know that you will give them more specific examples of these elements when you discuss how to teach new language skills.

Sample Script

▶ You want your child to learn that using the new skill results in what he or she wants, so your child will be more likely to use it again. If you prompt your child to use a specific new skill, make sure your child has tried to use it, either alone or with your help, before you reward him or her.

▶ It is OK to reward good trying, even if it is not exactly the response you were expecting. For example, if your child reaches for the bubbles and you prompt your child to say the word "Bubble," you can blow bubbles when he or she makes a good attempt, such as saying "Buh" or pointing clearly.

- ▶ Give your child the reward immediately after he or she uses the new skill, to help your child make the connection between the new behavior and the reward, and continue to expand on your child's response.
- ▶ In the beginning, reward your child each time he or she uses the skill. Don't ask your child to respond more than once before giving the reward. For example, don't prompt your child to say the word "Cracker," and then prompt him or her to tell you, "I want two crackers," before you provide the cracker. This can frustrate your child, who may learn from this that his or her communication is not effective. Instead, break up the reward into smaller portions, and reward your child for each use of the new skill. For example, give your child a small piece of cracker each time he or she uses a new skill to ask for it.
- ▶ A reward is natural when it is related to your child's behavior, action, or communication. Natural rewards increase the chances that your child will use appropriate behavior during everyday activities. Reward your child with something that is related to what the child is doing and/or saying. By focusing on your child, you can get a good idea of a natural reward to use.
- ▶ A reward will increase whatever behavior it directly follows. So only reward the behaviors that you want to see more of.
- ▶ Be careful not to reward challenging behaviors, because your child will learn to keep using them to get what he or she wants. For example, don't give your child a train if your child is yelling loudly for it and yelling is not something you want him or her to do.

Introduce Prompts for Using Communication

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 8

Introduce the rationale for *Prompts for Using Communication*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific communication goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this set of techniques.

Sample Script

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty learning to use gestures and verbal language to communicate with others and can have difficulty communicating spontaneously. You can use prompts and rewards to teach your child to use more complex communication skills.

- ▶ You can teach your child to use new gestures or verbal language, and to use these skills together. You can also expand the reasons your child communicates and help your child communicate more spontaneously by using prompts that provide different levels of support.
- ▶ This strategy is most helpful when your child is highly motivated by the activity and when your child needs to learn a new skill, such as how to indicate that he or she wants something or how to say "No" instead of hitting. It works best when you have the ability to control materials, because you will need to "hold back" the reward until your child responds to your prompt.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 9

Discuss the sequence for *Prompts for Using Communication*, as well as appropriate communication skills to prompt. As you go, remind the parents of the relevant key elements of *Prompts and Rewards*. Provide specific examples of communication that parents can prompt, based on your knowledge of the favorite activities and communication skills of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Let's look at how to use *Prompts for Using Communication*.

▶ When you teach your child to use new communication skills, you will begin with **Focus on Your Child, Adjust Your Communication, and Create Opportunities**, and then wait for your child to communicate. Next, you will prompt your child to use a skill that is slightly more complex than his or her first communication. For example, if your child says "Up," you might prompt him or her to say, "I want up." Once your child uses the more complex communication skill, you will reward him or her naturally—for example, by picking your child up. Table 5.1 in the parent manual suggests appropriate language you can prompt your child to use, based on your child's skills. Remember to prompt a more complex communication skill only about one-third of the time, to make sure your child doesn't get discouraged. The rest of the time, continue to respond to the child's spontaneous communication.

SLIDE 10

Discuss the different types of prompts parents can use as *Prompts for Using Communication*. As you go, give examples of how to use the different types to target communication skills that are relevant for the children in the group. You can also refer the parents to the table in the parent manual for more examples of each type of prompt. Emphasize that the goal is not for parents to use all of the prompts that you will discuss, but to pick the ones that work best for their child, given the communication skills the parents are trying to teach. Discuss the three-prompt rule again.

Sample Script

Now let's talk about which types of prompts you can use to help your child use a more complex communication skill. These prompts are listed in the slide from least supportive to most supportive.

▶ A time delay is the least supportive prompt. After your child communicates, wait with an expectant look for your child to use a more complex communication skill independently. For example, if your child says the word "Tickle," wait with an expectant look to help your child say, "Tickle me, Mommy," before tickling him or her. If your child does not use a more complex communication skill within 10 seconds, add more support, such as asking, "What do you want?" Because a time delay doesn't tell your child what communication skill to use, it is best to use it after your child has responded to a more supportive prompt several times, such as a question, choice, or language model.

▶ Ask your child a question to help your child communicate and expand his or her vocabulary. For example, while you are getting ready for bathtime, point to the faucet and

ask your child, “What do you want?” to help your child say, “Turn on water.” You can also help your child communicate about different aspects of an activity. For example, during a tickle game, you can ask: “Where do you want tickles?”, “Who do you want to tickle you?”, or “How many tickles do you want?” Be aware of your child’s skill level. “What,” “where,” and “who” questions are easier than “how,” “why,” or “when” questions.

▶ Begin a sentence, but leave off the last part to allow your child to fill in the missing words. For example, offer your child two different snacks and say, “I want . . . ,” to help your child tell you the snack he or she wants. To help your child key into the missing word, use gestures or visual cues. For example, place a baby doll in a bed, point to it and say, “The baby is in the . . . ,” and wait for your child to say “bed.” This prompt is useful for children who are more verbal but have difficulties finding the right word to say.

▶ Present your child with two choices to answer a question. For example, hold up a red and a blue shirt, and ask your child: “Do you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt?” If your child always repeats the second choice, give choices between something your child likes (say it first) and something your child doesn’t (say it second). If your child repeats the second item, give it to him or her, even though you know your child doesn’t want it. This helps your child learn to pay attention to your choice. If your child says the name of the unwanted object, make sure to provide more support so that your child is eventually able to get what he or she does want.

▶ Model a word or phrase you want your child to imitate. For example, when your child wants a car, hold one up and say the word “Car,” and wait for your child to repeat the word before giving it to him or her. This type of prompt is helpful for children who are just beginning to use verbal language. It is sometime easy to overuse this type of prompt with more verbal children, because they often respond immediately. If your child is consistently able to imitate your language, be sure to start with a less supportive prompt.

▶ Verbal routines are meaningful phrases your child has heard *many times*—for example, “Ready, set, go,” “Peek-a-boo,” or “One, two, three.” To use a verbal routine as a prompt, start the phrase, but leave off the last part and wait with anticipation. For example, “Ready, set, _____.” This type of prompt is helpful for children who are just beginning to use verbal language, because it is familiar, repetitive, and consistent.

▶ Demonstrate the gesture you want your child to use. Pair it with a spoken word, so that your child has the chance to learn the word as well. For example, when your child wants to leave an area, model waving, say “Bye-bye,” and wait for your child to imitate you. Or point to a toy your child wants, label it, and wait for your child to imitate the point. If your child does not imitate the gesture, use physical guidance to help him or her use the gesture.

▶ Physical guidance is the most supportive prompt. To use it, physically help your child complete a gesture. When your child is looking at a toy on the shelf, physically raise and shape your child’s hand to point to the toy. When your child wants to go outside, take your child’s hand and help him or her tap on the door. You should use physical guidance if your child does not respond to a gesture prompt.

▶ Remember, you want your child to be able to experience success by your third prompt. So you will start with the least supportive prompt you think your child can respond to successfully, and then increase support as necessary. For example, if your child is sometimes able to use a two-word phrase to ask for things when you ask the question “What do

you want?”, and your child is almost always able to use a two-word phrase when you use a language model, start with a question prompt; then follow up with a language model prompt if your child has difficulty. You also want to decrease your support over time. When your child is almost always able to use a two-word phrase when you ask, “What do you want?”, start using a time delay as your first prompt, and follow up by asking the question if your child is not successful.

SLIDE 11

Walk the parents through the slide’s example of how to use *Prompts for Using Communication*, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

Let’s see an example of what teaching with *Prompts for Using Communication* looks like. In this slide, Vivian’s mom is working to teach her to use a single word to request by using communication prompts and a reward. Vivian is having a snack. Her mother focuses on her by sitting face to face with Vivian and using simple language to talk about the food. She lets Vivian eat a few crackers, and then creates an opportunity by holding up the next cracker. Her mother then waits to see how Vivian will communicate. Vivian responds by reaching for the cracker. Her mother then prompts Vivian to use a single word by asking the question “What do you want?” When Vivian does not respond, her mother uses a more supportive prompt by modeling the word “Cracker” for Vivian to imitate. Vivian doesn’t respond, so her mother models the word “Cracker” again. This time Vivian responds with the syllable “Ca.” Her mother rewards this communication by giving Vivian the cracker and expands by saying “Cracker.” Notice how Vivian’s mom uses three prompts to help Vivian say “Cracker,” and does not reward her with the cracker until Vivian makes a good attempt by saying “Ca.”

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 12

Show video examples of each of the various types of *Prompts for Using Communication*. There are 12 examples of parents using specific prompts in isolation, and 3 clips of parents using multiple prompts together. The clips of the specific communication prompts are described in order from least to most supportive. They are short, and parents often benefit from viewing a clip more than once to fully understand the prompt-and-reward sequence. For some types of prompts, there are examples with children at different language stages, to illustrate how they can be used with children at different stages of language development. You may choose to show only one example per prompt or to focus on only some of the different types of prompts, depending on the communication skills of the children you are working with. After you have shown clips of the specific communication prompts, show the clips of adjusting support, to help the parents see how to use the prompts together by adding or decreasing support as needed. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Prompts for Using Communication* and to notice how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using the specific prompts we just discussed.

- ▶ *[Before showing each individual prompt clip]* Watch for how the parent uses each type of prompt to help the child use a more complex response, and how the parent rewards and expands on the child's response.
- ▶ *[After showing each individual prompt clip]* What did you notice during that interaction? What more complex skill did the parent prompt and how? How did the child respond when the parent prompted communication? How did the parent reward the child for using a more complex communication skill?

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using several prompts together to help their children use more complex communication.

- ▶ *[Before showing each prompt sequence clip]* Notice how the parent adds more or less support to help the child respond successfully and increase spontaneous skills.
- ▶ *[After showing each prompt sequence clip]* What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent increase support to help the child respond successfully? How did the parent use less supportive prompts over time to help the child use spontaneous skills?

Clip 21: Use a Time Delay, First Words

The mother uses a time delay to help her daughter use a sentence spontaneously. The mother creates an opportunity by giving the child a small portion of honey, and then waits for her to ask for more. The child says the word "Honey." The mom uses a time delay by waiting with an expectant look for the child to increase the complexity of her response. Her daughter responds by saying, "I want honey," spontaneously. The mother rewards her by giving her a spoonful of honey, and expands by saying "You want honey. Yum, yum, yum."

Clip 22: Use a Time Delay, Word Combinations

The mother uses a time delay to help her daughter increase the complexity of her spontaneous language during an art activity. The mother gives her daughter a choice of marker colors. The child responds by using a single word to request ("Pink"). The mother then uses a time delay by waiting with an expectant look. Her daughter responds by using a full sentence ("I want pink, please"). She rewards her daughter by giving her the pink crayon. The mother uses a time delay again after her daughter requests a marker by using a single word ("Green"). Again, this helps her daughter use a spontaneous sentence ("Mommy, I want green"). Notice how the mother creates multiple opportunities to prompt her child to use more complex communication by using small portions and letting her have only one crayon at a time.

Clip 23: Ask a Question, Preverbal

The mother uses a question to help her son increase the complexity of his communication during a tickle game. The mother tickles her son and then stops to create an opportunity for him to communicate. When he looks at her, his mother asks the question "What do we want?" to help him increase the complexity of his communication. He uses his gesture for "More," and she rewards him by tickling him and expands his communication by saying, "More tickles."

Clip 24: Ask a Question, First Words

The mother asks a question to help her daughter increase the complexity of her communication during snacktime. Her mother uses assistance to help her daughter initiate by presenting two snacks her daughter can't open. Her daughter initiates by touching the honey and saying "Gimme," but does not label the snack she wants. Her mother then asks her daughter the question "What do you want?" to help her use the label. The daughter responds with a label ("Honey"). The mother rewards her by giving her the honey and expands her response.

Clip 25: Use a Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence, First Words

The mother uses a fill-in-the-blank sentence to increase the complexity of her son's language. The mother controls access to the train to gain her son's attention. She then asks the question "Where are you going to drive your train?" When he is unable to respond, she adds more support by using a fill-in-the-blank sentence ("Jackson is going to drive his train _____"). He responds by saying the word "Road." She rewards him by letting him have the train and expands by saying, "On the road."

Clip 26: Use a Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence, Sentences

The father uses two fill-in-the-blank sentences to help his daughter increase the complexity of her language while playing with superhero figurines. The child places the superheroes on her lap and makes the comment "I'm sitting on our laps." Her father uses a fill-in-the-blank sentence, "They are sitting _____," to help his daughter use the correct pronoun. She responds by saying, "On my lap." She then makes another comment: "They sitting between me." The dad again uses a fill-in-the-blank phrase to help her use the correct pronoun by saying, "Between _____." She responds by using the correct pronoun: "Between my legs." He rewards her with praise.

Clip 27: Give a Choice, First Words

The mother uses a choice to help her daughter increase the complexity of her communication during snacktime. Her mother presents two snack choices that her daughter needs her assistance to open. Her daughter initiates by approaching the snack. Her mother then holds up each snack and asks: "Do you want chia or honey?" The child says the word "Honey," and the mom rewards her by giving her the honey and expands her language.

Clip 28: Give a Choice, Word Combinations

The mother gives a choice to help her daughter use more complex language while they are doing an art project together: "Should I use the purple or the pink one?" But the mother realizes that she does not have her daughter's attention. So she waits until the child has finished her task and then touches her to gain her attention. Once she has her daughter's attention, she gives her child the choice again. Her child responds by saying the word "Purple," and her mother rewards her by putting the purple button on the picture.

Clip 29: Model Language for Your Child to Imitate, First Words

The mother models language for her daughter to imitate during snacktime, to help her use more complex communication. The mother creates an opportunity by closing the lid of the honey jar so that her daughter needs assistance to open it. The child initiates by walking to the table and saying the word "Honey." Her mother then models a two-word combination for her daughter to imitate ("More honey"). Her daughter imitates the more complex language. Her mother then rewards her by giving her the honey and expands her communication.

Clip 30: Use a Verbal Routine, First Words

The mother uses a familiar verbal routine to help her son expand the complexity of his language. The mother joins in her child's play and uses *Playful Obstruction* to create an opportunity for him to communicate. He responds by imitating her words. She then uses a verbal routine to encourage him to use a word without a model by saying, "Ready, set, _____." He responds by filling in the word "go," and the mother rewards him by moving the train.

Clip 31: Model a Gesture for Your Child to Imitate, Preverbal

The mother models a gesture to increase the complexity of her son's communication during play. The mother creates an opportunity by placing a ball her son likes in a clear container that he cannot open (in sight and out of reach). Her son initiates by touching the lid. She models the word "Open." When he does not respond, she models the word "Open" along with a gesture for him to imitate (tapping the lid). He responds by using the gesture. His mother rewards him by opening the jar and letting him choose a toy. She also expands his communication by repeating the word "Open."

Clip 32: Use Physical Guidance, Preverbal

The mother uses physical guidance to help her son increase the complexity of his communication during play with bubbles. The mother uses a toy the child needs assistance with (bubbles) to create an opportunity for him to communicate. Her son responds by using his "More" sign. She then uses physical guidance to help her son point to the bubbles. She rewards his use of two gestures (the "More" sign and the point) by blowing the bubbles, and expands his communication by saying, "More bubbles."

Clip 33: Adjust Support, Preverbal

The mother uses several different types of prompts, with varying levels of support, to encourage her child to use more complex communication during a game of tickles. The mother focuses on her child and adjusts her communication by staying face to face and using animation and simple language. She creates an opportunity by pausing the tickle game; she asks the question "You want tickles?" and waits with an expectant look. Her son responds by pulling the mother's hands to him. She responds to this simple gesture by tickling him. She pauses again. This time, she models the child's sign for "More," which he imitates, and she rewards him with more tickles. The next time she pauses, she asks, "What do we want?" Her child then uses his sign for "More" without a gesture model. Notice how the mother rewards her son each time he uses a gesture to communicate. She also decreases the amount of support across the interaction to help him use a more complex gesture (the "More" sign) spontaneously.

Clip 34: Adjust Support, First Words

The mother uses several different types of prompts, decreasing support across an interaction, to help her child use a single word spontaneously during a tickle game. The mother gains her daughter's attention by pausing during a tickle game. She then prompts her daughter to communicate by modeling the phrase "More tickle." Her daughter doesn't respond, so she uses a fill-in-the-blank sentence: "I want _____." Her daughter responds with the single word "Tickle," and her mother rewards this attempt by tickling her and expands by saying, "More tickle." At the next opportunity, the mother uses the fill-in-the-blank sentence again, and her daughter again uses the single word "Tickle." At the next opportunity, her mother asks, "Do you want more tickle?" and her daughter imitates the two-word combination "More tickle." Her mother uses another fill-in-the-blank to help her daughter say "Tickle." After her mother has modeled and prompted the word "Tickle" multiple times, she uses a time delay with an expectant look, and her daughter uses the word "Tickle" spontaneously. Notice how

the mother is able to prompt her daughter to use language multiple times during this highly motivating activity. She also makes sure to reward her daughter each time she uses the prompted language.

Clip 35: Adjust Support, Sentences

The mother adds support to help her child use more complex communication successfully. The mother encourages her son to initiate by holding up (and thus controlling access to) a figurine (girl) that he wants. After her son initiates with a reach, she prompts him to use more complex language by asking the question “What do you want, Isaac?” Initially, he imitates her question, and she needs to ask the question again. He then responds by saying, “I wanna get more.” She then adds support to help him use more specific language (label) by saying, “More what?” When he struggles to use the correct label, she provides her son with more support by giving a choice (“Animals or girl?”). He responds correctly by saying the word “Girl.” Once he uses the label, she immediately rewards him with access to the toy.

SLIDE 13

Have the parents discuss how they could teach their child to use communication, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 5 of the parent manual for examples of using *Prompts for Using Communication* during various activities. The end of this discussion is usually a good point in the presentation to take a break.

Sample Script

Now let’s discuss how you could use *Prompts for Using Communication*.

- ▶ Take a moment to think about some motivating activities that would work well for prompting your child to use communication. Remember, these should be activities that your child likes and ones where you can control the materials, so that you can use prompts and rewards.
- ▶ Then think about what new communication skill you can prompt your child to use in one of these activities. Remember, you are going to prompt your child to use a communication skill that is only slightly more complex than his or her current skills.
- ▶ Then think about what three prompts you can use to help your child use the new communication skill.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let’s talk about it.

Take a Break

Introduce Prompts for Understanding Communication

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 14

Introduce the rationale for *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific communication goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of

the children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Many children with social communication challenges have difficulty attending to and understanding other people's language. This can make it hard for them to follow directions.

- ▶ You can use *Prompts for Understanding Communication* to teach your child to follow your directions, as well as to understand new words, phrases, or language concepts.
- ▶ *Prompts for Understanding Communication* are helpful to use during familiar daily routines, because your child already has an idea of the steps involved in the activity. It is also helpful when being able to follow directions is a goal for your child.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 15

Discuss the sequence for using *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, as well as appropriate skills to prompt. As you go, remind parents of relevant key elements of *Prompts and Rewards*. Provide specific examples of receptive language and directions that parents can prompt, based on your knowledge of the favorite activities and communication skills of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how to use *Prompts for Understanding Communication*.

- ▶ When teaching your child to understand communication, you will usually begin with **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** to make sure your child is motivated, and then use a **Create Opportunities** technique to gain his or her attention. Once you have your child's attention, prompt your child to follow a direction. After your child follows your direction, praise your child by stating what he or she did right, and immediately give the reward of letting your child do the activity he or she wants, even if you had to help. This will make it more likely that your child will understand and follow your directions again.
- ▶ Be aware of your child's language level. If your child has difficulty following multistep directions, only prompt your child to follow a one-step direction at a time. For example, instead of saying, "Get your shoes and coat and let's go," say, "Get your shoes." Once your child responds, give the second step of the direction: "Get your coat." If your child has difficulty responding, add more support by repeating the verbal instruction or using a more supportive prompt. Remember the three-prompt rule! Make sure you help your child to be successful by the third prompt.
- ▶ Sometimes your child needs to follow your directions during routines or activities the child doesn't choose, such as toothbrushing or putting away toys. In these daily routines, you may not be able to start by focusing on your child and may not be able to use a natural reward. Instead, begin by creating an opportunity to gain your child's attention, and then give the direction. You may need to give an extra reward, such as a favorite toy, activity, or treat, for following your direction. Your coach can help you decide when to use extra rewards.

SLIDE 16

Discuss the different types of prompts parents can use as *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. As you go, give examples of how to use the different prompts to target communication skills that are relevant for the children in the group. You can also refer the parents to the tables in Chapter 5 of the parent manual for more examples of each of these prompts. Emphasize the three-prompt rule here again, and remind parents about the importance of following through after giving a direction, even if it involves using physical guidance.

Sample Script

Now let's talk about the types of prompts you can use as *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. These prompts are listed on the slide from least to most supportive.

- ▶ You will usually start with a simple verbal instruction that tells your child exactly what to do. Be sure that you don't ask a question when you mean to give an instruction. For example, say, "Bring me your shoes," instead of "Can you bring me your shoes?"
- ▶ Pairing a gesture with the verbal instruction can help your child attend to the verbal instruction and provide a cue for how to respond. For example, point to or hold up an item, or pantomime an action. If your child has difficulty understanding verbal language, start by pairing the verbal instruction with a gesture prompt.
- ▶ Modeling the action adds a little more support by showing your child what to do. This prompt is helpful for children who can imitate but have difficulty understanding verbal language. For example, if your child does not follow the direction "Get your shoes" after you give a verbal instruction and point to the shoes, model the action by walking over, getting the shoes, and bringing them to your child. Then put them back and give the same verbal instruction: "Get your shoes."
- ▶ Physical guidance is the most supportive prompt. If your child is not able to follow the direction when you show him or her what to do, physically guide your child to respond to your direction. For example, after the verbal instruction "Get your shoes," take your child's hand, bring your child to the shoes, and help him or her pick them up.
- ▶ Remember, you want your child to be able to experience success by your third prompt. So start with the least supportive prompt you think your child can respond to successfully, and then increase support as necessary. Over time, use less supportive prompts, so that your child can learn to follow your directions without help.

SLIDE 17

Walk the parents through the slide's example of how to use *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

Let's see an example of what it looks like to teach your child to understand communication. James's dad is teaching James to understand and follow a one-step direction, "Give me _____," during a familiar routine. James's dad focuses on him by joining him during breakfast and getting face to face. He creates an opportunity by showing James the milk and waits to get James' attention. After James looks at his dad, his dad gives a clear

verbal instruction by saying, “Give me your cup,” to help him follow a one-step direction. When James doesn’t respond, his dad repeats the direction and uses a gesture prompt by pointing to the cup. James doesn’t respond, so his dad then uses physical guidance to help James pick up the cup and give it to him. His dad then rewards James by pouring the milk into the cup and handing it to him.

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 18

Show video examples of *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. There are three examples of parents teaching their child to understand communication and follow directions in play and daily routines. Different sets of prompts are illustrated in the various clips, ranging from using single-step verbal instructions (Preverbal), to providing a model and gesture prompt to support the instruction (First Words), to proceeding from a gestural prompt to physical guidance (Word Combinations). If you do not have time to show all of the clips, choose the clips that are most appropriate, given your knowledge of the children in the group. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Prompts for Understanding Communication* and to notice how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using the specific *Prompts for Understanding Communication*.

- ▶ [Before showing each clip] Watch for how the parent uses prompts to help the child respond to the direction and how the parent rewards the child’s response.
- ▶ [After showing each clip] What did you notice during that interaction? What prompts did the parent use? How did the parent reward the child for following the direction?

Clip 36: Understanding Communication, Preverbal

The mother helps her son understand and follow one-step directions during a familiar routine (snack-time). The mother gains her son’s attention by saying his name and showing him the crackers. She then gives him the verbal instruction “Come get your plate,” paired with a gesture (pointing to the cabinet). She then adds support by giving him the first step (“Open”) paired with a gesture (pointing to the cabinet). She then gives one-step directions (“Get your plate,” “Take it to the table,” “Set it down”), waiting for him to complete each step before giving the next instruction. Her son responds by following each direction. She rewards him by giving him the crackers at the table.

Clip 37: Understanding Communication, First Words

The mother uses prompts to help her son follow a direction during play with trains. She begins by giving a clear verbal instruction: “Go feed your train.” When he doesn’t respond, she adds support by modeling the action with her train, and then gives the verbal instruction again with a gesture prompt (pointing to the “food”). Her son responds by following her direction, and she rewards him by letting him play with the train the way he wants.

Clip 38: Understanding Communication, Word Combinations

The mother uses increasingly supportive prompts to help her daughter follow a direction during an art activity. The mother begins the interaction by getting face to face, joining in her daughter's play, and making comments. The mother then gives this verbal instruction: "Go get me a circle." When her daughter has difficulty responding, she repeats the instruction, and then adds a gesture prompt by pointing to the circle. When her daughter does not respond, she uses physical guidance and brings her to the circle. She then repeats the instruction with a gesture prompt. Once her daughter follows the direction, the mom rewards her by letting her play the way she wants.

SLIDE 19

Have the parents discuss how they could use *Prompts for Understanding Communication* with their child, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help each parent think through how this technique would work best for her child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 5 of the parent manual for examples of using *Prompts for Understanding Communication* during various routines.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how you could use *Prompts for Understanding Communication* with your child.

- ▶ Take a moment to think about a direction you might be able to give during familiar daily routines.
- ▶ How can you reward your child for following this direction? Remember, it helps if the reward is natural.
- ▶ Finally, what three prompts can you use to help your child follow your direction?
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Plan for Practice and Coaching

SLIDE 20

Have the parents develop a plan for how they will practice over the week. It is extremely important that the parents have time to complete their Practice Plans during the group session. At a minimum, the parents should complete the goals, activities, and sequence graphics in their Practice Plans before they leave. If you are running short on time, you may need to shorten the group discussion. Give the parents several minutes to write the following down on their Practice Plans: (1) one or two goals they would like to target, and (2) a play activity and a daily routine in which to practice. Next, have the parents write down a positive example of how they will use one of the techniques to address their child's goal during a selected activity, using the sequence graphic. You may want to ask one of the parents to complete the sequence graphic with you in front of the group as an example. If you have time, have the parents discuss their Practice Plans with each other, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. After the parents have completed their Practice Plans, ask them to think about what might be hard about using the techniques at home. Depending on time, you can have them discuss possible solutions, again either in pairs or as a full group. Common challenges and potential solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 8 (page 376).

Sample Script

I would like each of you to think of one to two goals that you will target this week. These goals should be related to increasing your child’s use and/or understanding of communication, such as using a gesture, word, phrase or sentence to request something or follow a direction. Write your goals on your Practice Plan. Next, think about a play activity and a daily routine during which you can practice these techniques. Remember that you will need to add several minutes to your daily routines in order to have time to use the techniques. Once you decide on the activities, write them down on your Practice Plan. Next, think about the techniques that we talked about today for **Teach New Communication Skills**. These include *Prompts and Rewards*, *Prompts for Using Communication*, and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. Choose the techniques that you will use to help your child use more complex communication skills, including the specific prompts, and write these down on the sequence graphic in the Practice Plan. You should plan to practice these strategies for 15–20 minutes per day during play as well as during one or two daily activities. Also, think about what may be hard about carrying out your Practice Plan, and brainstorm possible solutions.

SLIDE 21

Remind the parents to read the first three sections in Chapter 5 of the parent manual and to practice over the next week. Let them know what to expect during their individual coaching sessions.

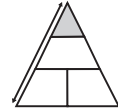
Sample Script

Next week, each of you will have an individual coaching session.

- ▶ Please be sure to read the first three sections in Chapter 5 of the parent manual—*Prompts and Rewards*, *Prompts for Using Communication*, and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*—if you haven’t already. These sections cover what we learned in group today.
- ▶ Over the next week, I would like you to try out your Practice Plan at home and write down how it went in the “Reflection” box of your Practice Plan form. You will discuss your Practice Plan during your coaching session. So please come with any questions you have about *Prompts and Rewards*, *Prompts for Using Communication*, or *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. You will also have the opportunity to get individual feedback and support as you work with your child. Come ready to practice!

SESSION 8

Review of Teach New Communication Skills (Coaching)



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Teach her child to use new gestures and verbal language skills.
- Teach her child to follow directions.

- Items for daily routines, such as clothes, dishes, and meal preparation
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Teach New Communication Skills** (Form 16)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create opportunities



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review **Teach New Communication Skills**.
- Demonstrate **Teach New Communication Skills**.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check in and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the group session, and take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will have the opportunity to practice using prompts and rewards to teach her child new communication skills while you provide her with support and feedback. This strategy set can increase her child's use of expressive communication skills (including both gestures and verbal language), and can also help her child understand and follow directions.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there additional topics you would like to cover?" Adjust the session agenda if necessary to address the parent's concerns.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the Written Plan from the Group Session

Have the parent talk you through how she used prompts and rewards to help her child to use more complex communication at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Challenges

Common challenges and possible solutions for **Teach New Communication Skills** are in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 376). These challenges are often intensified at home, because the child may not be used to the parent's requiring a more complex response from the child.

If the parent is unable to use **Create Opportunities** effectively, you will need to provide further coaching on this strategy set before the parent can successfully use **Teach New Communication Skills**.

Review Teach New Communication Skills

Briefly Review the Rationale and Key Elements

Using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the parent manual, explain how **Teach New Communication Skills** is used with the previous strategies the parent has learned. Highlight the key elements of *Prompts and Rewards* that are most important for the parent to be able to use correctly, as well as the specific language prompts that are likely to be most effective for the child. You can write down the key elements that the parent should attend to on the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Teach New Communication Skills** (Form 16) for the parent to take home.

We recommend focusing on *Prompts for Using Communication*. However, if the parent is already quite successful at using prompts to teach expressive communication, if the child already has well-developed expressive language, or if following directions is an important goal, you may wish to spend a portion of this session focusing on *Prompts for Understanding Communication*.

Ask the parent: "Which communication goal would you like to try teaching today?" Help the parent identify an appropriate communication goal that she would like to target, and review the specific prompts that are appropriate for the child's communication goal and abilities.

Explain the Steps of the Technique(s)

After the parent selects the technique(s) she would like to practice, use the sequence graphic in the parent manual to describe how to address the child's communication goal. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate **Teach New Communication Skills**

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Describe which type of prompt that you will begin with to elicit the more complex communication skill, and how you will add support if the child does not respond. Ask the parent to watch for the prompts you use and to notice how the child responds. You might say something like this:

“I am going to ask questions to increase Sam’s ability to use verbs. If he does not respond, I will use a fill-in-the-blank sentence and then a choice.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate **Teach New Communication Skills** with the child, point out the type(s) of prompts you use, describe how you add support, and note the child’s response:

“Sam is playing with the ball. I am going to use *Playful Obstruction* to gain access to the ball and wait to see how he communicates. . . . He said the word ‘Ball.’ I’m going to ask a question to prompt him to use more complex language. (*Coach asks Sam: ‘What should I do with the ball?’*) He said the word ‘Ball’ again, so I am going to add support by using a choice. (*Coach asks Sam: ‘Throw ball or hide ball?’*) He used a more complex response by saying, ‘Throw ball,’ so I am going to reward him by throwing the ball and expand on his response. (*Coach says, ‘Throw the red ball.’*)”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What type of prompts helped Sam respond?”
 “How did I reward him after he used the new skill?”



If the parent has chosen to practice both *Prompts for Using Communication* and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, demonstrate them one at a time, and allow the parent to practice in between.

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Have the parent practice **Teach New Communication Skills** with her child during a range of activities, to help her understand how to use prompts in different situations. If you are coaching in the home, you should have the parent practice using the techniques during a variety of caregiving routines. If you are coaching in a clinic setting, practice could include play with toys, a snack, or putting on the child’s jacket and shoes at the end of the session. Remind the parent of the specific prompts she should practice using for the activity:

“Use questions to increase Sam’s use of verbs. If he doesn’t respond, use a fill-in-the-blank sentence, and then provide him with a choice.”

Manage the Physical Environment

Hand the parent materials as needed (e.g., a puppet or toy to block play, specific toys that work well for turn taking, or materials that require assistance). Remove distracting items from the environment.

Provide Feedback

Give feedback on the parent’s use of **Teach New Communication Skills** and the child’s response. In particular, give feedback to help the parent use the appropriate prompt and to add or decrease support as needed. Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges that arise when a parent is practicing **Teach New Communication Skills** can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 376).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the in-session practice. Use this time to answer questions she has and to clarify any key elements of *teach new communication skills*. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How does it feel to prompt your child to use more complex language skills?”

“Can you imagine using these prompts at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“What types of prompts were most successful for helping your child respond? Was it difficult to use these types of prompts?”

Help the Parent Select Goals And Activities

Use the Child’s Goals from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record her selections on the Practice Plan. If the parent plans to practice both *Prompts for Using Communication* and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, she should complete a separate Practice Plan for each.

Good child goals for this unit include using gestures (point, tap, or sign) or verbal language (e.g., single words, word combinations, or sentences) to request, give instructions, or share information; responding to “what,” “where,” and “who” questions; or following one- or two-step directions in play and familiar daily routines (e.g., “Feed the baby,” “Pull up your pants”).

Good activities for this unit are ones that the child enjoys. At this point in the program, try to identify three different activities to help the parent learn to use the strategies across settings. The

Try This at Home! tables in the parent manual (pages 78 and 82 there) have examples of how to use **Teach New Communication Skills** during various activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of **Teach New Communication Skills** during an activity she has selected. Have her write down the key elements in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent which **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** strategies she will use to make sure that her child is motivated before she prompts.

Next, help the parent identify the technique she will use to create an opportunity for the child to communicate or gain his attention. Ask her what she thinks her child's response will be.

Ask the parent what more complex communication skill she will prompt her child to use, and which three prompts she will use to help her child respond. Have her write the three prompts down in the numbered "Prompt" boxes on the Practice Plan.

Then ask the parent how she will reward and expand on her child's response. Remind her that she should reward her child even if his response was not the exact skill she was anticipating, as long as it was appropriate and more complex than his initial communication. Let her know that she can write down how her child responds next to the child icon on the Practice Plan.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about practicing **Teach New Communication Skills** at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table (page 376).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Remind the parent to practice for 15–20 minutes each day at home, and to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next group session. Have the parent read the last two sections in Chapter 5 of the parent manual (*Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play*) before the next group session.



Troubleshooting Tips for Teach New Communication Skills

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty identifying good times to prompt

- Demonstrate a **Create Opportunities** technique with the child, and ask the parent to tell you when and what you should prompt.
- Have her practice a **Create Opportunities** technique, and note when the child initiates or she gains the child's attention.
- Look at the Daily Activity Schedule with her to identify activities the child enjoys. Suggest specific child behaviors to watch for that indicate high motivation (positive affect, reaching, eye contact, etc.).

Is hesitant to prompt or withhold rewards

- Let her know that it's common for children to become frustrated when adults "change the rules," and that this is OK. With time, her child will become accustomed to higher expectations, and his frustration will decrease.

Has difficulty helping her child initiate or gaining her child's attention before prompting or giving a direction

- Suggest a specific **Create Opportunities** strategy and one prompt that will likely elicit the child's response. Once the parent is comfortable, then coach her on how to add more or less support.

Prompts for unrelated skills

- Ask her to observe how her child plays for a few minutes before prompting language.
- Suggest specific skills she can prompt.
- Ask her: "What three skills are related to your child's activity?"
- Suggest that she prompt the communication skills she has been modeling.

Prompts communication skills that are too complex

- Remind her of the communication skill she is looking for before she prompts, and cue her when the child has given that response.
- Ask her: "What communication skill is one step more complex than what your child does on his own?"

Does not use clear prompts

- Suggest a specific prompt to use.
- Model a simple prompt for her to use.

Provides more supportive prompts too quickly

- Suggest that she count to 5 in her head before she uses a more supportive prompt.

Does not provide enough support to help the child use the more complex communication skill or follow the direction

- Cue her when to add more support.
- Give her three specific prompts to use.

<i>If the parent . . .</i>	<i>You can . . .</i>
Prompts too frequently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind her to respond to her child's spontaneous communication. • Suggest that she prompt for a more complex communication skill after only every third initiation. • Give her a concrete amount of time to wait before prompting a new skill (e.g., only prompt every 1–2 minutes).
Does not require a more complex response before giving the reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind her to follow through with the prompt, even if the child protests. • Let her know that it is OK if the child gets a little frustrated. • Ask her: "What communication skills are you looking for?"
Does not provide the reward immediately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cue the parent when to reward her child. • Suggest the parent give the child the reward within a concrete amount of time (e.g., 1 second). • Have the parent practice with you.
Inadvertently rewards inappropriate behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the parent to describe behaviors she wants to avoid rewarding. • Cue her when her child uses inappropriate behavior.
<i>If the child . . .</i>	<i>You can . . .</i>
Gets frustrated when the parent prompts communication or gives a direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge that this is common and that children usually become less frustrated as they learn the new expectations. • Suggest that the parent start with a prompt her child can respond to successfully. Once the routine is set, cue her to decrease support every third time. • Remind her to go back to Focus on Your Child to get engagement. • Suggest that she prompt for a more complex communication skill after only every third initiation. • Teach the parent to use an extra reward (something the child likes that is not related to the task) after the child follows the direction.
Resists physical guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach the parent to be quick and matter-of-fact in following through with physical guidance. • Model physical guidance with the child for the parent to observe. • Have the parent practice, with you pretending to be the child.

UNIT 5

Teach New Imitation and Play Skills

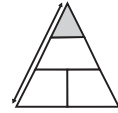
The purpose of this unit is to teach the parents to **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**. **Teach New Skills** (which combines **Teach New Communication Skills**, the topic of Unit 4, and **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**) is the **T** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. This strategy set uses prompts and rewards to teach the child to imitate new play actions and gestures and to expand the complexity and variety of the child play skills.

- During the group session, you will begin by reviewing the parents' Practice Plans for **Teach New Communication Skills**. You will then use the slides and video clips to introduce **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**, and the specific *Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play*. At the end of the group, you will help the parents complete a Practice Plan to carry out before the individual coaching session. As usual, a guide to the elements for each video clip is included in the slide notes.
- During the coaching session, you will begin by reviewing the parent's Practice Plan from the group session. You will then briefly review, demonstrate, and have the parent practice **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** while you provide feedback. Given the limited amount of coaching time, we recommend focusing on either *Prompts for Imitation* or *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Encourage the parent to identify the goal she would like to target, and to focus on those prompts that are best suited for the child's goal and abilities. You will end the session by asking the parent to complete the reflection and read Chapter 6, **Shape the Interaction**, and Chapter 7, **Moving Forward**, in the parent manual before the next group session.



SESSION 9

Teach New Imitation and Play Skills (Group)



Session Goals

Help the parents:

- Teach their child to imitate play actions or gestures.
- Increase the complexity and variety of their child's play.

- Review **Teach New Skills** (Slide 4).
- Introduce *Prompts for Imitation* (Slides 5–11).
- Take a break.
- Introduce *Prompts for Expanding Play* (Slides 12–17).
- Plan for practice and coaching (Slides 18–19).



Materials

- Slides/video clips
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34; multiple copies)
- Whiteboard or large sheets of paper
- Group guidelines
- Play Action Ideas (Form 13; multiple copies)
- Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7)



Key Elements: *Prompts for Imitation*

- Model an action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda (Slides 1–2).
- Review the Practice Plans (Slide 3).



Key Elements: *Prompts for Expanding Play*

- Make a leading comment.
- Ask a question.
- Give a choice.
- Use a verbal instruction.
- Model an action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Check In and Set the Agenda

SLIDE 1

Warmly greet the parents as they enter, and give them a few minutes to check in with each other before getting started. Then briefly introduce the topic for the day's group.

Sample Script

Welcome back! In our previous group session, we learned how to use prompts and rewards to **Teach New Communication Skills**—the first part of **Teach New Skills**, the T of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. This week we are going to talk about how you can use prompts and rewards to **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**. This is the second part of **Teach New Skills**.

SLIDE 2

Briefly go over the session agenda, to provide information on the goals and structure of the session. If you need to make adjustments to this agenda for the sake of time, explain this to the parents.

Sample Script

- ▶ We'll be starting off by reviewing your Practice Plans from the past week.
- ▶ Then we'll discuss two new sets of prompts you can use: one set to teach your child to imitate you during play, and another set to expand your child's play skills. For each set of prompts, we'll talk through what skills it can teach, discuss how to use it, and watch some video examples. Then we'll have a brief discussion of how you can use these strategies with your child.
- ▶ At the end, we'll plan how you can practice teaching specific imitation or play skills to your child over the next week.

Review the Practice Plans

SLIDE 3

Use a whiteboard to draw three columns labeled “What Went Well?”, “What Was Hard?”, and “Possible Solutions.” Ask the parents to report what technique they practiced and how their child responded. As each parent reports, briefly write down the information on the whiteboard in the appropriate columns. Help the parents identify commonalities across their experiences. After each parent has reported, identify one or more common challenges that the parents experienced. Ask questions and give suggestions to help them find potential solutions as a group. Write the best potential solutions in the “Possible Solutions” column next to the specific challenges in the “What Was Hard?” column. Common challenges and possible solutions relevant for this topic are described in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 8 (page 376).

Sample Script

Let's talk about how **Teach New Communication Skills** has gone at home. In the past week, each of you should have had an individual coaching session where you worked with your coach to practice **Teach New Communication Skills**. The coach should have modeled the techniques and supported you in practicing and thinking through how to use them at home.

- ▶ Let's go around and have everyone briefly share how practice at home has gone. What I am looking for specifically is what you practiced, what went well when you practiced with your child, and maybe one thing that was challenging.
- ▶ [*After all parents report on their practice*] Now let's think about some possible solutions for those challenges.

Review Teach New Skills

SLIDE 4

Review the **Teach New Skills** strategy set and explain how it relates to the previous strategies the parents have learned, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the sequence graphic. Emphasize the importance of only teaching new skills every 1–2 minutes as a way to strike a balance between having fun and teaching new skills. Between prompts, parents can go back to **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

Sample Script

▶ Today we will be discussing the second part of **Teach New Skills** at the top of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid: how to use prompts and rewards to teach your child new imitation and play skills. Remember that you only want to prompt a new play skill about one-third of the time. The rest of the time, you will continue to follow your child's lead in play and respond logically to your child's spontaneous actions.

▶ You will begin the interaction the same way you have already learned, by focusing on your child. When teaching imitation during play, you will use *Imitate Your Child* to set up a back-and-forth imitation game. When expanding play, you can join your child's play in other ways, such as handing your child needed materials or adding to the play. Then you will create an opportunity, using *Playful Obstruction* or *Balanced Turns*, to help your child pay attention to you. Once you have your child's attention, you will prompt your child to imitate you or use a new play skill. After your child imitates you or uses the new play skill, you will provide a reward by letting your child play the way he or she wants and using *Imitate Your Child* or *Follow Your Child's Lead* again. You can also expand your child's play by modeling a new play action.

Introduce *Prompts for Imitation*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 5

Introduce the rationale for using *Prompts for Imitation*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific imitation goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Children use imitation to learn new skills, such as how to play with a new toy, perform a new task, use new words, and communicate their interest in others. Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty learning new skills by watching others and imitating their behavior. You can use prompts and rewards to teach your child to imitate your actions and gestures during play.

▶ This strategy can improve your child's imitation skills. It can also help your child connect with you and learn new ways to play and gesture through imitation.

▶ Teaching imitation during play is most helpful when you have two of the same or similar toys, so that you and your child can imitate each other at the same time. Some toys work better than others for teaching object imitation and gesture imitation. It is also much easier to model actions for your child to imitate when you use toys that can be used in a number of different, creative ways.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 6

Discuss the sequence for using *Prompts for Imitation*, and give examples of good play actions and gestures that are appropriate for the children in the group. Emphasize that the goal is not to teach specific

play skills at this point, but rather to encourage the child to imitate the parent's behavior spontaneously.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss some key aspects of *Prompts for Imitation*.

- ▶ You can teach your child to imitate play actions and gestures by engaging your child in a back-and-forth social game, where you and your child take turns imitating each other during play. Start with *Imitate Your Child*. When it is your turn, use *Playful Obstruction* or *Balanced Turns* to help your child pay attention to you. Then model an action related to the play for your child to imitate, along with simple language that describes what you are doing. This helps your child pay attention to your model. For example, if your child has been pushing a car, when it is your turn, model putting a man in the car and say, "Man in." As soon as your child imitates you, give a reward of praise and let your child play the way he or she likes, even if you had to use a physical prompt. It is more important for your child to match your actions in general than to perform a specific action exactly, so be sure to reward any attempt at imitation even if it is not perfect. Remember to model an action for your child to imitate only about one-third of the time, to make sure your child doesn't get discouraged. The rest of the time, continue to imitate your child's play.

- ▶ At this point, don't worry about teaching specific play skills. Instead, model fun actions your child is likely to want to imitate. If your child has a lot of difficulty imitating, start by modeling familiar actions, even if they are unusual. For example, if your child only plays with cars by spinning their wheels or lining them up, model spinning the wheels when your child is lining up cars.

- ▶ You can also model gestures that are related to your child's play. For example, if your child is pushing the car, pantomime driving a car and say "Vroom." Tables 5.4 and 5.5 in the parent manual suggest appropriate play actions and gestures you can model for your child to imitate, based on your child's current play skills.

SLIDE 7

Discuss the two different types of *Prompts for Imitation*. Emphasize that parents are trying to increase their child's ability to match their behavior, rather than to follow a verbal direction. So to add support, they will repeat the model of the action or gesture, rather than use a verbal prompt. Emphasize the three-prompt rule here again.

Sample Script

- ▶ You will use two different types of prompts to help your child imitate. Since you are trying to encourage your child to match your behavior, you will repeat the model as a prompt, rather than use a verbal instruction. Once you model the new action, wait to give your child a chance to imitate the action independently. If your child doesn't imitate after about 5 seconds, add more support by modeling the same action with the same simple language again. You can do this twice. Wait after each model to see if your child imitates you. Keep the verbal model the same each time the action is modeled.

- ▶ If your child does not imitate your action after the second model prompt, physically guide your child to imitate the action.

SLIDE 8

Walk the parents through the slide's example of how to use prompts and rewards to teach object imitation, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

Let's see an example of what using *Prompts for Imitation* to teach a play action with an object looks like. In this slide, Jordan is playing with a Slinky by shaking it up and down. His mom focuses on her child and adjusts her communication by sitting face to face and imitating his play with another Slinky. After a few minutes, Jordan's mom creates an opportunity by playfully blocking his play with the Slinky. When she has Jordan's attention, she says, "Ball in," and models dropping a ball down the Slinky. She waits for Jordan to respond by imitating her with his Slinky. When he doesn't, she models the action and says, "Ball in," again and waits. When he does not respond, she models the action one more time. Jordan still doesn't respond, so she uses physical guidance to prompt him to imitate. After he does, she rewards him by saying, "Great job, ball in!" and imitates his play some more.

SLIDE 9

Walk the parents through the example of how to use prompts and rewards to teach gesture imitation, using the sequence graphic. Again, this is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this technique.

Sample Script

This slide shows how Jordan's mom teaches him to imitate a gesture during play. She says, "Ball in," and models a gesture (pointing into the Slinky), then drops her ball in. When Jordan doesn't respond after two more models, his mom uses physical guidance to prompt him to point into the Slinky. Notice that she is prompting only one skill at a time by focusing on having Jordan imitate her gesture and not the play action. Once he imitates the gesture, she says, "Great job, ball in!" and imitates his play some more.

Show Video Clips and Discuss**SLIDE 10**

Show video examples of *Prompts for Imitation*. There are three examples of parents using prompts to teach their child to imitate during play. The first two clips show parents teaching object imitation, and the third clip shows a parent teaching gesture imitation. Different sets of prompts are illustrated in the various clips, ranging from modeling the action only to modeling the action followed by physical guidance. You may choose to show a subset of the clips, based on the skills and goals of the children you are working with. You may also choose to show the object imitation examples when you discuss modeling an action for your child to imitate and physical guidance as *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of prompts for imitation and how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using the specific prompts we just discussed.

- ▶ *[Before showing each clip]* Watch for how the parent uses prompts to help the child imitate her and how the parent rewards and expands on the child's response.
- ▶ *[After showing each clip]* What did you notice during that interaction? How did the parent teach imitation? How did the child respond when the parent prompted imitation? How did the parent reward the child for imitating?

Clip 39: Object Imitation, Preverbal

The mother helps her son imitate an action with an object during play with the magic sand. She models putting the cooking cutter in the sand and uses simple descriptive language to describe the action ("One, two, three, smooosh"). Her son does not respond, so she models the play action again with the same descriptive language. When he doesn't respond after her third model, she uses physical guidance to help him imitate her action. She rewards him with praise and lets him play with the sand the way he wants.

Clip 40: Object Imitation, First Words

The mother helps her child imitate actions with objects during play with beads. She shows her daughter a net, and then models scooping the beads with another net and says, "Catch the beads." Her daughter imitates her language ("Beads"), but does not imitate her play action. So she models the action again with the same verbal description. When her daughter doesn't respond, she models the action again with the same verbal description several more times. Eventually her daughter imitates her play action along with her language ("Catch the beads"). Her mother rewards her with praise, letting her play the ways she wants, and begins to imitate her daughter's play. At the next opportunity, the mother models washing the beads in a toy sink. This time her daughter imitates her play after the second model. Again, her mother rewards her with praise and goes back to imitating her daughter's play. Notice how the mother alternates between imitating her daughter and modeling actions for her daughter to imitate. In this way, she teaches her daughter to imitate in a back-and-forth social imitation game.

Clip 41: Gesture Imitation, Sentences

The father teaches his daughter to imitate gestures while reading a book. He follows his daughter's lead by reading her a favorite book. He then models a gesture for his child to imitate that is related to the content of the book (moving feet), along with the corresponding line from the book, "Meuven los pies" ("Move their feet"). When she doesn't respond, he models the action again with the same line from the book. She still doesn't respond, so he increases support by asking her, "Where are your 'pies' [feet]?" This cues her to imitate his gesture. He rewards her with praise, positive affect, and continuing to read the book. At the next opportunity, he models the action of jumping after reading the corresponding line from the book. This time, the child imitates the father's action right away.

SLIDE 11

Have the parents discuss how they could teach their child to imitate play actions and gestures, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help them think through how this technique would work best for their child. You can refer the parents to

the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 5 of the parent manual for examples of using *Prompts for Imitation* during various activities. You may want to pass out copies of the Play Action Ideas form (Form 13) for them to write down the different play actions they identify for their child's favorite toys. The end of this discussion is usually a good point in the presentation to take a break.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how you could use *Prompts for Imitation*.

- ▶ Take a moment to think about some motivating activities that would work well for teaching your child to imitate. What new play actions can you model with your child's favorite toys or other materials? Remember, you want to model fun actions your child is likely to want to imitate, rather than focusing on specific play skills.
- ▶ Also, what gestures can you model that relate to your child's play or other actions? These gestures can express emotions, describe objects and attributes, or demonstrate actions.
- ▶ You can write your ideas down for two of your child's favorite toys on the Play Action Ideas form to remind yourself at home.
- ▶ [After a few minutes] Now let's talk about it.

Take a Break

Introduce *Prompts for Expanding Play*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 12

Introduce the rationale for *Prompts for Expanding Play*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific play goals it can be used to address, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Children with social communication challenges often have difficulty coming up with new ideas for how to play, and may play with toys in unusual or repetitive ways. Play skills are very important for language and social development. Play is an excellent place to work on problem solving and imagination. The better your child's play skills are, the easier it will be for him or her to play with other children. You can expand your child's play skills by using verbal prompts that will help your child come up with new play ideas and follow your directions in play.

- ▶ This strategy can increase the variety of play actions your child does with favorite toys, helps your child play with new toys, and play in more complex ways. If your child has more advanced play skills, you can teach him or her cooperative play with others.
- ▶ Since these prompts are primarily verbal, they are usually more successful for children with better play and language skills. If your child has difficulty responding to verbal

instructions, you should continue to use *Prompts for Imitation* to help your child expand his play skills.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 13

Discuss the sequence for using *Prompts for Expanding Play*, as well as appropriate play skills to prompt. As you go, remind the parents of the relevant key elements of *Prompts and Rewards*. Provide specific examples of play skills parents can prompt, based on your knowledge of the favorite activities and play skills of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how to use *Prompts for Expanding Play*.

- ▶ To expand your child's play skills, begin by using **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** to join your child in play. Then use a **Create Opportunities** technique to gain your child's attention. Next, prompt your child to use a new or slightly more complex play skill with his or her toy. After your child uses the new play skill, give a reward of praise and let your child play the way he or she wants. Remember to prompt a new play skill only about one-third of the time, to make sure your child stays in the lead. The rest of the time, continue to respond to your child's spontaneous play. You can increase both the variety and the complexity of your child's play skills.
- ▶ To increase the variety of your child's play, prompt your child to do different play actions with a favorite toy at the same developmental level. For example, if your child likes to line up blocks, prompt other actions with the blocks at the same play level, such as stacking the blocks or putting the blocks in different containers.
- ▶ You can also introduce new objects into play with your child's favorite activities. For example, if your child does not play with toys, but enjoys food or gross motor activities, teach your child to play with toys by including them in a preferred activity. For instance, you can place a favorite snack in a "busy box" for your child to get out, or have a doll take turns with your child on the swing or trampoline.
- ▶ You can also teach your child to play in more complex ways by prompting skills that are slightly more complex than the child's current skills. For example, if your child usually plays with toys by touching, banging, or dropping them, teach him or her to play by putting favorite toys in and out of containers. If your child is able to use a number of related play actions, you can increase the complexity of the play by prompting your child to tell a story through linking several actions together. For example, if your child likes to feed a baby doll, prompt your child to give the baby a bottle, burp the baby, and put the baby to bed. Table 5.7 in the parent manual has examples of types of play skills to prompt, based on your child's play level.

SLIDE 14

Discuss the different types of *Prompts for Expanding Play*. As you go, give examples of how to use the different prompts to target play skills that are relevant for the children in the group. You can also refer the parents to the relevant table in Chapter 5 of the parent manual for more examples of each of these

prompts. Emphasize the three-prompt rule here again, and the importance of following through after giving a prompt, even if it involves using physical guidance.

Sample Script

Now let's talk about the types of prompts you can use as *Prompts for Expanding Play*. These prompts are listed on the slide from least to most supportive.

- ▶ A leading comment is the least supportive prompt. This type of prompt is appropriate for children who have good receptive language and some pretend play, but have difficulty playing more creatively or linking actions together. Once your child is engaged in play, make a clear comment that cues your child what to do next. Pairing it with a gesture can help your child respond. For example, if your child is holding an Elmo doll, say, "Elmo looks tired," and hold up a blanket to encourage your child to put Elmo to bed.
- ▶ If your child has difficulty responding to a leading comment, you can use a slightly more supportive prompt by asking your child a question to cue him or her to do something new with the toy. For example, say, "What should Elmo do now?" or "Where should the train go next?" Your child can respond by doing the play action or by telling you.
- ▶ If your child has difficulty responding to an open-ended question, you can give your child a choice between two new play actions. For example, say, "Should Elmo eat or go to sleep?" This gives your child ideas of other ways to play, but allows him or her to choose the play sequence or type of play that will be added.
- ▶ You can teach your child to play more creatively by using a verbal instruction to tell your child something else to do with a toy. For example, if your child is pushing a train, offer your child a toy tiger and say, "Give the tiger a ride." Be sure to follow your child's lead and give directions centering around the child's activity of choice. This prompt is helpful for children who may have difficulty responding to the less supportive prompts.
- ▶ If your child does not respond to the verbal prompts, you can use the prompts you have just learned for teaching imitation. Model a play action for your child to imitate.
- ▶ If your child does not respond, use physical guidance to help your child imitate your play action or follow your verbal instruction.

SLIDE 15

Walk the parents through the slide's example of how to use *Prompts for Expanding Play*, using the sequence graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions about this strategy.

Sample Script

Let's see what it looks like to use *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Tina's mom is teaching her daughter to do pretend play with a doll. Tina's mom focuses on her child by sitting face to face with Tina while she is playing with the doll, and uses simple language to comment on Tina's play. Her mom creates an opportunity by taking a turn with the doll. When she has Tina's attention, her mom uses a leading comment to prompt Tina to feed the doll with the block by saying, "Baby's hungry," and showing her a block. When Tina doesn't respond, her mom uses a more supportive prompt by repeating the comment and asking a question: "Baby is hungry. What should we do?" When Tina doesn't respond, her mom adds more support by giving the verbal instruction "Give the baby some food." Tina then responds

by using the block to feed the baby. Her mom rewards Tina by praising her and letting her play with the doll the way she wants.

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 16

Show video examples of *Prompts for Expanding Play*. There are six clips of parents using specific prompts in isolation (one for each type of prompt), and four longer clips of parents using multiple prompts together to teach their child to expand play skills. The clips of the specific play prompts are listed in order from least to most supportive. They are short, and parents often benefit from viewing a clip more than once to fully understand the prompt and reward sequence. Depending on the skills of the children you are working with, you may choose to show examples of only some of the prompts. For example, preverbal children benefit most from the more supportive prompts, including teaching imitation, while more verbal children may respond to the less supportive prompts. After you have shown clips of the specific play prompts, show the longer clips of teaching expanding play, to help the parents see how to use the prompts together to increase or decrease support as needed. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of *Prompts for Expanding Play* and to notice how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using the specific *Prompts for Expanding Play* to help their child use more complex play skills.

- ▶ [Before showing each individual prompt clip] Watch for how the parent uses prompts to help the child use new or more complex play skill, and how the parent rewards the child's response.
- ▶ [After showing each individual prompt clip] What did you notice during that interaction? What prompts did the parent use? How did the child respond to the prompts? How did the parent reward the child for expanding play?

Clip 42: Make a Leading Comment, Sentences

The mother uses leading comments to help her son incorporate a baby doll into his play with the toy food. She begins by making this comment: "The baby's crying." He responds by pretending to cry, but does not feed the baby the food. So his mother uses a more concrete leading comment ("She's hungry") and shows him a bottle. He responds by feeding the baby with the bottle. She rewards him by responding to his comments ("She does") and letting him return to his play.

Clip 43: Ask a Question, Sentences

The father asks a question to help his daughter use an extended play sequence with a baby doll. The father begins the interaction by following his daughter's lead to the bedroom, where she puts the baby in her bed. He then asks the question "What else does the baby need?" while holding up a blanket. His daughter responds verbally ("Sleep sack") and adds another step to her play (she puts the baby in the sleep sack). Her father rewards her by following her lead in play and commenting on what she is doing.

Clip 44: Give a Choice, Word Combinations

The mother gives a choice to expand her son's play sequence with a set of figurines. The mother follows his lead in play, and then gives a choice for what play action her son should have his character do next ("Are they going to take a bath or go potty?"). Her son responds by acting out one of the choices with his character. Notice how the mother rewards this by acknowledging it and letting him play. The mom then uses another choice prompt to help him add another step in his play ("Do we need to flush, or do we need to wash?"). This time her son responds with both the play action and a verbal choice, and the mom rewards him by letting him play the way he wants and commenting on what he is doing.

Clip 45: Give a Verbal Instruction, First Words

The mother uses a verbal instruction to help her child use pretend play with his train. The mother joins her son's play by getting a train and imitating her son driving it on the grass. She then models a new play action (making the train "splash" in the water). She models the action again and when he does not respond, she gives the verbal direction ("Jackson, you drive your train into the water and splash"). Notice how she uses gestures with the verbal direction to help him respond. He responds by using the play action. The mother rewards this by letting him play how he wants with the train and imitating his play.

Clip 46: Model an Action for Your Child to Imitate, First Words

The mother models an action for her son to imitate, to help him expand the number of play actions he does with the train. The mother joins her son's play at the train table and gets face to face. When she has his attention, she models rolling a ball over the train and then a car. Her son responds by imitating this action and her language ("Crash"), and then comments on the activity (points and says, "A big ball go"). His mother responds to his communication in a meaningful way.

Clip 47: Use Physical Guidance, Preverbal

The mother uses physical guidance to help her child increase the complexity of his play with magic sand. She physically guides him to use a crayon to draw a face in the sand. After he does this (with her help), she rewards him by letting him play with the sand the way he wants (dropping it through his fingers). At the next opportunity, she uses physical guidance again to help him use the crayon to poke the sand.

Clip 48: Adjust Support, Preverbal

The mother decreases the support of her play prompts over several opportunities to help her son increase the complexity of his play with magic sand, moving him from running the sand through his fingers (exploratory play) to poking the sand with a crayon (combinatorial play). His mother begins by using physical guidance to help him poke the sand with a crayon. After she helps him, she rewards him with praise and lets him go back to running the sand through his fingers. At the next opportunity, she gives him the crayon; he starts to poke the sand on his own, but has difficulty, so his mother uses physical guidance to get him started. Eventually, he reaches for the crayon and pokes the sand on his own. By the end of the interaction, he and his mother are able to play together by poking the sand with their own crayons. Notice how the mother rewards him each time by letting him play the way he wants. Eventually he learns that the new way of playing is also fun, and it becomes rewarding on its own.

Clip 49: Adjust Support, First Words

The mother uses several play prompts together to increase the complexity of her child's play skills with the train. The mother begins by joining her son's play, following his lead, and imitating him. She adjusts her communication by using language to describe what she is doing. When she has his attention, she models a new action (having her train drink water), and then gives him a verbal instruction to have him make his train drink water. When he uses the new play skill, she goes back to letting him lead the play. She then provides another opportunity for him to expand his play by modeling a new action (washing the train), followed by a verbal instruction for him to wash the train. He responds by using the new play action. She continues with this pattern of following his lead to keep his engagement, and then providing play prompts when he is engaged to expand his play skills. Notice how each time she prompts his play, she follows through and has him use the new play action before she rewards him by letting him play the way he wants.

Clip 50: Adjust Support, Sentences—Pretend Play

The mother uses several play prompts together to help her son engage in an extended pretend play sequence with a baby doll. The mom begins the interaction by joining in her son's play and responding to his initiations and play ideas. She then uses leading comments ("The baby is crying" and "She's hungry") to increase the complexity and variety of his play skills. He responds verbally (he says that he needs a bottle). Notice how the mom responds to his verbal request, but also has the child follow through with the play action of feeding the baby. When he is finished, she pretends that the baby is crying again, but responds to his language (letting him lead the play) when he says she is not crying. She then prompts play again by using another leading comment ("I think she's cold"). When he does not respond, she gives a direction and models an action for him to imitate (putting a blanket on the baby). Notice how she follows through with the play prompt, even if it is not his desired action. He then does become interested in the play and follows through on wrapping the baby in the blanket.

Clip 51: Adjust Support, Sentences—Symbolic Play

The father uses several play prompts together to help his daughter engage in an extended symbolic play sequence (making tea) with object substitution (substituting a block for ice). Her father begins the interaction by joining his daughter's play and commenting on what she is doing. She initiates by saying, "It is super hot," referring to the "tea." Her father responds by saying, "It is super hot," and then prompts her to expand her play by asking a question: "How do we cool it down?" When she does not respond, he adds support by asking a yes-no question ("Do you need some ice to cool it down?"). He then adds more support by showing her an item she could use for the ice (symbolic play). She uses the "ice" to cool down the tea. He rewards her by letting her return to playing how she wants.

SLIDE 17

Have the parents discuss how they could use *Prompts for Expanding Play* with their child, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help each of them think through how this technique would work best for her child. You can refer the parents to the Try This at Home! table in Chapter 5 of the parent manual for examples of using *Prompts for Expanding Play* during various play routines. If you haven't already, you may want to pass out the Play Action Ideas form (Form 13) for the parents to write down the different play actions and gestures they identify for their child's favorite toys.

Sample Script

Now let's discuss how you could use *Prompts for Expanding Play*.

- ▶ Take a moment to think about how your child usually plays with favorite toys. What new play skills can you prompt your child to use with these toys? Make sure to attend to your child's current play level. Remember, you can focus on increasing the variety of your child's play at his or her current play level, or you can add one level of complexity. You can write your ideas down on the Play Action Ideas form to remind yourself at home.
- ▶ After you think of a number of different play actions, think about what three prompts can you use to help your child use a new play skill.
- ▶ [*After a minute or two*] Now let's talk about it.

Plan for Practice and Coaching

SLIDE 18

Have each parent develop a plan for how she will practice over the week. It is extremely important that the parents have time to complete their Practice Plans during the group session. At a minimum, the parents should complete the goals, activities, and sequence graphics in their Practice Plans before they leave. If you are running short on time, you may need to shorten the group discussion. Give the parents several minutes to write down on their Practice Plans (1) one or two goals they would like to target; and (2) a play activity and a daily routine in which to practice. Next, have the parents write down a positive example of how they will use one of the techniques to address their child's goal during a selected activity, using the sequence graphic. You may want to ask one of the parents to complete the sequence graphic with you in front of the group as an example. If you have time, have the parents discuss their Practice Plans with each other, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. After the parents have completed their Practice Plans, ask them to think about what might be hard about using the techniques at home. Depending on time, you can have them discuss possible solutions, again either in pairs or as a full group. Common challenges and potential solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 10 (page 398).

Sample Script

I would like each of you to think of one to two goals that you will target this week. These goals should be related to increasing your child's object imitation or gesture imitation during play, or to expanding your child's play. Write your goals on your Practice Plan. Next, think about a play activity and a daily routine during which you can practice these techniques. Remember that you will need to add several minutes to your daily routines in order to have time to use the techniques. Once you decide on the activities, write them down on your Practice Plan. Next, think about the techniques that we talked about today for **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**. These include *Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Choose the techniques that you will use to help your child use more complex imitation or play skills, including the specific prompts, and write these down on the sequence graphic in the Practice Plan. You should plan to practice these strategies for 15–20 minutes per day during play, as well as during one or two daily activities. Also, think about what may be hard about carrying out your Practice Plan, and brainstorm possible solutions.

SLIDE 19

Remind the parents to read the last two sections of Chapter 5 in the parent manual and to practice over the next week. Let them know what to expect during their individual coaching sessions.

Sample Script

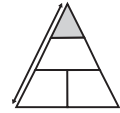
Next week, each of you will have an individual coaching session.

▶ If you haven't already, please be sure to read through the rest of Chapter 5 in the parent manual: the sections on *Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play*. These sections cover what we learned in group today.

▶ Over the next week, I would like you to try out your Practice Plan at home and write down how it went in the "Reflection" box of your Practice Plan form. You will discuss your Practice Plan during your coaching session. So please come with any questions you have about *Prompts for Imitation* or *Prompts for Expanding Play*. You will also have the opportunity to get individual feedback and support as you work with your child. Come ready to practice!

SESSION 10

Review of Teach New Imitation and Play Skills (Coaching)



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Teach her child to imitate play actions or gestures.
- Increase the complexity and variety of her child's play.

- Toys that can be used in multiple, creative ways
- Two pairs of some toys
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—**Teach New Skills** (Form 34)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** (Form 17)
- Favorite toys



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**.
- Demonstrate **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the group session. Take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will have the opportunity to practice using prompts and rewards to teach her child new imitation and play skills while you provide her with support and feedback. This strategy set can increase her child's imitation of play actions and gestures, and can expand the variety and complexity of her child's play skills.

Ask the parent: "Do you have any questions about today's session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?" If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the Written Plan from the Group Session

Ask the parent to talk through how she used prompts and rewards to help her child imitate or expand his play at home. Discuss what went well and what was hard.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Challenges

Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 398).

Review Teach New Imitation and Play Skills

Briefly Review the Rationale and Key Elements

Using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid and the parent manual, explain how this strategy set is used with the previous strategies the parent has learned. Highlight the specific prompts that are likely to be most effective for the child. You can write these down on the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** (Form 17) for the parent as a reminder.

Prompts for Imitation are useful for children who have very limited play skills and who have difficulty imitating gestures. Descriptive gestures can be abstract and thus harder to imitate. Thus the parent should target gesture imitation only if the child already has some skill with object imitation. *Prompts for Expanding Play* are primarily verbal; therefore, they are usually more successful for children with better play and language skills.

Ask the parent: “Which imitation or play goal would you like to try teaching today?” Help the parent identify an appropriate imitation or play goal that she would like to target. Review the specific prompts that are appropriate for the child’s goal and abilities.

Explain the Steps of the Technique(S)

After the parent selects the technique(s) she would like to practice, use the sequence graphic in the parent manual to describe how to address the child’s imitation or play goal. Give the parent an opportunity to ask questions.

Demonstrate Teach New Imitation and Play Skills

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Indicate which prompt you will begin with to elicit imitation or play, and how you will add support if the child does not respond. Ask the parent to watch for the prompts you use and to notice how the child responds.

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** with the child, point out which types of prompts you use, how you add support, and how the child responds. In play, it is sometimes easier to complete the prompt sequence and then explain, as illustrated in the example below:

“Sam was playing with the cars. I moved into his line of sight and stopped the movement of his car to gain his attention. He looked at me. I asked a question, ‘Where should the car go?’, and let go of the car. Sam did not respond. So I stopped the car again to gain his attention and presented him with a choice: ‘Should the car go to the gas station or the car wash?’ Sam responded by washing the car. I rewarded him by providing praise (‘Yay, you washed your car!’) and letting him play with the toy for a little while before providing another prompt.”

Once the demonstration is finished, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What type of prompt was effective in expanding Brianna’s play?”

“What type of play skills did you see me prompting?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the specific prompts she should practice, based on the goal and the child’s skill level. It can be difficult to think of new ways to play during an interaction. If necessary, help the parent brainstorm play ideas with the toys before practicing:

“Sam enjoys play with cars. Your goal is to expand his pretend play. Start with a leading comment (‘The car is dirty’). If he does not respond, use a question (‘The car is dirty. What should we do?’). If he still does not respond, then give him a choice (‘The car is dirty. Should we wash it with a rag or the hose?’).”

Manage the Physical Environment

Offer toys that the parent can use to imitate her child, or that will help her think of play ideas. Clear away toys to limit distractions.

Provide Feedback

Help the parent identify good play actions to model or play skills to prompt, based on the child’s interests and ability. Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 398).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask the parent questions about the interaction. Here are some examples of questions you could include:

“How does it feel to prompt your child to imitate you/expand his play?”

“Can you imagine doing this at home? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“What types of prompts were most successful in helping your child imitate you/expanding your child’s play skills?”

“What types of play skills did you prompt? Can you think of how to do this with your toys at home?”

Help the Parent Select Goals and Activities

Use the Child’s Goals from the parent manual and the completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11) to help the parent select between-session goals and activities. Have the parent record her selections on the Practice Plan. Good child goals for this unit could include increasing the complexity of the child’s play (e.g., use of pretend play), increasing the number of sequences used in play, or increasing the number of toys with which the child plays.

Good activities for this unit include play with favorite toys, active play, bathtime, and even mealtimes. Help the parent identify specific types of play she will teach, based on the activities she has selected. For example, if the parent chooses to teach her child pretend play during play with cars, help her identify specific play with cars. This could include pushing the car to the gas station, washing the car, or fixing a part of the car. The Try This at Home! tables in Chapter 5 of the parent manual (pages 87 and 92 there) have examples of how to teach imitation and play skills during various activities.

Help the Parent Complete the Sequence Graphic

Talk the parent through a positive example of **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills** during an activity she has selected. Have her write down the key elements she will focus on in the relevant boxes of the sequence graphic on the Practice Plan.

Ask the parent what she will do for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. Ask the parent what **Create Opportunities** technique she will use to gain her child’s attention before modeling or prompting play.

Next, ask the parent what imitation or play skill she will prompt, and which three prompts she will use to help her child use the skill. Ask her to use specific language rather than the type of prompt (e.g., “Baby is hungry” rather than a leading comment).

Finally, ask the parent how she will reward and expand on her child’s response. Remind her that the reward should be allowing the child to play as he chooses. Provide examples of ways she can expand by modeling a new play action or bringing another object into the play.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask the parent what might be hard about using *Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play* at home. Common challenges and possible solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 398).

Assign Reflection and Reading

Ask the parent to write down what went well and what was hard during practice at home. Let her know that you will review this at the beginning of the next group session. Have the parent read Chapter 6, **Shape the Interaction**, and Chapter 7, **Moving Forward**, in the parent manual before the next group session.



Troubleshooting Tips for Teach New Imitation and Play Skills

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty identifying good play skills to model or prompt

- Suggest actions that are easy or fun to imitate.
- Help her identify good actions to do with the toys the child is playing with, new toys that could be added to expand the play theme, or emotions that could be brought into play.
- Ask her: “What are three other things you could you do with this toy?”
- Ask her: “What are three gestures you can use with this toy?”
- Suggest that she take time to watch how other children play with toys for ideas.
- Suggest that she bring in her child’s favorite toys to the next coaching session.

Has difficulty gaining her child’s attention before prompting

- Encourage the parent to use *Playful Obstruction* before she presents a model.
- Cue her for good times to model actions.
- Remind her to *Use Animation* to make her actions clear.

Does not use clear prompts

- Remind her to gain her child’s attention before prompting a new play skill.
- Suggest a specific prompt to use.
- Model a clear prompt for her to use.

Prompts imitation or expanded play too frequently

- Remind her to respond to her child’s spontaneous play skills.
- Suggest that she prompt for a more complex play skill after only every third initiation.
- Give her a concrete amount of time to wait before prompting a new skill (e.g., only prompting every 1–2 minutes).

Does not provide enough support to help the child imitate or use the more complex play skill

- Suggest repeating the model if the child doesn’t imitate within 5 seconds.
- Cue her when to add more support.
- Give her three specific play prompts to use.

Does not require a more complex response before giving the reward

- Remind her to follow through with the prompt, even if the child protests.
- Let her know that it is OK if the child gets a little frustrated.

<i>If the child . . .</i>	<i>You can . . .</i>
Leaves the interaction before he imitates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind the parent to follow through with the prompt, even if the child protests or leaves the interaction. • Suggest that the parent move through the prompt sequence more quickly. • Encourage the parent to follow the child with the toy and model the action again. • Help bring the child back to the interaction for the parent to model the action again.
Gets frustrated when the parent attempts to change his play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove toys that cause frustration from the coaching space. • Acknowledge that this is common, and that children usually become less frustrated as they learn the new expectations. • Suggest that the parent start with a prompt her child can respond to successfully, and then allow the child to play in his own way. Once the routine is set, cue her to decrease support every third time.
Does not imitate on his own	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest that the parent watch how the child plays with toys and model actions he uses spontaneously. Once he begins to imitate these actions, cue her to model new but similar actions every third time. • Ask her: “What are three things your child likes to do with this toy?”
Resists physical guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach the parent to be quick and matter-of-fact in following through with physical guidance. • Model physical guidance with the child for the parent to observe. • Have the parent practice, with you pretending to be the child.

UNIT 6

Shape the Interaction and Moving Forward

The first purpose of this unit is to help the parents learn **Shape the Interaction**, the **S** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. This strategy set helps the parents use the Project ImPACT strategies together to keep their children engaged and having fun, while also learning new skills across various home and community activities. The second purpose of this unit is to help each parent update her child's goals and plan for continued success with Project ImPACT after coaching ends.

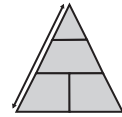
- During the group session, you will review the Practice Plan for **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**. You will then use the PowerPoint slides to introduce and discuss **Shape the Interaction**. After this, you will discuss *Plan for Continued Success*, to help the parents recognize and celebrate their accomplishments as a group and to help them plan for future success with the program. At the end of the session, you will help each parent complete a Practice Plan to carry out before the individual coaching session. Once again, a guide to the key elements for each of the video clips is included in the slide notes.
- During the coaching session, you will review the parent's Practice Plan from the group session. You will then briefly review, demonstrate, and have the parent practice *Shape the Interaction* for the majority of the coaching session. Given the limited number of coaching sessions and the large number of techniques the parent has learned in the group sessions, it is likely that you have not provided coaching on all techniques. Focus on improving the parent's use of those techniques that will have the greatest positive impact on the parent-child relationship and the child's skills. If you have time and new goals are needed, you can help the parent review the child's progress and update goals as needed. If you do not have time, update the goals after the session, based on the parent's report and the data you have collected on the child's skills. You will end the session by helping the parent fill out the Practice Plan for *Update Your Child's Goals*.

At the end of the program, the parent should schedule monthly follow-up sessions for 6 months or as needed. The procedure for the follow-up sessions is provided at the end of this unit.



SESSION 11

Shape the Interaction and *Plan for Continued Success* (Group)



Session Goals

Help the parents:

- Use the Project ImPACT strategies together to keep their child engaged and having fun while also learning new skills.
- Recognize and celebrate accomplishments.
- Plan for continued success with Project ImPACT.

- Introduce *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* (Slides 10–13).
- Plan for practice (Slide 14).
- Take a break.
- Introduce *Plan for Continued Success* (Slides 15–19).
- Plan for coaching (Slide 20).



Materials

- Slides/video clips
- Community Activity Schedule (Form 23; multiple copies)
- Practice Plan—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 35; multiple copies)
- Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8; multiple copies)
- Whiteboard or large sheets of paper
- Group guidelines
- Group Fidelity Checklist (Form 7)



Key Elements: *Shape the Interaction*

- Move up and down the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to keep your child engaged and learning.
- Select the strategy to use based on your child's motivation/mood and the activity.



Key Elements: *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*

- Bring your child's favorite things.
- Create many, brief learning opportunities.



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda (Slides 1–2).
- Review the Practice Plan (Slide 3).
- Introduce **Shape the Interaction** (Slide 4).
- Introduce *Shape the Interaction* (Slides 5–9).



Key Elements: *Plan for Continued Success*

- Recognize your family's accomplishments.
- Problem-solve continuing challenges with using Project ImPACT.
- Get others on board.
- Identify your family's needs.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

SLIDE 1

Warmly greet the parents as they enter, and give them a few minutes to check in with each other before getting started. Then briefly introduce the topic for the day's group.

Sample Script

Welcome to our final group session together! In our previous group session, we focused on **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**, the second part of the **Teach New Skills** strategies at the top of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. This week we are going to wrap up by talking about how to put everything together and **Shape the Interaction**. This is the S of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. It involves finding the balance between having fun with your child and teaching your child new skills. After talking about how to find this balance, we'll touch on what you've felt most successful doing during the program, and how you can continue to use Project ImPACT as you move forward across a variety of activities in your home and the community.

SLIDE 2

Briefly go over the session agenda, to provide information on the goals and structure of the session. If you need to make adjustments to this agenda for the sake of time, explain this to the parents.

Sample Script

- ▶ We'll be starting off by reviewing your Practice Plans from the past week.
- ▶ Then we'll discuss how to **Shape the Interaction**. The first part of this involves learning how to keep your child engaged and learning new skills, while also having fun, during your daily activities. The second part involves finding ways to use Project ImPACT across a number of your community activities.
- ▶ After this we'll plan out how you will practice over the next week.
- ▶ We will end our final group session by talking about your accomplishments and planning how to continue having success with Project ImPACT after the group ends.

Review the Practice Plans

SLIDE 3

Use a whiteboard to draw three columns labeled “What Went Well?”, “What Was Hard?”, and “Possible Solutions.” Ask the parents to report what technique they practiced and how their child responded. As each parent reports, briefly write down the information on the whiteboard in the appropriate columns. Help the parents identify commonalities across their experiences. After each parent has reported, identify one or more common challenges that the parents experienced. Ask questions and give suggestions to help them find potential solutions as a group. Write the best potential solutions in the “Possible Solutions” column next to the specific challenges in the “What Was Hard?” column. Common challenges and possible solutions relevant for this topic are described in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 10 (page 398).

Sample Script

Let's start by talking about how practice has gone over the past week. In the past week, you should have had an individual coaching session in which your coach helped you practice **Teach New Imitation and Play Skills**.

- ▶ Let's go around and have each of you briefly share what you practiced, what went well when you practiced with your child, and maybe one thing that was challenging about

practice. We can then brainstorm how to address some of the common challenges you experienced.

▶ [After all parents report on their practice] Now let's think about some possible solutions for that challenge.

Introduce **Shape the Interaction**

SLIDE 4

Introduce **Shape the Interaction**, using the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. Emphasize that the goal is for the parents to balance their use of the strategies, based on how their child is responding in the moment.

Sample Script

Let's talk about **Shape the Interaction**. We've begun to talk about this strategy set already without necessarily naming it. **Shape the Interaction** is all about figuring out when to use which techniques across your daily interactions with your child, both at home and in the community.

▶ You want to **Shape the Interaction** with your child so that the child is engaged and having fun, while also challenging him or her just enough to learn new skills. You can do this by adjusting your use of the Project ImPACT strategies in the moment, based on how your child is responding. It's a delicate balance, and when it's done right, it should look like a dance.

▶ Remember the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid. Always start with **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, because these strategies help your child engage with you and the activity. Use these techniques most of the time you are interacting with your child.

▶ If your child does not respond to the strategies at the base of the pyramid, or if you want to teach a new skill, move up the pyramid and use a **Create Opportunities** technique to help your child initiate or to gain your child's attention. Once your child responds, you can respond to this behavior as meaningful right away, *or* you can prompt your child to use a new skill.

▶ If your child is very motivated, it is a good time to move up the pyramid to **Teach New Skills**. But only do this about a third of the time, or your child may become frustrated. If your child loses interest or becomes frustrated as you move up the pyramid, move back down to get your child engaged again. Learning how to move up and down the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid in this way is the first part of **Shape the Interaction**. The second part is called *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*, which we'll talk about later in this session.

Introduce **Shape the Interaction**

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 5

Introduce the rationale for using *Shape the Interaction* to keep the child engaged and learning new social communication skills across the day. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals

that can be targeted, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

Once you are comfortable using Project ImPACT strategies, you can use them throughout your child's day. It only takes a moment to create a learning opportunity. Over the course of a day, your child will have many opportunities to build social communication skills.

- ▶ By teaching your child across the day, you will help your child use his or her skills in new situations. This is called *generalization*.
- ▶ This strategy is helpful if you can add a few extra minutes to familiar activities.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 6

Discuss the key elements of *Shape the Interaction*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group.

Sample Script

Usually you want to use the intervention strategies together to improve your child's social communication skills, but there are times when it's better to use some techniques over others. This will depend on your child's motivation and mood, as well as on the activity you are doing.

- ▶ When your child is very motivated for an item or activity, such as having a favorite snack or playing with favorite toys, it is a great time to teach a new skill because your child is more likely to work hard for them. When your child is motivated, try prompting him or her to use new play or communication skills. When your child is not motivated for an item or activity (such as getting dressed or putting away toys), try using techniques to engage him or her, such as *Imitate Your Child*, *Use Animation*, and *Model and Expand Communication*.

- ▶ A child who is calm and happy is likely to respond better to more techniques. When your child is feeling good, you can use one or more of the **Create Opportunities** or **Teach New Skills** strategies. A child who is very frustrated, tired, or upset may disengage or begin to have a tantrum if you hold back things the child wants, block his or her play, or prompt the use of a more complex skill. At these times, use *Follow Your Child's Lead*, *Imitate Your Child*, or *Model and Expand Communication* to reduce the frustration and help your child engage. You can always return to **Teach New Skills** when your child is settled.

- ▶ If you can control access to the item or activity that your child wants, you can use a **Create Opportunities** or **Teach New Skills** strategy. If you cannot control access (for example, you are driving), or if controlling access will lead to a tantrum when you need to avoid it, try using *Follow Your Child's Lead*, *Imitate Your Child*, *Use Animation*, or *Model and Expand Communication* instead.

- ▶ If you have time to follow through, you can use prompts to teach a new skill. However, if you begin to prompt but aren't able to follow through, your child may learn that he or she doesn't have to respond. So if you are in a hurry, like when you are trying

to get out of the house to catch the bus, it is often better to use a **Focus on Your Child**, **Adjust Your Communication**, or **Create Opportunities** strategy instead. Daily routines and activities that your child enjoys are usually the best for **Teach New Skills**. For many children, we have found that playtime, snacktime (if your child enjoys eating and is not too hungry), bathtime, and transitions to favorite activities (such as going outside) are most effective. The techniques at the bottom of the pyramid are usually better during activities that are usually less motivating, such as getting dressed, brushing teeth, or getting ready for bed.

Show Video Clips and Discuss

SLIDE 7

Show video examples of *Shape the Interaction*. There are three video clips of *Shape the Interaction*, to help the parents understand how to use the strategies together to keep their child engaged and learning across different activities. They also demonstrate how to adjust their use of the strategies, depending on the activities and the child's motivation. One of the clips is longer and includes several different activities (First Words—Park). For this clip, it can help to pause the video after an activity to discuss the strategies the parent is using within the specific activity. Before showing each clip, ask parents to watch for the key elements of shape the interaction and how the child responds. After each clip, help the parents reflect on what they observed by asking open-ended questions. If they are unable to identify important elements of the interaction, ask more specific questions. The important information to highlight in the clips is described below.

Sample Script

Now we are going to watch some examples of parents using *Shape the Interaction* to keep their children engaged and learning across various activities.

► [Before showing each clip] Watch for how the parent moves up and down the pyramid, based on the child's motivation and response. Also, think about how the activity influences what strategies the parent uses.

► [After showing each clip] What did you notice during that interaction? When did the parent focus on the child and adjust her communication? When did the parent teach new skills? How did the activity and the child's motivation influence the parent's use of the different strategies?

Clip 52: Shape the Interaction, First Words—Drinking Fountain

The father uses the strategies together while his child gets a drink of water. The father follows the child's lead to the drinking fountain and adjusts his communication by modeling language ("Turn water on," "Drink"). He then uses *Playful Obstruction* (turning the water off and on) to create an opportunity for his child to communicate. When he has his son's attention and motivation, he moves up the pyramid to **Teach New Skills**. He uses a time delay after *Playful Obstruction* to help his child use spontaneous language to request ("On"). The father immediately rewards him by turning the water on and letting him drink. Notice how the father then moves back down the pyramid to focus on his child and adjust communication by labeling what his son is doing ("Drink") to keep him engaged. He then uses playful obstruction again to create an opportunity, and a fill-in-the-blank sentence ("I want

more . . . [water])” to expand his child’s language skills. Notice how the father teaches new skills when he has control over the desired item (turning the water on), and how he immediately rewards his child for using the new skill.

Clip 53: Shape the Interaction, First Words—At the Park

The mother uses the strategies together with her daughter across a number of different play activities at the park. Notice how the mother focuses on her child and adjusts her communication to encourage engagement when her daughter’s motivation is low and when the mother is not able to control access to the equipment (walking on steps). When the mother is able to control access to what her daughter wants (getting on the spinning seat, getting on the swing), she is able to create opportunities for her daughter to initiate. During times when her daughter is highly motivated (needs assistance with the play equipment), her mother is able to move up the pyramid to prompt her to use more communication skills. Her mother then moves back down the pyramid to encourage engagement.

Clip 54: Shape the Interaction, Sentences—Snack

The mother uses the strategies together with her son while getting a snack. She uses techniques from the bottom of the pyramid, **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, to ensure that her son is engaged and motivated to interact. Once he is engaged, she creates opportunities to help him initiate (holding the snack, giving it to him without opening it, pretending that she will eat the fruit leather). Once he initiates, she moves up the pyramid to **Teach New Skills**. For example, when the child says the word “Open,” the mother uses a time delay and question to expand his language, which helps him use a full sentence (“Mommy, open the fruit leather”). Notice how the mother responds meaningfully to all of her son’s communications, but waits for him to increase the complexity of his language before she provides the reward.

Discuss Using Project ImPACT across Daily Activities

SLIDE 8

Walk the parents through the slide’s example of how to use Project ImPACT across multiple home activities, using the graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions.

Sample Script

Once you are comfortable with using Project ImPACT strategies, you can use them throughout your child’s day to target your child’s goals. This slide shows an example of a mom using different strategies and techniques across her son’s day to help increase his ability to use single words. The strategies she uses depend on how much Jerome enjoys the activity, and how easily she can control access to the things he wants and follow through if she prompts him. When getting Jerome dressed in the morning (an activity he does not like very much), his mom adjusts her communication by using single words to label each item of clothes as she puts them on him. During snack, an activity Jerome likes a lot, she is able to prompt him to use a single word to request help and favorite snack items. Jerome enjoys watching his mom unload the dishwasher, but this is an activity she typically needs to do quickly, so she labels each item as she takes out and puts it away while Jerome watches. Jerome loves going outside and running water, so she prompts him to say a single word to request going outside and turning on the water at bedtime. At bedtime, she sings

Jerome lullabies. She starts leaving off the final word of his favorite song to encourage him to fill it in.

SLIDE 9

Have the parents discuss the best activities for using the different Project ImPACT strategies, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Then have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help each of them think through which activities would work best for her child.

Sample Script

Now let's take a few minutes to think about which of your home activities would be best for using the different Project ImPACT strategies.

- ▶ Take a moment to think about which of your daily activities are best for **Teach New Skills**.
- ▶ Now think about which activities are best for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Introduce *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*

Explain the Rationale

SLIDE 10

Introduce the rationale for *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. As you do, you may want to give examples of specific goals that can be targeted in the community, based on your knowledge of the children in the group. You can also refer to the parent manual for additional information on this technique.

Sample Script

You can also use many of the Project ImPACT strategies when you are out in the community with your child, to keep your child engaged and learning in the community.

- ▶ Practice in the community is important, because it helps your child use skills in new settings with more people.
- ▶ These strategies can help keep your child engaged during community outings, and can help reduce your child's boredom and frustration.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 11

Discuss the key elements of *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. As you go, provide some concrete examples of how parents could use this technique, based on your knowledge of the children in the group.

Sample Script

There are a few things that can help you make *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* a success.

- ▶ Seeing familiar toys and materials during community outings may help your child interact with you and follow your directions. Bring familiar and favorite toys with you during outings, to help your child use new skills in a different environment. You can also use favorite toys or other items as rewards for following your directions in community settings.

- ▶ You can also use the Project ImPACT strategies to create small, meaningful learning opportunities when you are out in the community. These brief learning opportunities will build on each other over time to encourage your child's social communication skills. Try to create brief learning opportunities for your child in many different places. This will help your child use his or her skills more often, with more people, and in more settings. Using these strategies does not have to be time-intensive or prolonged. For example, when getting into the car, you can prompt your child to say the word "Open" before you open the car door, and then move on with your outing. Choose the technique based on your child's motivation and mood, as well as the setting you are in. Remember, the **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** techniques are appropriate for nearly all your interactions with your child. The **Create Opportunities** and **Teach New Skills** strategies may be more challenging to use in the community.

- ▶ The Community Activity Schedule in Chapter 6 of your parent manual can help you start thinking about some of the community activities you do with your child on a frequent basis. It can help you think about how you might use the intervention strategies within some of these activities to help your child engage and communicate better.

SLIDE 12

Walk the parents through the slide's example of how to use Project ImPACT across multiple community activities, using the graphic. This is a good point to ask parents if they have any questions.

Sample Script

This slide gives examples of a dad using different strategies and techniques during different community activities to help his daughter learn to point. The strategies he uses depend on how much Mai enjoys the activity, what Mai's general mood is like, and how easily he can control access to the things Mai wants and follow through once he prompts. Mai is often motivated to get items at the store; however, she sometimes has tantrums when she doesn't get what she wants quickly enough, and they are often in a rush to get through the store. So when her dad takes Mai shopping, he models communication by pointing and labeling each item as he puts it in the cart. Dad is more comfortable if Mai gets a little upset at the children's library, since they go there often. Since Mai loves books, her dad prompts Mai to point to a book for him to read to her. It is hard for her dad to control access to things during a walk, so when they are walking through the neighborhood, he points to and labels things Mai is looking at. Mai loves the swing at the park but needs help getting on it, so her dad prompts her to point to it before he helps her on it. Mai also loves the pool but needs help getting in the water, so her dad prompts her to point to the water before getting in. Mai is very motivated to get out of the car when they get home from school. Since she

needs help undoing the harness of her car seat, her dad prompts her to point the harness before he undoes it.

SLIDE 13

Have the parents discuss the best activities for *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*, using the Think About It! questions on the slide. Give them a minute or two to think about their responses. Have the parents discuss their responses, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. Help them think through which activities would work best for their child and how to use the strategies in the activities the group members discuss.

Sample Script

Now let's take a few minutes to think about which community activities would be best for *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*.

- ▶ Take a moment to think about which activities you do with your child in the community might be good for using Project ImPACT.
- ▶ Then think about how you can use the strategies during these activities to address your child's goals. Remember, some strategies are likely to work better in some activities than others, so think about what your child's general motivation and mood are likely to be, whether you can usually control access to things your child wants, and whether you have time to follow through if you prompt in different community activities.
- ▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

Plan for Practice and Coaching

SLIDE 14

Have each parent develop a plan for how she will practice over the week. It is extremely important that the parents have time to complete their Practice Plans during the group session. Give the parents several minutes to write down on their Practice Plans (1) one goal they would like to target; and (2) six different home and/or community activities in which to practice. For each activity, parents should write down how they will target the goal by using one or more Project ImPACT techniques. You may want to ask one of the parents to complete the Practice Plan with you in front of the group as an example. If you have time, have the parents discuss their Practice Plans with each other, either in a pair-and-share format or as a full group. After the parents have completed their Practice Plans, ask the parents to think about what might be hard about using their plans at home or in the community. Have them discuss possible solutions. Common challenges and potential solutions are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 12 (page 420). The end of this discussion is usually a good time to take a break.

Sample Script

I would like each of you to think about one of your child's goals you would like to target this week. Think about some of the home and community activities we discussed earlier. Choose six different activities in which you can target the goal during this week, and write them on your Practice Plan. For each activity, write down how you will use one or more of the Project ImPACT techniques to address the goal you selected. Remember to think

about how the routines are structured and how your child usually participates when you are deciding which techniques would be best to use. Also, think about what will be hard in using your plan. What are some possible solutions that will make it easier? Continue to practice using Project ImPACT during play for 15–20 minutes per day, in addition to creating many, brief learning opportunities during the routines or activities you have selected.

Take a Break

Introduce Plan for Continued Success

SLIDE 15

The goal of the final portion of this session is to *Plan for Continued Success*—that is, to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to ask additional questions, problem-solve, and leave the group on a high note. (*Plan for Continued Success* is one of the two parts of **Moving Forward** in Project ImPACT; the other part, *Update Your Child's Goals*, will be covered with each parent individually in Session 12.) Encourage parents to maintain their relationships with other parents from the group after the program has ended. If the session is close to being finished early, you may wish to allow parents to use this time to give and receive support. This can include encouraging parents to share information about other services in the community that they have found helpful, or letting parents discuss some of the difficulties that they face in parenting a child with social communication challenges. If the session ends with the latter topic, be sure to have some type of closure to the group that leaves parents feeling positive.

Sample Script

During the last portion of our session today, we'll be spending some time discussing what you feel that you learned over the course of this group and what supports you need for the future. This can help you think about how to keep up your skills in Project ImPACT as you move forward.

Discuss the Key Elements

SLIDE 16

Discuss accomplishments to help the parents recognize the positive impact of their work with their children and maintain their motivation to use the Project ImPACT strategies at home. Help the parents identify positive changes in the quality of the parent–child relationship, increases in their child's skills, and the role they have played in these improvements. Write these accomplishments on a whiteboard to help parents appreciate their own and each other's efforts. You may want to consider copying the list of accomplishments and distributing it to the parents during their final coaching sessions.

Sample Script

Let's start by recognizing and celebrating each family's accomplishments.

▶ First, I'll ask each of you to think about the gains your child has made over the course of this program. You will have the opportunity to review your child's progress and set new goals with your coach at the final coaching session.

▶ If you haven't started doing so already, consider how you might record your child's successes as your family moves forward. For example, you could write down something good your child does every day, even if it is small. When you are feeling frustrated or overwhelmed, these small accomplishments can remind you that your child is making progress every day.

▶ It is important for each of you to recognize the positive role you have played in your child's growth. Remind yourself of all of the things you do for your child every day, and give yourself credit for helping your child to develop social communication skills!

▶ I'm going to give you a minute to think about your child's and your own accomplishments in the program, and then we can discuss them as a group. I am going to write them down here on the whiteboard, so we can all see and appreciate what everyone has done.

▶ [After a minute or two] Now let's talk about it.

SLIDE 17

Give the parents the opportunity to discuss what works best for them and any challenges they still have in using the strategies. Let them know that they can each problem-solve individually with their coach during the final coaching session. Help them think about ways to maintain their use of the strategies after the program ends.

Sample Script

There are many strategies in the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. You do not need to be using all of these strategies all of the time. The goal is to treat them as tools that you have in your pocket to pull out and use across daily routines and activities that you are already doing with your child.

▶ So think about what strategies work best for your child.

▶ In the final coaching session, you will have the opportunity to practice and problem-solve any techniques you are still finding difficult to use. So it helps to think through what is working for you and what is still hard. This way, you can let your coach know what you need help with during your final coaching session.

▶ Follow-up sessions are helpful for keeping up your skills and learning how to adapt your use of the strategies as your child develops. So be sure to schedule follow-up session as needed. The hope is that the strategies become second nature to you, so that you don't even have to think about using them. However, it can sometimes be hard to remember to use the strategies when we are no longer meeting regularly. It helps to be aware of this and to plan for what to do if you notice that you are having a hard time using Project ImPACT techniques.

▶ Let's take a minute to think about these two questions: What might make it hard for you to use Project ImPACT as you move forward? And what can you do to make it easier?

▶ [After a few minutes] Let's discuss these questions.

SLIDE 18

Give the parents the opportunity to discuss how they might share what they've learned with other members of their families and/or their child's treatment teams. Help them problem-solve ways to get others involved.

Sample Script

Think about your team—the people who support you and your child.

- ▶ You can share techniques with other service providers who are working with your child, so that your child's intervention team members are all on the same page.
- ▶ Partners, grandparents, friends, and day care providers can all be great support. Now that you know the intervention, you can teach them some of the strategies so that they can help your child learn, too.
- ▶ You can even teach your child's siblings some of the techniques from **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, to help your other children play with your child.
- ▶ Take a moment to think about people you can teach to use some of the Project ImPACT strategies.
- ▶ *[After a minute or two]* Let's talk about it.

SLIDE 19

If there is time, encourage parents to discuss the types of services and supports that they need to move forward, and share information about other services in the community that they have found helpful. Parents should leave the group feeling positive. So be careful that the discussion does not become negative, particularly if parents have experienced frustration with accessing or using specific services. Also, make sure that any recommendations are not harmful.

Sample Script

- ▶ Think about the types of services and supports your child and family might need for moving forward. These could be specific services, community resources, or even good activities to do with your family. Your coach may be able to help with suggestions and recommendations. Think about goals you have for your child that were not addressed in this program. Think about other services that might benefit your family or others.
- ▶ In previous groups, parents have chosen to exchange information so that they can continue supporting each other after the group has ended. Some families have continued to meet periodically, either as a support group or for social purposes (such as having a pool party for their children). Other parents have chosen to take turns babysitting so that each family gets a break from the kids, or they have just gotten together for coffee. If you would like to have contact with other families, please write down your name and contact information on this sheet. I will make copies and make sure that each of you gets one at your last coaching session next week.
- ▶ Often parents are great sources of information about what community services are helpful. I can also make some suggestions and recommendations, so let's take a minute to think about what supports and services your child and family need for moving forward.
- ▶ *[After a minute or two]* Now let's talk about it.

Plan for Coaching

SLIDE 20

Remind the parents to read Chapters 6 and 7 of the parent manual and to practice over the next week. Let them know what to expect during their individual coaching sessions. Hand out copies of the Social

Communication Checklist (Parent Version; Form 8) for the parents to complete at home before their final coaching session.

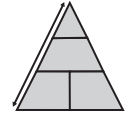
Sample Script

Next week, each of you will have your last individual coaching session.

- ▶ Please be sure to read Chapters 6 and 7 in the parent manual, if you haven't done so already. It covers what we learned in group today.
- ▶ Over the next week, I would like you to try out your Practice Plan at home and write down how it went in the "Reflection" box of your Practice Plan. You will discuss your Practice Plan during your coaching session. So please come with any questions you have about **Shape the Interaction** and *Plan for Continued Success*.
- ▶ Your coach will also help you review your child's progress and update your child's goals, if an update is appropriate. Please complete the Social Communication Checklist and bring it to your coaching session. Remember, as you fill out this form, be sure to think about how well your child uses each skill without your support. Come prepared to talk about your child's progress on the goals you set at the beginning of the program. Also, think about any new goals you have for your child to discuss with your coach. Remember, good skills to teach are those that your child can do "sometimes, but not consistently" on the Social Communication Checklist.

SESSION 12

Review of *Shape the Interaction* and *Update Your Child's Goals* (Coaching)



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Use the Project ImPACT strategies together to keep her child engaged and having fun, while also learning new skills across various home and community activities.
- Review her child's progress toward his goals, and develop new goals if needed.

- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create an opportunity
- Parent Satisfaction Survey (Form 24)
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist (Form 5)
- Coach Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Materials

- Parent manual
- Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36)
- Copy of the Child Goals from the parent manual and the parent's completed Daily Activity Schedule (Form 11)
- Goal Development Form (Form 10)
- Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8)
- Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) (Form 9)



Session Agenda

- Check in and set the session agenda.
- Review the Practice Plan.
- Review **Shape the Interaction**.
- Demonstrate *Shape the Interaction*.
- Have the parent practice, and give feedback.
- Update the child's goals (optional).
- Have the parent reflect, and plan for follow-up.
- Have the parent complete exit measures.
- Complete the Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) after the session.

Check In and Set the Session Agenda

Check In with the Family

Ask the family how things have gone since the group session, and take a moment to engage the child in an activity if needed.

Explain the Session Goals and Agenda

Today the parent will have the opportunity to practice using *Shape the Interaction* to keep her child both engaged and learning new skills. If there is time at the end of the session, you will use the parent's Social Communication Checklist (SCC) to review the child's progress and update his goals as needed. If there is not time, you can use the information from the SCC and any other data you have collected to inform any exit reports you complete.

Ask the parent: “Do you have any questions about today’s session, or are there are additional topics you would like to cover?” If the parent expresses a concern, you may need to adjust the session agenda.

Review the Practice Plan

Review the written Practice Plan from the group session. Ask the parent to talk you through how she used **Shape the Interaction** at home or in the community. Discuss the child’s response, what went well, and what was hard. Help the parent problem-solve challenges that came up while practicing at home. Common challenges and possible solutions for prompts for **Shape the Interaction** are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 420).

Review Shape the Interaction

Use the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18) to highlight the specific techniques that that will have the greatest positive impact on parent–child interaction and the child’s skills, and to discuss how the parent can balance their use to keep the child engaged and learning. In addition, review with the parent how to use these techniques across a variety of activities in both the home and the community.

Next, ask the parent: “Which techniques would you like to practice today?” Solicit input from the parent on the Project ImPACT techniques that she thinks work best for her child and that she is most comfortable using. Encourage the parent to let you know whether there are any techniques she finds difficult or would like more practice using. You can write the most important information for the parent to remember under “Key Elements to Remember” on the Review Sheet for the parent to take home.

Demonstrate *Shape the Interaction*

Prepare for Your Demonstration

Ask the parent if there is a specific goal she would like you to target. Explain how you will demonstrate the basic *Shape the Interaction* strategy by moving up and down the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to address the targeted goal. Ask the parent to watch for the Project ImPACT techniques you use and to notice how the child responds. You can say something like this:

“Watch how I move up and down the pyramid to help Sam use two- to three-word phrases. If he is not initiating with me, or if I want to teach a new skill, I will move up the pyramid. During times when he is very motivated by the activity, I am going to prompt him to use two to three words. To give him the opportunity to use his language spontaneously, and to keep him engaged and having fun, I will move back down the pyramid and respond to his spontaneous skills. I will also model play and language skills for him, but I won’t require him to use them.”

Describe What You Are Doing

As you demonstrate *Shape the Interaction* with the child, point out the techniques you use and the child's response:

“Sam is playing with the cars. I'm holding up more cars to get his attention. He said the word 'Car.' He seems pretty motivated, so I've prompted him by asking a question to expand his communication: “Which car do you want?” He said the word 'Car' again. (*Sam grabs for the car.*) I've added more support by using a fill-in-the-blank sentence: 'I want the . . . ' Again he said the one word 'Car.' (*Sam starts to fuss.*) Now I've used a choice to add more support to help him respond: 'The red car or the black car?' He said, 'Red car.' so I've given him the car. He's getting a little frustrated, so I'm going to go back to following his lead with the cars for a while before I prompt him again. I can model the words I want him to say while I am doing this: 'Drive the red car.' Next time I hold up a car, I'm going to accept whatever word he gives me. Once he's calm again, I'll try to prompt for another two- to three-word phrase.”

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering, ask more specific questions, such as these:

“How often did you notice that I used the prompts from **Teach New Skills**?”

“Did you see me reward and respond to his spontaneous communication some of the time?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Encourage the Parent to Practice

Remind the parent of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, using specific examples based on the child's skills, motivation, and mood. Do not coach on too many techniques at one time; choose two or three techniques on which to coach, and identify those for the parent before she begins practice. You might say something like this:

“Brianna is playing with the balls. Begin by joining her play with the balls. If she does not respond, use *Playful Obstruction* to gain her attention. Once she responds, respond to her by giving her the ball and showing her a point while saying the word 'Ball' on two out of three opportunities. Every third opportunity, prompt to help her point or say the word 'Ball' before you give her the ball.”



It can be difficult to think of new ways to play during an interaction. If necessary, help the parent brainstorm play ideas with the toys before practicing.

Manage the Physical Environment

At this point in the program, the goal is for the parent to begin to manage the environment with a decreased amount of support. If she is having difficulty, rather than removing items and helping

her control access, ask questions to help her think about why the strategy might not be working. For example:

“Why do you think Brianna is moving from activity to activity?”

“What do you think you could do to gain Brianna’s attention?”

Provide Feedback

By this point in the program, you should be using less directive corrective feedback. Describe the situation, but do not tell the parent a specific technique or strategy to use. Less directive corrective feedback can be given in the form of a question (e.g., “Why do you think Sam is having difficulty responding to you?”) or a comment (e.g., “Sam is playing with the car”). This type of feedback helps the parent move toward independence. Suggestions for giving feedback on common challenges can be found in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of this session (page 420).

Help the Parent Reflect

Ask questions about the in-session practice. Use this time to help the parent understand how to move up and down the pyramid to keep her child motivated and engaged, while she is also teaching the child new skills. Also, problem-solve any continuing difficulties the parent has in using the strategies. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

“How did it feel to use all the strategies together?”

“Can you imagine interacting that way with your child on a regular basis? If not, what felt uncomfortable? What might make it easier?”

“Think about your daily activities. In which routines can you see yourself using these strategies? Which strategies might work best within these activities?”

“Are there any home or community activities during which you struggle to use the intervention strategies?”

Update the Child’s Goals (Optional)

Review the Child’s Progress

Use the parent’s SCC, the session data you have collected, and any other assessments you think may be helpful to assess the child’s progress. If the parent did not complete the SCC before the session, have her do so now. If time is tight, you can update goals without the SCC by simply discussing the child’s skills.

Ask the parent: “Has your child made progress toward his goals?” Assess the parent’s perception of her child’s progress on each of the goals she developed at the beginning of the program. Help her determine which goals should be updated, based on her SCC, the session data, and any additional assessments. If the child has made limited progress, let the parent know that you will help her determine the best way forward.

Develop New Goals for the Child as Needed

Use a collaborative approach to help the parent determine which of the child's goals should be updated and whether new goals would be appropriate. Depending on the child's progress, some of the goals may remain the same, and others may need to be changed.

Solicit input from the parent on new goals she has for her child in a skill area. For example, if you are beginning with communication, ask the parent: "Are there new communication skills you would like your child to work on?" Record this information under "Long-Term Goals" on a blank copy of the Goal Development Form (Form 10). This is the same form that was used at the beginning of the program to set goals.

Use the child's current skills and the SCC results to help the parent break down her goals into *specific and measurable goals that follow developmentally from the child's current skills level*. Record this information under "Current Skills" on the Goal Development Form. If the parent has difficulty identifying goals, you can make suggestions. Be sure to confirm with the parent that she endorses the goals you suggest. Write the new goals down on the Goal Development Form under "Short-Term Goals." Have the parent write the new short-term goals on the Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36).

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Follow-Up

Help the Parent Identify Activities and Strategies

Help the parent identify at least two activities for each new goal, to help the parent use the strategies across settings. Ask open-ended questions about the activity and the strategies. For example:

"You have a goal to help Brianna use two words to request during snacktime and playtime. Which strategies might you use during snacktime? Do you think the same strategies will work at playtime?"

If the parent has difficulty, you can provide more support by offering choices of techniques. Have her record the activities and strategies on the Practice Plan.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about addressing the new goals at home. Take time to brainstorm solutions. Common challenges and solutions for each technique are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the end of each unit's individual coaching session.

Schedule Follow-Up Sessions

Follow-up sessions should be scheduled monthly, for 6 months or as needed. Ideally, follow-up sessions are conducted in the home; however, the clinic setting is effective if home sessions are not possible.

Assign Reflection

The parent should complete the “Reflection” box on the Practice Plan. This lets the parent make note of things that go well or are challenging as they happen, and questions that come up. This information will help her keep track of important things to discuss at the first follow-up session. Tell the parent that she can bring a video of an interaction or activity to the follow-up session if she would like to share successes or receive feedback on routines that might be challenging.

Have the Parent Complete Exit Measures

Take time at the end of the session to have the parent complete the Parent Satisfaction Survey (Form 24) and any additional measures relevant to her completion of the program. This will give you important information on ways to improve your parent coaching skills.

Complete the Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) after the Session

After the session, complete the coach version of the SCC to measure the child’s progress in the program. Use this information, along with the parent’s SCC and any other relevant data, to update the child’s goals (if this was not completed in session) and to inform any exit reports.



Troubleshooting Tips for Shape the Interaction

If the parent . . .

You can . . .

Has difficulty balancing her use of the strategies

- Remind her of the goal of moving up and down the pyramid to keep the child engaged and motivated while also teaching new skills.
- Recommend a specific frequency for teaching new skills, such as responding to the child's spontaneous use of the skill twice, and the third time prompting him to use a specific, more complex skill.
- Give her a concrete rule to follow, such as demonstrating a new skill two times and then prompting it.
- Record a brief parent-child interaction, and review the video with her. Have her identify when she responds to her child's spontaneous skills and when she teaches new skills.

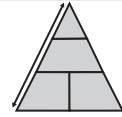
Has difficulty using the intervention during a specific home or community routine

- Schedule a home visit during a daily activity or community outing that is particularly challenging for the parent.
- Ask her to bring in a video of the home routine, and review it with her during the next session.
- Talk through the best times to respond and reward versus the best times to teach a new skill. Provide concrete suggestions for which techniques are best suited to specific daily activities.

Is hesitant to teach new skills in the community

- Remind her that she can use a brief and repetitive interaction, such as cueing the child to say the word "Open" before she opens the car door.
- Remind the parent that motivation is key. For example, if the child does not want to get out of the car, this would not be a good time to teach a new skill.
- Talk through the activity, and help the parent identify a small portion of it the child enjoys in which she can control access to the object or action the child enjoys.

Follow-Up Sessions



Session Goals

Help the parent:

- Maintain the ability to implement the intervention.
- Review and update goals.
- Use the Project ImPACT strategies to address new goals.

- Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version) (Form 9)
- ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18)
- Favorite toys or items such as snacks that can be used to create an opportunity
- Session Data Sheet (Form 12)
- Intervention Fidelity Checklist (Form 4)
- Coaching Fidelity Checklist (Form 6)



Materials

- Parent manual
- Copy of completed Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36)
- Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38)
- Completed Goal Development Form from previous session (Form 10)
- Goal Development Form (Form 10)
- Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (Form 8)



Session Agenda

- Check in, review the Practice Plan, and set the session agenda.
- Review the child's progress.
- Review and practice the Project ImPACT strategies.
- Help the parent reflect, and plan for practice.

Check In, Review the Practice Plan, and Set the Session Agenda

Ask the family about how things have gone since the previous session. It may be helpful to have a brief interaction with the child to engage him in an activity before you speak to the parent. This check-in will inform your session agenda.

Look at the written Practice Plan from the previous session, and have the parent report on what went well and what was hard. Ask the parent: “What would be most helpful for us to do this session?”

Depending on the parent's response, you might begin with a review of the child's progress to update the child's goals, a review of the Project ImPACT strategies with parent practice, or some problem solving if recurring or new challenges have arisen. If the parent has brought a video to review, take time to review the video, answer any questions, and provide feedback.

Review the Child's Progress

Gather Information on the Child's Progress

Gather information on the child's progress toward the goals recorded on the updated Goal Development Form (Form 10) and the Practice Plan—*Update Your Child's Goals* (Form 36). Use parent

report, observation of a parent–child interaction, and interaction with the child yourself (if necessary) to understand the child’s skills.

Ask the parent to report any progress the child has made on his goals since the most recent coaching session. For example, you might ask:

“You were working on increasing your child’s single words. How is he communicating now?”
 “You were working on increasing your child’s functional play. How is he playing now?”

Have the parent use the intervention strategies with her child while you observe. This observation will help you determine the child’s current skill level, as well as the parent’s continued ability to use the intervention techniques.

While the parent interacts with her child, take notes on the child’s progress toward his goals and the parent’s use of the Project ImPACT strategies (use the Intervention Fidelity Checklist, Form 4). If you feel you need additional information on the child to assess progress, take time to interact with the child yourself.

Update the Child’s Goals as Needed

Use a collaborative approach to help the parent determine which of the child’s goals should be updated and whether new goals are appropriate. Even if the child has not met a goal, the parent may have a new goal that she would like to target in one of the four core areas. Solicit input from the parent throughout this process. You might say something like this:

“It is great to see that Brianna is beginning to use single words when you use a choice. Do you think we should keep this goal and work on using less supportive prompts such as a question or a time delay? Or are there other communication goals you have for Brianna?”

If you both feel that the current goals are appropriate and the parent would like to continue targeting them at home, write them down on the Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38).

If you decide to develop new goals for the child, you and the parent should complete the SCC (Form 8 for the parent, Form 9 for you) to determine goals in the four core areas. Use a blank copy of the Goal Development Form (Form 10) to structure the goal-setting process by identifying or restating the long-term goals, identifying the child’s current skills, and writing short-term goals that are specific and measurable. Once goals are developed, you can write the short-term goals on the Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38), which you will send home with the parent.

Review and Practice the Project ImPACT Strategies

Review the Project ImPACT Strategies

Briefly review the key points of techniques, using the ImPACT F.A.C.T.S Review Sheet—**Shape the Interaction** (Form 18). Give the parent an opportunity to ask any questions she might have about any of the techniques, or about ways how to use them at home to address her child’s goals.

This sets the stage for demonstrating and coaching on only a few techniques at a time. Choose the techniques that are challenging for the parent and that will help the child use the new skill identified.

Demonstrate the Project ImPACT Strategies

Ask the parent if there is a specific goal she would like you to target. Explain how you will move up and down the pyramid to address the targeted goal:

“Watch how I move up and down the pyramid to help Brianna use two words to request. I begin by focusing on her and adjusting my communication to model phrases I would like her to use. If she is not initiating with me, or if I want her to use the new skill, I will move up the pyramid. During times when she is very motivated by the activity, I am going to prompt her to use two words. To give her the opportunity to use her language spontaneously, and to keep her engaged and having fun, I will move back down the pyramid and respond to her spontaneous skills.”

Describe what you are doing as you demonstrate use of *Shape the Interaction* to target any new goals the parent has identified or goals that have presented a challenge at home. Identify the techniques as you use them and the child’s responses. It can be helpful to demonstrate how the parent can respond and expand on the child’s initiation or teach a new skill to address the goal. This explanation helps the parent to continue balancing the use of the techniques. If the parent has reported difficulty with specific intervention techniques or strategies, be sure to demonstrate them with the child.

Once the demonstration is over, ask the parent: “What did you notice during the interaction?” If the parent has difficulty answering ask more specific questions, such as these:

“What techniques seemed to work to help your child use the new skill we identified?”

“What did I do when he became frustrated?”

Have the Parent Practice, and Give Feedback

Have the parent practice the techniques that have been highlighted during the review and demonstration. Remember that feedback should not be provided on too many techniques at once. If you notice that the parent is having difficulty with a particular technique that you have not reviewed, make a note of it and then repeat the steps of review, demonstration, and practice.

Help the Parent Reflect, and Plan for Practice

Have the Parent Reflect

Ask questions that will help the parent think about the session and about ways to use the Project ImPACT strategies to address her child’s goals. Questions could include these:

“Which techniques are most effective in addressing your child’s goals?”

“What prompts seem to be most effective for increasing the complexity of your child’s communication/play/imitation skills?”

“Do you have questions that have not yet been addressed?”

Help the Parent Complete the Practice Plan

With the parent, complete the Practice Plan—*Follow-Up* (Form 38). Restate the goals that you identified with the parent and wrote on the Practice Plan earlier in this session. If the session has been spent on review and practice of the strategies with the previous goals, ask the parent if she would like to continue with the same goals or if she has a new goal she would like to address.

Help the parent identify at least two activities for each goal, to help the parent use the strategies across settings. Ask open-ended questions about the activities and the strategies. For example:

“You have a goal to help Brianna increase her spontaneous use of single words to request. Which strategies do you think you can use to help her use her language spontaneously? Which activities do you think would work best for teaching spontaneous requests?”

If the parent has difficulty choosing strategies to work on, you can provide more support by offering choices of techniques from **Focus on Your Child**, **Adjust Your Communication**, **Create Opportunities**, **Teach New Skills**, and **Shape the Interaction**.

Help the Parent Problem-Solve Potential Challenges

Ask what might be hard about using the Project ImPACT strategies at home and in the community. Take time to brainstorm possible solutions. Common challenges and solutions for use of the techniques together and use in the community are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips table at the end of Session 12 (page 420). Common challenges and solutions for the specific techniques are listed in the Troubleshooting Tips tables at the ends of the relevant individual coaching sessions.

Assign Reflection

Instruct the parent to write down on the Practice Plan what went well and what was hard. Tell her that this will be reviewed during the next follow-up coaching session. The parent may choose to video-record an interaction at some point during the next month and to receive feedback on the interaction during the follow-up session.

APPENDIX

Web-Based Materials

The companion website for this manual can be accessed easily at www.guilford.com/ingersoll-materials. The site contains PowerPoint slides for group presentations; copies of all the forms that are used in Project ImPACT; and links to videos demonstrating Project ImPACT intervention techniques. The companion website for the parent manual can be accessed at www.guilford.com/ingersoll-parents.

Forms

All forms that are used in Project ImPACT are organized by number, as shown in Table A.1. Forms can be downloaded and printed for use in the program. Seven of the forms to be used by a coach can be filled out electronically. The session guidelines in Parts II and III of this manual provide information on when each form should be used.

PowerPoint Presentations

The PowerPoint slides are used with the group parent coaching model (see Part III) and can be downloaded from the website. The slides are organized by unit and correspond with the step-by-step guide in Part III. Each slide has a “notes” section, which highlights the important information the coach should cover in presenting each slide, and which includes a sample script for each slide. (This information, along with the number of the corresponding slide, also appears in the Part III text on the group sessions.) Parents in the group program should have copies of the parent manual, but the PowerPoint presentations for each group session can also be printed out and distributed to parents at each group session as optional handouts for taking notes.

Video Examples of Techniques

Video examples of parents using the Project ImPACT intervention techniques with their children can be accessed through the companion website. These video clips let parents see what the techniques look like in action. Two or more examples of a technique are often provided, in order to demonstrate its use with children at different stages of language development. This can help parents understand how the technique may be used in different activities; how it can be used to teach different skills; and how children’s responses

TABLE A.1. Project ImPACT Forms

The following forms can be downloaded from the companion website and printed by book purchasers for use in their programs. Forms that also appear in the parent manual are indicated below with an asterisk (*). Forms with a dagger (†) may be completed electronically before printing.

Form 1. Implementation Plan†	Form 21. Video Review Form— Teach New Communication Skills
Form 2. Intake Questionnaire†	Form 22. Video Review Form— Teach New Imitation and Play Skills
Form 3. Getting Started Questionnaire	Form 23. Community Activity Schedule*
Form 4. Intervention Fidelity Checklist	Form 24. Parent Satisfaction Survey
Form 5. Collaborative Goal-Setting Fidelity Checklist	Form 25. Functional Assessment Interview†
Form 6. Coaching Fidelity Checklist	Form 26. Challenging Behavior Record*
Form 7. Group Fidelity Checklist	Form 27. Summary Statement*
Form 8. Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version)*	Form 28. Behavior Plan*†
Form 9. Social Communication Checklist (Coach Version)†	Form 29. Practice Plan— <i>Set Up Your Home for Success</i> *
Form 10. Goal Development Form†	Form 30. Practice Plan— Focus on Your Child *
Form 11. Daily Activity Schedule*	Form 31. Practice Plan— Adjust Your Communication *
Form 12. Session Data Sheet† Session Data Sheet—How to Use Session Data Sheet—Example	Form 32. Practice Plan— Create Opportunities *
Form 13. Play Action Ideas	Form 33. Practice Plan— <i>Prompts and Rewards</i> *
Form 14. ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet— Focus and Adjust	Form 34. Practice Plan— Teach New Skills *
Form 15. ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet— Create Opportunities	Form 35. Practice Plan— Shape the Interaction *
Form 16. ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet— Teach New Communication Skills	Form 36. Practice Plan— <i>Update Your Child's Goals</i> *
Form 17. ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet— Teach New Imitation and Play Skills	Form 37. Practice Plan— <i>Plan for Continued Success</i> *
Form 18. ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. Review Sheet— Shape the Interaction	Form 38. Practice Plan— <i>Follow-Up</i>
Form 19. Video Review Form— Focus and Adjust	Form 39. Practice Plan— <i>Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior</i> *
Form 20. Video Review Form— Create Opportunities	Form 40. Practice Plan— <i>Prevent the Challenging Behavior</i> *
	Form 41. Practice Plan— <i>Change the Consequences</i> *
	Form 42. Practice Plan— <i>Teach a Replacement Skill</i> *

may vary, depending on their abilities. Four stages of language development are represented by the clips: Preverbal, First Words, Word Combinations, and Sentences.

The video clips are designed to be used with the group coaching model and to be shown during the group presentations. The guidelines for the group sessions in Part III detail when and how to use the specific video clips within these sessions, and provide a description of each clip. (These descriptions are also included in the “notes” sections of the relevant PowerPoint slides.) Prescreen the video clips to determine the most appropriate examples, based on the skills of the children in your current group. For example, if

the group is composed exclusively of parents of infants and toddlers, you may choose to show only clips of preverbal children.

The video clips can also be used with the individual model, if a parent would benefit from seeing specific examples of the intervention techniques, or if you are coaching remotely. These clips should not be used in lieu of live demonstrations of techniques when the child is present. The clips should be shown after you discuss the techniques illustrated in the clips.

Table A.2 lists the video clips in the sequence in which the techniques are presented in the group program (Part III). The technique each clip illustrates and its level of language development are also noted in this table.

Viewing the Video Examples

You can stream the videos when you are connected to the Internet. This option works best if you are showing individual video clips to a parent or coaching remotely. If you will be showing the videos in a location without high-speed Internet, we recommend that you download the videos and save them locally on your computer.

Embedding the Video Clips into the PowerPoint Presentations

You can embed the video examples into the PowerPoint presentations, so that you can show the videos during the group presentations. To do this, you will need to have downloaded the videos you wish to use and saved these videos on your computer.

We recommend creating a new slide for each video you wish to show. To do this, simply copy the relevant “Let’s see an example . . .” slide in the PowerPoint presentation. Then use the “Insert Video” function in PowerPoint to insert the video from your computer into the slide. Consult the “Help” feature in the version of PowerPoint you are using if you need assistance.

If you plan to show the PowerPoint presentation on a different computer after you have inserted the video, you should make sure the video clip is in the same folder as the presentation. That folder can then be copied to a USB drive or the hard drive of the computer you wish to use, and the video will remain available to the presentation.

TABLE A.2. Video Clips of Techniques

This table lists the video clips illustrating techniques. These clips are available for download or streaming from the companion website. The headings indicate the Part III unit and group session in which the clips may be used; not every clip needs to be used in each session. The developmental language level is also noted for each clip below.

Unit 1. Getting Started—Session 1

Clip 1: Before and After Project ImPACT, First Words
 Clip 2: Before and After Project ImPACT, Word Combinations

Unit 2. Focus on Your Child and Adjust Your Communication—Session 3

Focus on Your Child

Clip 3: *Follow Your Child's Lead*, Preverbal
 Clip 4: *Follow Your Child's Lead*, Sentences
 Clip 5: *Imitate Your Child*, First Words
 Clip 6: *Imitate Your Child*, Word Combinations

Adjust Your Communication

Clip 7: *Use Animation*, Preverbal
 Clip 8: *Use Animation*, Sentences
 Clip 9: *Model and Expand Communication*, Preverbal
 Clip 10: *Model and Expand Communication*, First Words
 Clip 11: *Model and Expand Communication*, Sentences

Unit 3. Create Opportunities—Session 5

Playful Obstruction

Clip 12: *Playful Obstruction*, First Words

Balanced Turns

Clip 13: *Balanced Turns*, First Words

Communicative Temptations

Clip 14: Put Fun Things in Sight and out of Reach, First Words
 Clip 15: Control Access to Items, Sentences
 Clip 16: Give Small Portions, Word Combinations
 Clip 17: Use Items That Require Assistance, First Words
 Clip 18: Use Items That Require Assistance, Sentences
 Clip 19: Have an Item Missing, Sentences
 Clip 20: Present a Silly Situation, Sentences

Unit 4. Teach New Communication Skills—Session 7

Prompts for Using Communication

Clip 21: Use a Time Delay, First Words
 Clip 22: Use a Time Delay, Word Combinations
 Clip 23: Ask a Question, Preverbal
 Clip 24: Ask a Question, First Words
 Clip 25: Use a Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence, First Words
 Clip 26: Use a Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence, Sentences
 Clip 27: Give a Choice, First Words
 Clip 28: Give a Choice, Word Combinations
 Clip 29: Model Language for Your Child to Imitate, First Words
 Clip 30: Use a Verbal Routine, First Words
 Clip 31: Model a Gesture for Your Child to Imitate, Preverbal
 Clip 32: Use Physical Guidance, Preverbal
 Clip 33: Adjust Support, Preverbal
 Clip 34: Adjust Support, First Words
 Clip 35: Adjust Support, Sentences

Prompts for Understanding Communication

Clip 36: Understanding Communication, Preverbal
 Clip 37: Understanding Communication, First Words
 Clip 38: Understanding Communication, Word Combinations

Unit 5. Teach New Imitation and Play Skills—Session 9

Prompts for Imitation

Clip 39: Object Imitation, Preverbal

Clip 41: Gesture Imitation, Sentences

Clip 40: Object Imitation, First Words

Prompts for Expanding Play

Clip 42: Make a Leading Comment, Sentences

Clip 47: Physical Guidance, Preverbal

Clip 43: Ask a Question, Sentences

Clip 48: Adjust Support, Preverbal

Clip 44: Give a Choice, Word Combinations

Clip 49: Adjust Support, First Words

Clip 45: Give a Verbal Instruction,

Clip 50: Adjust Support, Sentences—Pretend Play

Word Combinations

Clip 51: Adjust Support, Sentences—Symbolic Play

Clip 46: Model an Action for Your Child to Imitate,

First Words

Unit 6. Shape the Interaction and Moving Forward—Session 11

Clip 52: *Shape the Interaction*, First Words—

Clip 54: *Shape the Interaction*, Sentences—Snack

Drinking Fountain

Clip 53: *Shape the Interaction*, First Words—

At the Park

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Teaching Social Communication

SECOND EDITION

to Children with Autism
& Other Developmental
Delays

The
Project ImPACT
**Manual for
Parents**

Brooke Ingersoll and Anna Dvortcsak



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About the Authors

Brooke Ingersoll, PhD, BCBA-D, is Associate Professor of Psychology at Michigan State University, where she is Director of the Autism Research Lab. She has published extensively on the development, evaluation, and dissemination of social communication interventions for children with autism spectrum disorder and their families, and provides training to professionals nationally and internationally. With Anna Dvortcsak, she is codeveloper of Project ImPACT (Improving Parents As Communication Teachers).

Anna Dvortcsak, MS, CCC-SLP, is a speech pathologist in private practice in Portland, Oregon. She provides consulting, training to families with children with autism spectrum disorder and social communication disorders, individualized speech and language services, and training to professionals nationally and internationally. Ms. Dvortcsak conducts research on the efficacy of interventions for children with autism spectrum disorder and has presented her findings at professional conferences and in peer-reviewed articles and book chapters.

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About This Manual

This manual is written for parents like you: parents of a young child who has difficulty interacting and communicating. This includes children who have or are at risk for social communication delays and autism spectrum disorder or ASD. It is designed to be used as part of a Project ImPACT parent program. ImPACT stands for Improving Parents As Communication Teachers. This program does not teach parenting skills. Rather, it teaches you to use special techniques to help your child develop social communication skills. These techniques are “evidence-based,” which means that they have been researched and found to be effective in helping children improve their social communication skills. Many professionals use these techniques when they work with children who have social communication delays, and research shows that parents can learn these same techniques to help their children.

You are likely to learn the strategies best if you work with a coach. However, you may find the information helpful even if you are not currently in a coaching program. If you are not working with a coach, we suggest that you talk through the information with family members, friends, or other service providers who know your child. If you are participating in a group or individual Project ImPACT program with a coach, you can expect to practice using the techniques with your child during your coaching sessions. Your coach will help you to set goals for your child, show you what to do, and then give you a chance to practice each technique while offering suggestions. Together, you will decide which techniques work best for you and your child. You will also work together to plan practice times with your child at home.

Many children with social communication delays have behavior problems such as tantrums and aggression because they have trouble communicating. As their social communication skills improve, their behavior problems often get better. However, parents of children with more severe behavior problems may benefit from additional strategies to help them manage their child’s behavior. Therefore, we have included an optional chapter at the end of this manual called **Manage Your Child’s Challenging Behavior**. This chapter describes positive behavior support strategies. Your coach will help you decide whether you and your child will benefit from learning these strategies.

This manual is the second edition of *Teaching Social Communication to Children with Autism*. It includes a number of updates to make the manual more user-friendly and appropriate for a wider range of children. This second edition also has a companion website, where you can use links to

view video examples of parents using intervention techniques with their child. In addition, you can download electronic copies of all of the checklists, Practice Plans, and other forms included in this manual.

Although we use the term “parents” throughout this manual, this program is designed for all caregivers of young children with social communication delays, including extended family members and legal guardians. For simplicity’s sake, we use the pronoun “he” to refer to a child. However, we recognize that many children with social communication challenges are girls.

CHAPTER 1

Getting Started



Positively ImPACT your child's social communication development.

Overview of Project ImPACT

The Skills Your Child Will Learn

- Social engagement
- Communication
- Imitation
- Play

Develop Goals for Your Child

The Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S.

- **Focus on Your Child**
- **Address Your Communication**
- **Create Opportunities**
- **Teach New Skills**
- **Shape the Interaction**

Prepare Yourself for Success

- Make time to practice.
- Talk to your coach about your needs.
- Gather support from your team.
- Plan ahead for what will be hard.
- Recognize your family's accomplishments.

Set Up Your Home for Success

- Make your routines predictable.
- Identify daily activities for practice.
- Make time for play.
- Set up a space to play.
- Limit distractions.
- Rotate toys and materials.

Overview of Project ImPACT

Some children have difficulty with social interaction and social communication. Their social communication challenges may include:

- Difficulty making eye contact, interacting with others, or sharing emotions and activities.
- Difficulty learning to gesture, speak, or follow directions.
- Difficulty imitating others or playing with toys in imaginative ways.
- A tendency to repeat sounds, words, or actions in unusual and repetitive ways.

These challenges are not caused by anything that you, as a parent, may or may not have done. However, you can help your child build social communication skills by using special teaching strategies, which you will learn in this program. The ImPACT in Project ImPACT stands for Improving Parents As Communication Teachers.

How This Program Benefits Your Family

When you learn and use the strategies in this program, you can teach your child throughout the day during everyday activities. There are clear benefits for your whole family when you do:

- Using these strategies at home will give your child many more hours of learning and practice. This will improve his social communication skills and lead to fewer behavior problems.
- Your child will learn during meaningful activities like meals, bathtime, bedtime, and playtime. This will help him use his skills where they matter most. It will also help him use them in new situations and keep using them over time.
- Learning these strategies can make you more confident in your ability to help your child develop and grow. It can also make interacting with your child more enjoyable. Parents who participate in programs like Project ImPACT report less parenting stress and more positive interactions with their child.
- Once you have learned the strategies, you can teach them to other important people in your child's life, including grandparents and siblings, so that they can help your child too.

The Skills Your Child Will Learn

This program will help you encourage your child's skills in four areas, all of which are key building blocks for learning: social engagement, communication, imitation, and play.

Social Engagement

Social interaction and engagement are the foundation for the development of social communication skills. Children begin engaging with others through eye contact and facial expressions during face-to-face social games. As they grow, they start to share their interests and attention to objects

with others during play and other activities, using eye contact, gestures, and words. This is called *joint attention*.

When children have difficulty interacting with people in these ways, they have fewer opportunities to learn from others. Building your child's social engagement is the starting point of this program. When your child is engaged with you, he can learn from you.

Communication

Communication is how your child understands and uses facial expressions, gestures, sounds, words, and sentences. Before children develop verbal language, they communicate by using non-verbal behaviors, such as eye contact and vocalizations, and then gestures, such as reaching, showing, giving, and pointing. Children use communication for a variety of reasons, including to ask for things (request), tell you about things they don't like (protest), get people's attention, tell you about things they see (comment), share information, and do what you ask (follow your directions).

Children who do not communicate effectively on their own have trouble expressing their needs and may develop problem behaviors to get their needs met. This program helps you teach your child to communicate better, using gestures, words, or sentences, depending on his current skills. This program focuses on building spontaneous communication, so that your child can communicate on his own. It will also help your child understand you better and follow your directions.

Imitation

Imitating, or copying what others are doing, is important for development. Children use imitation to learn new skills, such as how to play with a new toy, perform a new task, or use new words, and to communicate their interest in others. Children begin imitating familiar actions, actions they do on their own. As they grow, they start to imitate new actions, and to use back-and-forth imitation during play to interact with other children.

When children have difficulty imitating, it makes interacting and learning new skills much harder. This program helps you teach your child to imitate you during play and other familiar routines, and encourages the back-and-forth nature of social imitation.

Play

Play involves interacting with toys and other objects for fun. Play skills are important because children develop and practice new language and social skills through play. Play also helps children learn problem-solving skills, imagination, perspective-taking skills, and motor skills. Children interact with each other through play, so developing play skills is important for peer interactions. Pretend play and language both involve symbolic thinking, or understanding that one thing can stand for another. So encouraging pretend play strengthens the foundation for language skills.

Some children do not play in a traditional way. They may not be interested in toys, or they may play in unusual or repetitive ways. This program shows you how to help your child play in more flexible, creative, and complex ways.

Develop Goals for Your Child

It is important to start by setting goals for your child. Setting goals helps you see how to get your child from where he is now to where you want him to be. It also lets you see when he is making progress. You can start by identifying your child's current skills in each of these areas.

You and your coach will each complete a copy of the Social Communication Checklist (the parent version of this checklist is the first form at the end of this chapter). This form asks questions about your child's current abilities in each of the four skill areas. The abilities on the checklist are listed in the sequence in which most children learn these skills. Your completed checklist can show you the skill level where your child is now, as well as the next skill level. You can also use the social, communication, imitation, and play development charts (Tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4) to get a better understanding of your child's current developmental level and what to expect as your child grows.

There are a few things to consider when you are setting goals for your child:

- Select only a few skills to work on at a time. We recommend one to two goals for each of the core areas in which your child is having challenges.
- Goals should be meaningful and important to you and your child.
- The goals you select should be ones your child is able to meet within the timeframe of this program. Appropriate social communication goals are skills that are one step above what your child is able to do on his own. Usually, these are skills that you have indicated that your child can do "Sometimes, but not consistently" on the Social Communication Checklist. You can always add new goals as your child learns new skills.

Your coach will help you take your long-term, general goals and turn them into more specific, measurable ones that you can focus on together during this program. You will write the goals you select on the Child Goals form (the second form at the end of this chapter).

TABLE 1.1. Social Development Chart

Social stage	Description
Responsive engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at you and smiles during face-to-face play. • Stays with you when you join him in play. • Smiles back when you smile at him.
Reciprocal engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses eye contact, smiling, and vocalizations to keep face-to-face play going. • Makes sounds back and forth with you.
Coordinated joint attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at an object and then back at you during a shared activity. • Uses eye contact, smiling, and vocalizations to engage with you during toy play.
Response to joint attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds when you point or look toward an item by looking at it. • Responds to requests for a turn.
Initiation of joint attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives, points, or shows items to share. • Begins taking turns with toys or other objects.

TABLE 1.2. Communication Development Chart

Communication stage	Description
Preintentional communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cries, coos, smiles, and grasps without a clear reason. • Uses eye contact. • Babbles and vocalizes.
Preverbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks for objects or food by pointing or reaching. • Uses gestures or vocalizations to protest. • Gives or shows items to share. • Babbling becomes more word-like.
First words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses spontaneous single words to request, protest, label, comment, and gain attention. • Follows simple directions. • Gives greetings and farewells. • Imitates language.
Word combinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses two words together for a number of reasons. • Uses many words and learns new words every day. • Uses nouns, verbs, and descriptors when combining words. • Responds to “what” and “where” questions. • Asks, “What is that?” • Points to objects, body parts, familiar people, and pictures when they are named. • Follows simple instructions.
Sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a variety of phrases and sentences. • Uses plurals, prepositions, different verb tenses, and pronouns to communicate. • Tells about past and future events. • Asks questions to gain information, such as “What is that?”, “Where is my car?”, or “Why can’t I have cake?” • Uses language to express emotions. • Responds to most questions, including “how,” “why,” and “when” questions. • Follows two-step directions. • Begins to have a back-and-forth conversation.
Complex language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a variety of sentences in many different settings for many reasons. • Uses verbal and nonverbal language together. • Tells simple stories. • Understands abstract language. • Follows multiple-step directions.

The Project IMPACT F.A.C.T.S.

You will help your child meet his goals by using Project IMPACT strategies within your daily routines and interactions with your child. You will learn five strategy sets that build on each other: **F**ocus on Your Child, **A**djust Your Communication, **C**reate Opportunities, **T**each New Skills, and **S**hape the Interaction. We call these the Project IMPACT F.A.C.T.S. For each strategy set, you will learn one or more techniques that you can use to help your child. The F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, as shown on page 3, will be used throughout the program to help you remember. (Note

TABLE 1.3. Imitation Development Chart

Imitation stage	Description
Mutual imitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles and looks more at you when you imitate him. • Imitates familiar vocalizations and simple motor movements.
Immediate imitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes what he is doing when you imitate him to see if you continue. • Imitates you when you clap, wave, or point. • Imitates both familiar and new actions with objects and toys.
Delayed imitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitates two or more actions in a row, both immediately and after a delay. • Imitates what you are intending to do, even if you don't show him.
Reciprocal imitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes turns being imitated and imitating you for an extended period.

that the names of the five F.A.C.T.S. strategy sets are capitalized and given in boldface throughout this book. The names of the specific techniques that make up the F.A.C.T.S., such as *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child* for **Focus on Your Child**, are capitalized and given in italics.)

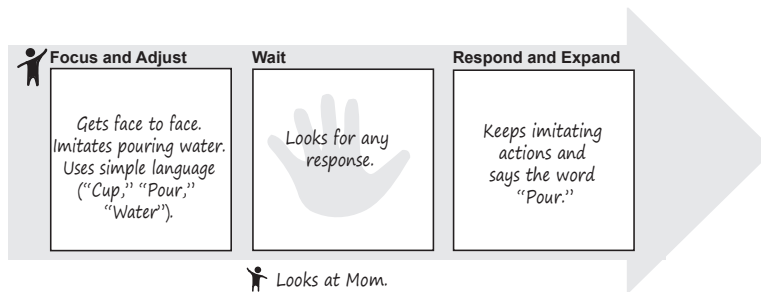
First, you will learn to **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. These strategies help your child engage with you and the activity, and can be used throughout all of your interactions with your child. This is important, because children learn best when they are actively

TABLE 1.4. Play Development Chart

Play stage	Description
Exploratory play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores toys and objects by touching, mouthing, visually examining, banging, throwing, and dropping them. • Shows interest in new objects.
Combinatorial play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts toys and objects together. • Nests and stacks toys. • Puts objects in containers.
Cause-and-effect play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plays with pop-up toys. • Activates toys by pressing buttons or turning knobs.
Functional play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses miniature toys for their intended purpose (pushes car, puts phone to ear). • Directs play actions to self (pretends to eat or sleep). • Directs play toward you and then dolls (feeds you, puts baby to bed).
Pretend play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretends that one thing represents another (a block is a car). • Gives an object characteristics it does not have (a toy stove is hot). • Animates characters (makes doll walk) and pantomimes actions (pours "tea"). • Links several pretend actions together to tell a story.
Dramatic play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretends to be something else, such as an animal, firefighter, or superhero. • Pretend plays with peers to tell stories or act out events. • Play becomes more cooperative.

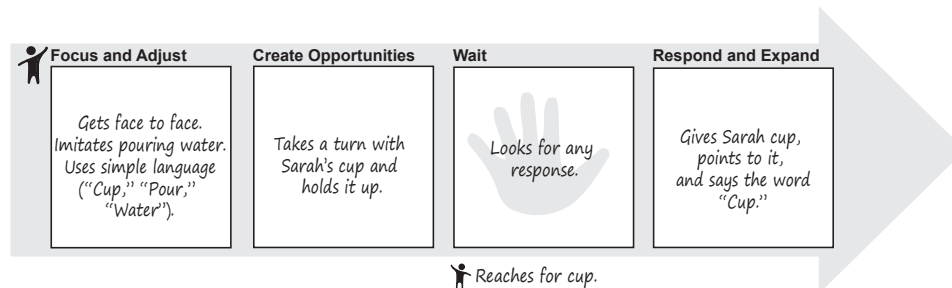
engaged. When you use these strategies, you let your child choose the activity; you get face to face, joining in the activity while using big gestures and simple language; then you wait and watch for his response. You respond in a logical way to all of your child's actions, including eye contact, gestures, sounds, language, and emotions, as well as his watching or imitating what you are doing. This teaches your child that his behavior carries meaning and gets a response from you.

The sequence graphic below shows an example of how Sarah's mom uses these strategies during a bath routine to encourage her daughter to engage with her for longer periods of time. Sarah is playing in the bath, pouring water from a cup. Her mother practices **Focus on Your Child** by getting face to face and imitating Sarah pouring water. She practices **Adjust Your Communication** by using simple language to talk about what they are doing. Every minute, Sarah's mom waits to see how Sarah will respond. Sarah responds by looking at her mom. Sarah's mom continues to imitate Sarah and use simple language.



Next, you will learn to **Create Opportunities**. This strategy helps your child to *initiate*—that is, to start communication or play with you *on his own*. Initiation is very important, because children who do not initiate have trouble learning from their experiences as they grow. You will use the **Create Opportunities** set of techniques to help your child initiate if he doesn't do this on his own, or to gain your child's attention. When you use this strategy set, you continue to focus on your child and adjust your communication. Then you create an opportunity for your child to show or tell you that he wants something and you wait. You respond to his action in a logical way and expand on what he says or does.

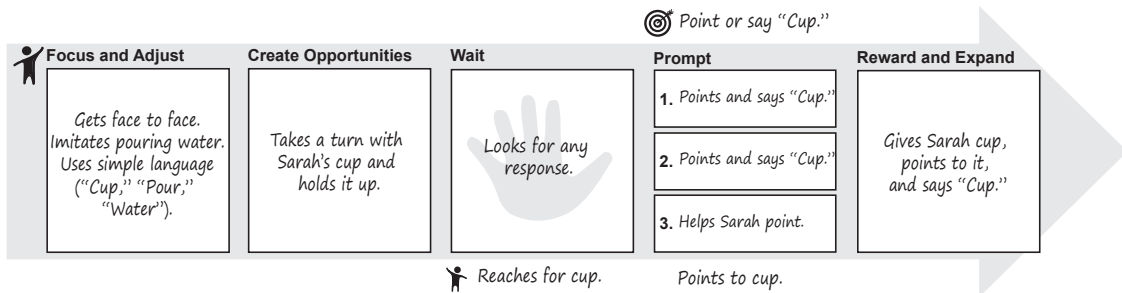
Let's go back to Sarah playing in the bath, pouring water from a cup. Sarah's mother continues to use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, and then she practices **Create Opportunities** by taking a turn with the cup. This encourages Sarah to initiate spontaneous communication. Sarah's response is to reach for the cup (an initiation). Her mother responds by giving Sarah the cup and expanding on Sarah's reach by pointing and saying the word "Cup." This sequence is illustrated below.



Reaching toward the cup may not be the way Sarah’s mom wants her to communicate. She might prefer a word or a point, but Sarah’s reaching is an initiation, which is one of the main goals of Project ImPACT. So her mom responds to it by giving her the cup, and shows her a more complex way of communicating by saying the word “Cup.”

After this, you will learn to **Teach New Skills**. This strategy set uses *prompts* and *rewards* to help your child communicate, imitate, or play in new and more complex ways. When you teach new skills, you continue to focus on your child, adjust your communication, create an opportunity, and wait for your child to respond. But now, rather than responding to any action your child does, you will help him to use a specific new skill and wait to reward him until he uses the new skill.

In the sequence graphic below, Sarah’s mom uses **Teach New Skills** to help Sarah communicate in a new, more complex way. Notice that the first three steps are the same as for encouraging initiations. The difference is that after Sarah reaches, her mom does not immediately give her the cup. Instead, her mom prompts her to use a more complex skill: a point. Her mom waits. When Sarah doesn’t respond, her mom gives her a more supportive prompt, forming Sarah’s hand into a point. This counts as Sarah’s using the point. Her mom rewards her with the cup and expands on her response by saying the word “Cup.” A key difference between encouraging initiations and teaching a new skill is in *when* you respond to and reward your child’s behavior.



Using new skills will challenge your child, which is good. But he may get frustrated if you use this strategy set too often. For that reason, you will use **Teach New Skills** less often than you will use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.

By the end of the program, you will learn how to **Shape the Interaction** by moving up and down the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, based on how your child is responding. You will shift between playful, fun strategies that keep your child engaged, and strategies that are more supportive and teach your child new skills.

Prepare Yourself for Success

Since this is a parent coaching program, it is important to prepare yourself for success. Here are a few suggestions to help you make Project ImPACT successful for your family.

Make Time to Practice

Learning new skills takes time and practice. You will give yourself the best chance of success if you set aside a little time to practice the strategies with your child each day. Eventually they will become part of your daily life.

- We recommend at least 15–20 minutes of practice per day. You may find it easier to practice for shorter periods spread throughout the day. Your coach can help you figure out when and where to practice.
- You may want to reduce other commitments while you are learning these strategies. Talk with your coach about supports you might need to make time for learning and practicing the techniques.

Talk to Your Coach about Your Needs



How do you learn best?

Some parents learn best by reading, others by listening or discussing, and still others by watching. Let your coach know how you learn best. It's OK if you're not sure at first. It will become clearer as you move through the program.

- Some strategies in this program may come more naturally to you than others. That's OK, too. Talk to your coach about what feels easy and what feels hard. Your coach can help you gain more confidence through your practice.
- You may think of questions after you've met with your coach. You can keep a log of questions, successes, or challenges to share with your coach at your next meeting.



You know your child the best. If something you are learning doesn't feel right for you or your child, let your coach know.

Gather Support from Your Team

It helps parents when they have a team that can support them while working through this program. This team could include your child's family, friends, or other service providers—anyone who can help you make this program successful.

- Reach out to family members and friends to let them know how they can help. For example, they might be able to provide child care for your other children while you are practicing with your child, or take over some of your responsibilities so you can attend sessions.
 - You can talk with your coach about how to involve your family and friends in the program. You can also share strategies you've learned with your family.
 - Talk to your child's other service providers about this program, so that they can support you in what you are learning.
 - If you are not working with a coach, think about other people you can ask for help in working through the program.



Who can you ask for support while completing this program?

Plan Ahead for What Will Be Hard

If you plan ahead for what will be hard, you will be more likely to have success if problems come up.

- Think ahead about things that might get in the way of doing this program. Examples might include transportation to sessions, scheduling conflicts, finding child care for siblings, finding time, or getting family members on board.



What might make it hard to complete this program?

- Talk to your coach about any challenges you think might come up, and brainstorm possible solutions.

Recognize Your Family's Accomplishments

There may be times during this program when you feel overwhelmed or frustrated. We all feel this way sometimes! Don't be too hard on yourself.

- Take note of something good your child does every day, even if it is small. These accomplishments can remind you that your child is making progress every day.
- Recognize your own accomplishments. Remind yourself of all of the things you do for your child every day, and give yourself credit for learning new ways to interact with your child!

Set Up Your Home for Success

You will use the Project ImPACT strategies during your everyday interactions with your child, such as playtime, meals, dressing, or bathtime. By adding a little extra time to daily routines, you can create many learning opportunities for your child without making big changes to your schedule. When your child has many chances to use a skill throughout the day during meaningful activities, he is more likely to use it in new situations. This is called *generalization*. By making a few small changes at home, you can make learning and using the strategies during your daily routines most successful.

Make Your Routines Predictable

Many young children are more comfortable when they know what to expect. By making your daily routines predictable, you help your child know what is coming next. This can help reduce frustration, make it easier for him to interact with you, and reduce challenging behaviors.

- Consider carrying out your routines in a similar way each time as much as possible. For example, bedtime might always involve putting on pajamas, helping your child get into bed, then reading a book to your child.
- Try to make your major routines happen at about the same times each day. These routines include getting up, meals, naps, bathtime, and going to bed.
- Repeat the routines every day when possible, so your child can get used to them. Predictability can be very important, especially for routines that your child may not enjoy at first.
- Make playtime predictable, to help your child get used to playing with you. For example, always play immediately after lunch, when your child wakes up from a nap, right after school, or after dinner.



Some children have difficulty with certain routines. If your child is having significant difficulty with a routine and the strategies in this program don't work, you and your coach can decide whether to go over Chapter 8, **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior**.



What activities do you think will work best for teaching your child?

Identify Daily Activities for Practice

The best routines for using the strategies are ones that are familiar, meaningful to your child, and manageable for you.

- Use the Daily Activity Schedule (the third form at the end of this chapter) to help you and your coach identify the best daily routines for practice. We've started the form off by listing some common activities from wake-up time to bedtime.
- Good routines for teaching are ones that you and your child do most days, and that your child knows well.
- Think about routines that your child enjoys. If your child doesn't like a routine, you may have difficulty using the strategies.
- Try to add 5–10 minutes to your routines for teaching, and make sure you can focus on your child. Don't choose a routine in which you are usually rushed or can't pay attention to your child.
- As you begin teaching during daily routines, you will probably notice that some strategies work best within certain routines. Think ahead of time about which strategies would work best for you to use in a given routine. For example, the strategies you will learn first often work best during child-directed activities (such as play) and routines your child enjoys (which may include bathtime, reading time, or snacktime).
- You may use some techniques during one routine and other techniques during another. It's OK if you do not use all the techniques in every routine you try. This manual gives suggestions for how to use each of the intervention techniques in different daily routines, so be sure to read the Try This at Home! table for each technique.



Notice how much time you already spend interacting with your child during the day. The goal of this program is to teach you strategies that you can use during the interactions you already have with your child.

Make Time for Play

One very important routine for young children is playtime. Children develop social communication skills during play with others. Therefore, it is very important to make time to play with your child each day.

- Try to plan at least 15–20 minutes each day to sit down and play with your child. Give your child your full attention during this time, and try to avoid interruptions. This can feel like a long block of time for families with a busy schedule. If this is too long, start with several shorter play interactions spread throughout the day.



Have a special set of your child's favorite toys that he only plays with when he is playing with you. This can make your playtime together more exciting and motivating for your child.

Set Up a Space to Play

Choose a space where you regularly play with your child, to help him understand what to expect during your playtime together. The closer you and your child are to each other, the easier it is to

interact. If your child has difficulty staying near you during play, set up a smaller, more intimate space to keep your child close to you. As play becomes easier, you can move to larger spaces.

- Set up a room or special place in your home to use during playtime.
- Try rearranging furniture to make a smaller space. Some families have set up a smaller space to play in the following ways:



What space in your home can you set up to play with your child?

- Moving a table or couch to block off a corner of the room for play.
 - Using the bathtub.
 - Using a walk-in closet.
 - Putting up a sheet or a divider in a large room.
 - Putting a large blanket or sheet over a table to create a tent.
 - Making a fort out of couch cushions.
- The space you choose will depend on your child and home. It can be a permanent space that stays set up (like a small room or moving furniture), or something temporary that you put up only when you want to use it (like making a tent).
 - Having a smaller play space is especially helpful when you are first learning to use the intervention techniques.
 - The amount of rearranging you will need to do will depend on your child's ability to stay near you during play.

Limit Distractions

It will be easier for your child to pay attention to you when *you* are the most interesting thing in the room!

- Limit loud sounds, strong smells, distracting sights, and other sensations as much as possible.
- Turn off electronics, such as the TV, tablets, phones, video games, or the computer, while you are playing together. If necessary, remove any of these items or cover them with a sheet or blanket.
- Put away clutter and other distracting items, like extra toys.
- Bring out only one or two toys at a time to help your child attend to you. The number of toys you have out will depend on your child's interest and attention.



What sounds, sights, or items distract your child or make it difficult to play with him?

Rotate Toys and Materials

Many children are interested in a toy or other play materials for a few weeks and then lose interest. One way to keep things interesting is to rotate toys, so that your child has “new” play materials available every few weeks.

- Separate your child's toys into a few sets. Each set should have some toys your child loves, and some he likes a little.
- Choose one set to have available, and put the other toys away in the closet, garage, basement, or bins.

- Once your child loses interest in a set of toys, put them away and bring out the next set.
- For many children, rotating toys every 2–3 weeks is helpful, but use your child’s interests to determine how often to rotate.



Some schools or libraries have “toy exchanges” where you can check out toys for a few weeks. Or you could exchange toys with friends or neighbors who have small children.



Which of your child's toys can you put into sets for a toy rotation?

The final form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you *Set Up Your Home for Success*. Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.

Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version)

Child: _____ **Parent:** _____ **Date:** _____

Complete the Social Communication Checklist to help you better understand your child’s current social communication skills, and to help you choose appropriate goals in the areas of social engagement, communication, social imitation, and play. Skills are listed in the order they usually develop in young children. **Please complete this form based on what your child can do on his or her own (i.e., without help from you).**

- For each skill, indicate whether your child uses it *Usually (at least 75% of the time)*; *Sometimes, but not consistently*; or *Rarely or not yet*.
- For items 32–36, if your child uses the skill *Usually* or *Sometimes*, please also indicate the strategy type (nonverbal strategies or verbal language) your child uses *more often*.
- If your child used to use an earlier skill, but no longer does because he or she now uses a later skill (e.g., the child used to babble, but is now using words), check *Usually* for the earlier skill.

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Social Engagement			
1. Does your child enjoy face-to-face interaction with you?			
2. Does your child prefer to be near you or other family members?			
3. Does your child maintain simple social games for at least three turns (e.g., peek-a-boo, chase, pat-a-cake)?			
4. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during social games for at least 5 minutes?			
5. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during social games for at least 10 minutes?			
6. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during toy play for at least 2 minutes?			
7. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during toy play for at least 5 minutes?			
8. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during toy play for at least 10 minutes?			
9. Does your child lead play or try to continue with play once you have stopped (e.g., make eye contact, smile at you, vocalize, touch you)?			
10. Does your child respond to your attempts to draw his or her attention to something or someone (when you use a point, use language, or shift your gaze)?			
11. Does your child make eye contact while interacting or communicating with you?			
12. Does your child initiate activities or play with you (e.g., offer you a toy or find you to come play with him or her)?			
13. Does your child take turns with you?			
14. Does your child point or show you objects that interest him or her for the purposes of sharing?			
15. Does your child provide greetings and farewells when people come into or leave the room?			

(continued)

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Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (page 2 of 4)

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Using Communication—Form (Expressive Language)			
16. Does your child babble or use speech-like sounds?			
17. Does your child use gestures to request items or actions (e.g., lead you to an object, point, sign)?			
18. Does your child communicate a clear choice when presented with two alternatives by reaching, using eye gaze, using sounds, or saying words?			
19. Does your child imitate your speech sounds or language?			
20. Does your child use single words spontaneously?			
21. Does your child name objects?			
22. Does your child name actions?			
23. Does your child combine words into simple phrases (e.g., “Go car,” “Push train”)?			
24. Does your child use words to describe objects (e.g., “Big red ball,” “Little green ball”)?			
25. Does your child use pronouns appropriately?			
26. Does your child use a variety of tenses (e.g., words with “-ing” or “-ed” endings)?			
27. Does your child consistently use sentences to communicate?			
28. Does your child answer simple questions about him- or herself (e.g., “What is your name?”, “How old are you?”)?			
29. Does your child answer simple questions about his or her wants, needs, or environment (e.g., “What do you want?”, “What is it?”, “Where is it?”)? If yes, please check the type of questions: <input type="checkbox"/> What <input type="checkbox"/> Where			
30. Does your child answer “who,” “why,” or “how” questions (e.g., “Who is driving the car?”, “Why are you sad?”)? If yes, please check the type of questions: <input type="checkbox"/> Who <input type="checkbox"/> Why <input type="checkbox"/> How			
Using Communication—Function (Expressive Language)			
31. Does your child babble or use speech-like sounds in a way that is intentionally directed at you (i.e., to communicate)?			
32. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to request desired items or activities? If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i> , please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities: <input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds) <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)			
33. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to protest or tell you he/she does not want something? If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i> , please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities: <input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds) <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)			

(continued)

Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (page 3 of 4)

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Using Communication—Function (Expressive Language) <i>(continued)</i>			
<p>34. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to ask for help?</p> <p>If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i>, please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)</p>			
<p>35. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to share information (e.g., pointing, “I see a plane”)?</p> <p>If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i>, please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)</p>			
<p>36. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to gain your attention (e.g., “Mom, come here”)?</p> <p>If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i>, please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)</p>			
<p>37. Does your child use words to tell you how he or she is feeling (e.g., “hurt,” “mad,” or “happy”)?</p>			
<p>38. Does your child use words to tell you what to do (e.g., “Feed the baby,” “Push the car”)?</p>			
<p>39. Does your child tell you about events that have already occurred (e.g., about the day at school)?</p>			
<p>40. Does your child use words to tell you a simple story?</p>			
<p>41. Does your child ask you questions for information (e.g., “What is that?”, “Where is dog?”)?</p>			
<p>42. Does your child ask “who,” “why,” or “how” questions?</p>			
<p>43. Does your child participate in a conversation that is initiated by an adult for three consecutive turns?</p>			
<p>44. Does your child participate in a conversation that is initiated by an adult for more than three consecutive turns?</p>			
<p>45. Does your child initiate conversations with others?</p>			
Understanding Communication (Receptive Language)			
<p>46. Does your child consistently look when his or her name is called?</p>			
<p>47. Does your child look to people/photos of people when they are named?</p>			
<p>48. Does your child respond by stopping actions in response to inhibitory words (e.g., “No,” “Stop”)?</p>			
<p>49. Does your child identify several named body parts?</p>			
<p>50. Does your child respond appropriately to one-step directions in natural play, dressing, or eating routines (e.g., “Get your cup”)?</p>			

(continued)

Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (page 4 of 4)

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Understanding Communication (Receptive Language) <i>(continued)</i>			
51. Does your child follow directions with more than one step in natural play, dressing, or eating routines (e.g., "Get your cup and put it on the table")?			
52. Does your child retrieve several requested objects that are in the room but not directly in front of him or her?			
53. Does your child complete a task and then put away the play materials?			
Imitation			
54. Does your child imitate facial expressions or movements (e.g., tongue thrust)?			
55. Does your child imitate actions or body movements within songs or known routines (e.g., "Wheels on the Bus" movements)?			
56. Does your child imitate conventional gestures (e.g., wave bye-bye, blow kisses, clap hands)?			
57. Does your child imitate familiar play actions (actions that your child does on his or her own) after seeing you do them?			
58. Does your child imitate novel play actions (actions that your child does not do on his or her own) after seeing you do them?			
59. Does your child engage in longer imitative interactions with you during play, in which you take turns imitating each other?			
Play			
61. Does your child use toys in an exploratory manner (e.g., touching, mouthing, smelling, looking)?			
61. Does your child combine objects (e.g., nesting one object in another, putting objects in containers, lining, stacking, ordering toys in certain ways)?			
62. Does your child use cause-and-effect toys (e.g., mechanical toys, pop-up toys)?			
63. Does your child use toys for their intended purpose (e.g., throw a ball, push a car)?			
64. Does your child direct familiar pretend play actions toward him- or herself (e.g., pretend to eat, pretend to sleep, pretend to talk on a toy phone)?			
65. Does your child direct basic pretend play toward another person or a doll or other toy (e.g., pretend to feed a parent or a baby doll, dress a doll, put a doll to bed)?			
66. Does your child pretend that one thing represents another (e.g., pretend that a block is a car or a stack of blocks is a building), attribute characteristics to an object that it does not have (e.g., pretend that toy food is "hot" or tastes "yummy"), or animate objects (e.g., make a figurine walk or have a doll hold a cup rather than placing a cup to the doll's mouth)?			
67. Does your child link several pretend actions together or tell an extended story with toys (e.g., put a doll in a car and push the car to the store)?			
68. Does your child take on an imaginary role (e.g., pretend to be a doctor, firefighter, mommy/daddy) during play?			
69. Does your child tell an extended story while taking on an imaginary role with at least one other person (e.g., child is doctor, parent is patient; child is mommy, sibling is baby)?			
70. Can your child switch between directing the play and following another person's idea within an extended play sequence?			

Child Goals

Write down the goals that you and your coach have selected for your child in each of the four core areas.

Social Engagement
Communication
Imitation
Play

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Daily Activity Schedule

Child: _____ Parent: _____ Date: _____

Describe activities or routines that you do regularly with your child. If there are activities that are not listed, you can add them to the end of this form. For each activity, provide a brief description, how often you do it with your child, and how much time you can add to it. In the last column, indicate whether your child [E]njoys, [T]olerates, or [R]esists the routine. This can help you select two or three activities in which to practice using the intervention with your child.

Activity	Description	How often?	Time to add?	Child's response
Morning				
Waking up				
Dressing				
Breakfast				
Other				
Afternoon				
Play time				
Lunch				
Naptime				
Other				

(continued)

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Daily Activity Schedule *(page 2 of 2)*

Evening				
Dinner				
Play time				
Bath time				
Story				
Bedtime				
Other				
Additional Routines				

Practice Plan— Set Up Your Home for Success

Date:

PLANNING	
Make time for play:	What will be hard?
Set up a space to play:	Possible solutions:
Limit distractions:	
Rotate toys and materials:	

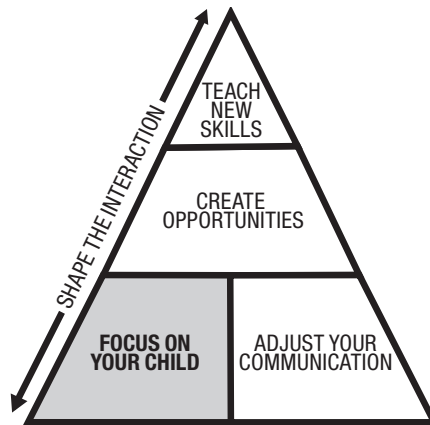
REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	

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CHAPTER 2

Focus on Your Child



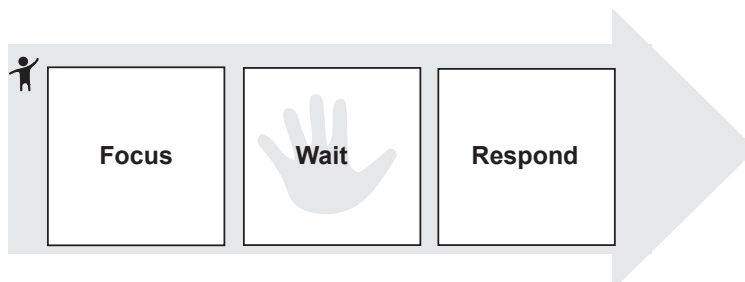
Help your child play with you and set the foundation for engagement and learning.

Follow Your Child's Lead

- Stay face to face with your child.
- Let your child lead the activity.
- Join in your child's play.
- Avoid questions and directions.
- Be sensitive, but persistent.
- Set limits.
- Wait and watch for your child's response.
- Respond to all your child's actions.

Imitate Your Child

- Imitate your child's gestures, facial expressions, and body movements.
- Imitate your child's vocalizations.
- Imitate your child's play with toys and objects.
- Only imitate positive behaviors.



Focus on Your Child is the **F** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. This is the starting place for building interactions with your child. It gives you and your child a chance to be together in a way that you can both enjoy. It also makes sure that your child is engaged and ready to learn. There are two **Focus on Your Child** techniques that you can use: *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*. Both techniques can help your child engage with you during play and increase the amount of time you can play together. The technique you use will depend on the activity.

Throughout this program, you will always begin an interaction by focusing on your child and then waiting for your child to respond, as shown in the sequence graphic on page 24. At this point in the program, your child can respond in any way. This might include using eye contact; sharing emotions; watching or imitating what you are doing; using gestures such as reaching, pushing, or pointing; making sounds; or using language. You will respond to your child's actions in a logical way. This teaches your child that his behavior carries meaning and gets a response from you.

Follow Your Child's Lead

Follow Your Child's Lead involves following your child's actions and ideas of what to do. Children interact and play more with other people when they get to choose the activity. When they can go first and do something they want to do, they also tend to get less frustrated. When your child gets to show you what is interesting to him, he will have fun and play with you longer. This helps him learn. By following your child's lead and watching how he responds, you will learn more about how and why your child communicates. You can use *Follow Your Child's Lead* during all activities in which it is OK for your child to direct the interaction. These include play, trips to the park, walks in the neighborhood, and even bathtime, if your child enjoys the tub. When you use *Follow Your Child's Lead*, you can increase:

- Your child's ability to engage with you during play.
- The length of time you and your child are able to play together.
- Your child's initiations.

Now let's discuss the key elements of *Follow Your Child's Lead*.

Stay Face to Face with Your Child

By facing your child and being at his level, you can become part of his play, notice where he is looking, and respond to how he is feeling.

- Place yourself at or below your child's eye level, so he can easily see your facial expressions and what you are doing. For example, if your child is laying his head on the table while rolling a truck back and forth, kneel down across from him and tilt your head, so you can see his face and look at the truck too.



If sitting face to face is too intense for your child, you can look in a mirror together. This way, your child can watch himself in the mirror while also making eye contact with you.

- If your child is very active and moves around a lot, move with him, so that you can remain face to face as much as possible.
- Hold objects that your child is interested in near your face, to encourage him to look at you.

Let Your Child Lead the Activity

Let your child choose the toys and lead the activity. Letting your child lead the activity lets you know what he is interested in. It also helps him engage with you.

- Wait and watch to allow your child to initiate and lead the interaction. When you sit your child down next to several toys, wait for him to choose a toy before starting to play with him.
- Let your child decide how to play, even if the way he plays seems unusual. Your child is more likely to engage with you if he is enjoying himself.
- Watch what your child is looking at, so you can follow his interest. If he begins a new activity, follow him to it.



What are some ways your child likes to play?



It can be difficult to let your child choose all the activities if he switches activities very quickly. Remember, the key is to increase engagement and initiations. Over time, you can increase the length of time your child stays with an activity.

Join in Your Child's Play

Playfully join in your child's play to show him that you are interested in what he is doing.

- Help your child with his play by becoming a needed part of it. If your child is building a tower, give him the blocks or take turns putting a block on the tower. If your child is driving a car, put a person in the car.
- Some children respond better to active or sensory play. If your child likes to climb, engage in rough-and-tumble play; if he likes to spin, spin him in a chair; if he likes to touch textures, give him dried beans or rice to feel; if he likes to stare at lights, play with flashlights together. By providing a positive sensory experience to your child, you are working to make yourself part of the experience.



What are some ways you can join in your child's play?

Avoid Questions and Directions

For now, avoid asking questions and giving directions, because this takes the lead away from your child. Instead, comment on your child's play, to show your interest in what he is doing. Later in the program, you will learn how to ask questions and give directions to teach new skills.

- Make comments about what your child is doing or what you are doing. For example if your child is stacking blocks, you could say, "Block on" or "You are stacking blocks."
- Comments with infants and young children are often gestures, sounds, or simple words,

such as “Uh-oh” or “Wow” and a point to the object. Comments with older children may include descriptions such as “You built a tall and colorful tower.”

Be Sensitive, but Persistent

When you start playing, your child may turn away from you or move across the room. Acknowledge how your child is feeling by labeling it, but don't leave. Stay near your child, and move toward him when he moves away.



If your child does not respond, don't worry! You will learn to use techniques in the **Create Opportunities** chapter (Chapter 4) that are sure to get a response. At this point, focus on staying close and observing how your child communicates without your help.

- Be sensitive to your child's frustration, *but* be persistent in interacting with your child. He will learn to have fun with you if you are persistent!
- Don't shy away from your child's protests. If your child expresses frustration, he is still interacting with you.
- If your child protests, try joining his play in a different way. For example, if he starts to fuss when you touch his train, get a different train or vehicle and make a comment: “My train is driving fast!”

Set Limits

Continue with *Follow Your Child's Lead* unless he breaks the family rules. Be consistent with rules and consequences for your family.

- You are in control of the situation, and you can determine which behaviors are OK for your child.
- Remember, safety comes first. Do not allow behaviors that could destroy property or injure your child or another person.
- If your child engages in an unsafe behavior (such as banging his head on a wall, climbing up shelves, or hitting), make it clear to him that this behavior is not OK by stating this in a firm but calm voice, and remove the toys or objects that are causing a problem (if possible).



If behavior is a concern, talk to your coach about whether to go over Chapter 8, **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior**.

Wait and Watch for Your Child's Response

Once you have begun to *Follow Your Child's Lead*, wait and watch for any signs that your child may be engaging or communicating with you. Behaviors that show engagement can take many forms.

- Does he acknowledge your involvement in his play in any way? Does he look at you, gesture, vocalize, or move away from the activity? Any of these actions may be how your child communicates when you are not helping him.
- Waiting lets you know what your child can do on his own! Your coach can help you identify your child's interests and discover how, why, and how often he communicates and plays without your help.

Respond to All Your Child's Actions

Respond to all your child's actions in a logical way. This teaches him that these behaviors have meaning and can be used to communicate with others.

- Respond to any and all of your child's behaviors (verbal and nonverbal) as if he were telling you something. For example, if he puts your hand on a doorknob, respond by opening the door. Table 2.1 gives some examples of how to do this.
- If your child protests, this is a form of communication; respond to it appropriately.
- Label his nonverbal behaviors. For example, if he is crying, say, "You're sad." If he reaches for a cracker, point to it and say the word "Cracker."

In Figure 2.1, Johnny is playing with blocks by lining them up. His mother practices **Focus on Your Child** by using *Follow Your Child's Lead* to increase engagement. She then waits for him to respond. Johnny looks at the block, and she gives him the block. This sequence is shown below.



What ways can you respond to your child's actions?

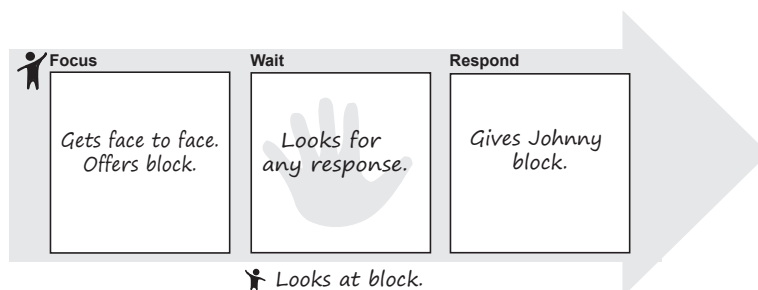


TABLE 2.1. Ways to Respond to Your Child's Actions

If your child . . .	You can . . .
Looks at you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your child the object you are holding. • Say "Hello." • Continue doing what you are doing.
Moves away from you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say "Bye-bye," "Move," or "All done." • Stop doing what you are doing.
Reaches toward an item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your child the item.
Pushes your hand away when you try to touch his toy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove your hand and say "No."



FIGURE 2.1. *Follow Your Child's Lead.* Johnny's mom joins his play by handing him a block to increase engagement.

On page 30 you'll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Follow Your Child's Lead*. The form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use **Focus on Your Child** (including both *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*, which you will learn next). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



Try This at Home! for *Follow Your Child's Lead*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Toy play

Is playing with vehicles such as cars, trains, trucks or helicopters

- Sit face to face and join him in play.
- Wait to see what he does with the vehicles.

Moves from one thing to the next

- Follow him to the new activity and try to join him in play.
- Use tips from *Set Up Your Home for Success* to create a smaller environment.

Does not seem interested in toys

- Be creative! Children often enjoy playing with household items, such as pots and pans, silverware, brooms, brushes, and laundry baskets.
- Have toys available that your child likes to play with. Choose toys that you can use to join in your child's play, such as musical instruments, squishy balls, and cars.

Plays with toys in an unusual way

- Follow his lead and join him in play, as long as it is OK with your rules about what is OK.

Active play

Likes chase, tickles, play on trampolines, slides, or other play structures

- Follow his lead and join him in these activities.
- For simpler/cheaper alternatives at home, consider jumping on a bed or sofa, or hiding under blankets.

Is playing on a swing

- Stand in front of him and push him a few times.
- Wait to see if he indicates that he wants more pushes.

Sensory play

Likes playing with water

- Join him at the faucet or sprinkler, to show that you are interested in his activity.

Is running his fingers through beans, sand, or rice

- Join him and pour the beans/sand/rice on his hand with a cup.
- Catch the beans/sand/rice in a cup as he runs it through his fingers.

Is turning the lights on and off

- Join him in this activity, and try to take a turn turning the lights on and off.

Bathtime

Is splashing in the bath

- Join him by splashing.
- Have items available that he can play with, such as cups and spoons.
- Watch to see what he does with these items, and join his play.

Imitate Your Child

The *Imitate Your Child* technique involves copying your child's movements, gestures, play actions, sounds, and words. This is another great way to **Focus on Your Child** and have fun playing together. *Imitate Your Child* can increase:

- Your child's ability to engage with you during play.
- The length of time you and your child are able to play together.
- Your child's spontaneous vocalizations and language.
- The number of different play actions your child uses.

Now let's discuss the key elements of *Imitate Your Child*.



What gestures, facial expressions, or body movements can you imitate?

Imitate Your Child's Gestures, Facial Expressions, and Body Movements

Imitating your child's various actions and expressions helps your child realize that his behavior is meaningful and can affect how you act. He may look at you or change his actions when you imitate him. Imitating his gestures can also increase his interest in you.

- Imitate your child's gestures and body movements. For example, if he stomps his feet, you can stomp your feet. If he taps his hands on a piece of furniture, you can tap your hands on the same piece of furniture. If he claps his hands, you can clap your hands, too.
- Imitate the faces your child makes and his emotions. This will help him learn that facial expressions are important.
- Exaggerate your imitation of your child's gestures, facial expressions, and body movements, to help him notice that you are copying him.



Imitating gestures and body movements is especially helpful when your child is not engaged with a toy.

Imitate Your Child's Vocalizations

Your imitation of your child's sounds and words can capture his attention and help him to learn that his sounds are meaningful.

- Imitate all of the sounds your child makes, matching the emotions of his vocalizations, as well as the sounds themselves.
- If your child does not use words yet, imitate any sounds he makes, even grunts and sighs.
- If your child is using words or sentences, only imitate language that is related to what you are doing together. For example, if you are looking at a book together, imitate what he says about the book, but don't imitate lines he recites from a favorite movie.



Which of your child's vocalizations can you imitate?

Imitate Your Child's Play with Toys and Objects

When you imitate your child's play, he may use a new or different play skill to see if you copy him.

- Copy what your child is doing with the toy or object. For example, if he is dumping toys, you can grab another container and also dump toys.
- As long as it is safe, imitate whatever your child does with the toys, even if it is unusual. Over time, you can shape nonfunctional play actions into more appropriate play.
- It is helpful to have two of the same toy or object. Your child is more likely to be aware that you are imitating him if the toy or object you are using is the same as or similar to his. This allows you to imitate your child's play at the same time he is playing—for example, by putting a car down a ramp after he does.



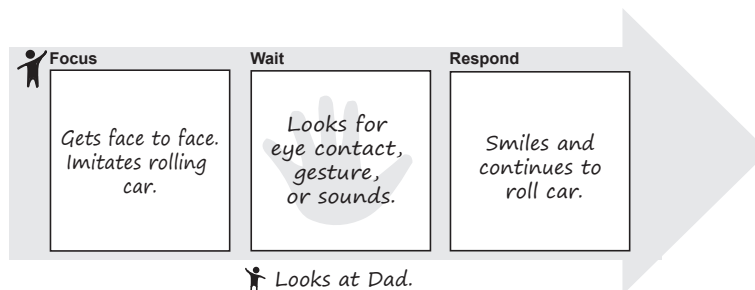
Which of your child's play actions can you imitate?

Only Imitate Positive Behaviors

Imitate Your Child can increase the behaviors that you are imitating. So don't imitate unsafe or destructive behaviors—for example, throwing objects or aggressive behaviors.

- You can imitate the child's action while showing your child a more appropriate way to play. For example, if he likes to throw toys, get a soft ball to throw.
- You can match your child's emotion instead of the action. For example, if your child is flapping his hands to show excitement, imitate the excitement—but express it by clapping your hands or putting your hands above your head to say, “Yay, I did it!”

Figure 2.2 shows Michael playing with a car by rolling it back and forth. His father is practicing **Focus on Your Child** by imitating Michael to increase his engagement and then waiting for a response from Michael. Michael looks at his dad, and his dad responds with a smile and continues to imitate. This sequence is shown below.



On page 34 are Try This at Home! ideas for *Imitate Your Child*. The form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use **Focus on Your Child** (including both *Follow Your Child's Lead* and *Imitate Your Child*). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



FIGURE 2.2. *Imitate Your Child.* Michael's dad imitates his play by pushing another car to increase engagement.



Try This at Home! for *Imitate Your Child*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Toy play

Is playing with musical instruments

- Imitate playing these instruments.

Is playing with art materials, such as chalk, markers, paint, or stickers

- Get the same materials, sit face to face, and imitate what he is doing. Wait to see how he responds.

Does not seem interested in toys

- Put out toys that can be played with in many different ways, such as stacking cups, Koosh balls, blocks, pom-poms, vehicles, toy food, Play-Doh, and figurines. Wait and see what he does with these items. If he shows interest, imitate his actions.

Is playing with cars

- Get another car, sit face to face, and imitate his play with the car. Wait to see how he responds.

Active play

Is wandering around the house or yard

- Imitate your child's vocalizations, gestures, and body movements. Exaggerate the fact that you are imitating him.

Sensory play

Is running his fingers through beans, sand, or rice

- Sit face to face and imitate his play, even if it seems unusual.

Bathtime

Is splashing in the bath

- Move face to face and splash with him.

Is playing with bath toys, such as wheels, water cups, containers, strainers, wind-up toys, bath crayons, or bubble bath

- Imitate his actions, and then wait to see what he does.

Snacktime

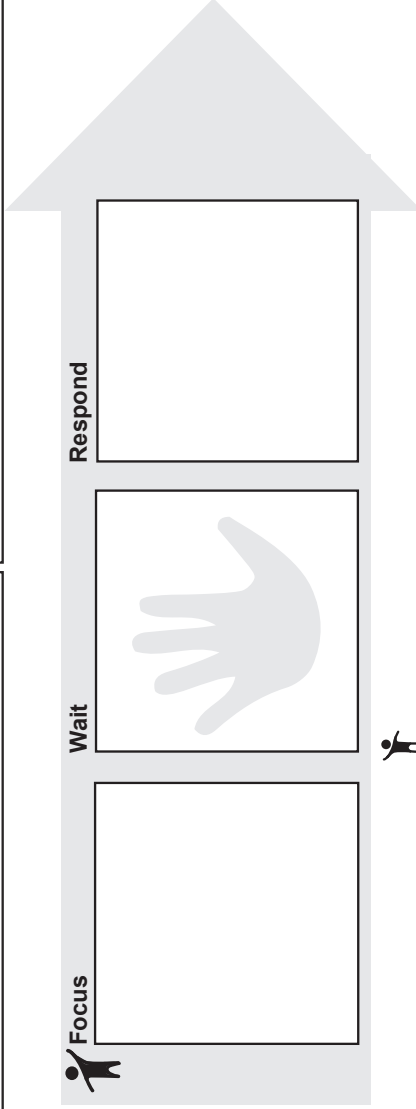
Is having a snack

- Put food in your mouth at the same time as your child puts food in his.
- Your child is more likely to pay attention to you if you eat off the same plate.

Practice Plan— Focus on Your Child

Date:

PLANNING	
Goal(s):	What will be hard?
Activity/activities:	Possible solutions:



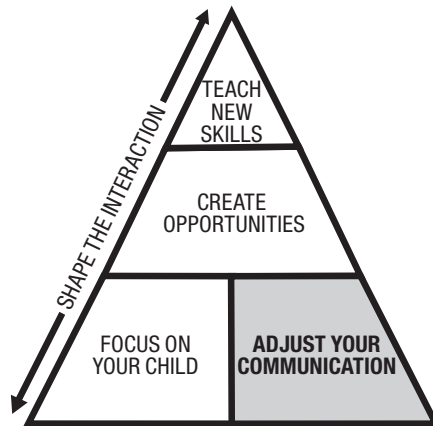
REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	

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CHAPTER 3

Adjust Your Communication



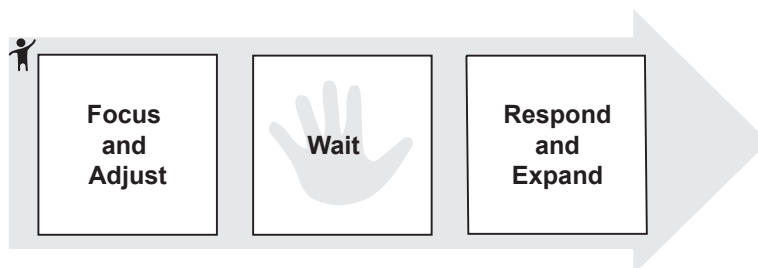
Help your child understand and use verbal and nonverbal communication.

Use Animation

- Be excited about the activity.
- Exaggerate your gestures.
- Exaggerate your facial expressions.
- Exaggerate your vocal quality.
- Use attention-getting words.
- Adjust your animation to help your child stay regulated.
- Wait with anticipation for your child to respond.

Model and Expand Communication

- Talk about what your child is seeing, hearing, or doing.
- Use simple language.
- Use gestures and visual cues.
- Speak and gesture slowly.
- Stress important words.
- Be repetitive.
- Avoid questions.
- Expand your child's communication.



The next set of strategies in this program is **Adjust Your Communication**. This is the **A** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. This strategy set also encourages social engagement and helps your child understand and use verbal and nonverbal communication. There are two **Adjust Your Communication** techniques. *Use Animation* is focused on adjusting your nonverbal communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice, to make the interaction fun. Exaggerating helps your child understand these more subtle aspects of communication. *Model and Expand Communication* involves adjusting your verbal language to help your child understand your words and sentences.

As shown in the sequence image on the facing page, you will use **Adjust Your Communication** as you use **Focus on Your Child** and wait for your child to respond. You will then respond to your child's actions in a logical way and expand on his response. These strategies can be used throughout your interactions with your child.

Use Animation

The *Use Animation* technique involves adding more (or, once in a while, less) energy to your actions, voice, and facial expressions to help them stand out. This can make the interaction more fun. It also lets you emphasize these nonverbal aspects of communication, which are often subtle and easily missed by children with social communication challenges. *Use Animation* can highlight the other techniques and increase:

- Your child's ability to share enjoyment with you.
- Your child's initiations.
- Your child's understanding of gestures, facial expressions, and body posture.

Now let's discuss the key elements of *Use Animation*.

Be Excited about the Activity

The more you share your enjoyment with your child, the more likely he will be to share his enjoyment with you.

- Show excitement by using eye contact, smiling, and laughing.
- Pretend to be excited even when what your child is doing is boring or repetitive to you.

Exaggerate Your Gestures

Use gestures when communicating with your child, to help him pay attention to the nonverbal aspects of communication.

- Use big gestures to make your meaning clear to your child. Wave, point, or shrug your shoulders in an exaggerated way.
- Use repetitive gestures that are simple enough for your child to imitate.



What gestures can you exaggerate?

Exaggerate Your Facial Expressions

Exaggerate the facial expressions you use, to help your child pay attention to them and to understand what they mean.

- If you are happy, make your smile bigger and more obvious, and clap your hands along with the smile to show that you are really happy.
- If you are tired, bored, or surprised, exaggerate the facial expressions and the body movements that go with these feelings.
- Use gestures to help your child notice your facial expressions. For example, point to the corners of your mouth when you frown, to show that you are sad.



If your child does not look at you, try adding an attention-getting word or gasp.

Exaggerate Your Vocal Quality

Vocal quality includes the speed, tone, and volume of your speech. It can be difficult for children to understand differences in vocal quality. When you exaggerate these changes in your voice, you help your child notice them.

- Vary the volume of your voice, to make it stand out to your child. For example, whisper specific words.
- Exaggerate the inflection changes you use that change the meaning of a sentence from a question to a comment. For example, exaggerate raising your vocal pitch at the end of the word when you are asking a question, and lower it when you are making a comment.
- Exaggerate the inflection changes that you use when you have different emotions. Use big gestures and facial expressions when you do this, to help your child interpret the meaning.

Use Attention-Getting Words



What attention-getting words can you use?

Certain words and sounds can stand out and get your child's attention. They can also cue your child that you have something to share and can encourage him to look at you.

Get your child's attention by saying things like "Uh-oh," "Oh, no," or "Wow," or by gasping.

- If your child uses any similar words or sounds, react in an exaggerated way, to show that the words are meaningful and you understand what he is telling you.

Adjust Your Animation to Help Your Child Stay Regulated

Children learn best when they are in a balanced state of arousal, neither too "up" or too "down."

- If your child is becoming quiet, withdrawn, or sleepy while playing with you, these may be signs that he is underaroused. In this case, use more animation to help your child engage with you. For example, if your child has too little energy, increase your volume and use an energetic voice paired with gestures, to help him get excited.

- If your child becomes too “revved up” when you use a lot of animation, use less animation to help your child calm down. You can also slow down your speech and lower your voice. For example, if your child is not paying attention or has too much energy, speak softly or in a whisper, to see if this captures his attention.



If your child moves away when voices are too loud or gestures are too fast, keep your voice quiet and gestures slow. The goal of this technique is to increase engagement.

Wait with Anticipation for Your Child to Respond

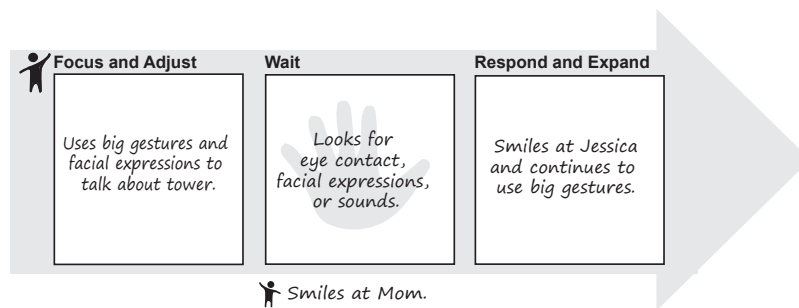
Add an expectant look and exaggerated gestures when you wait. Using these cues can increase your child’s awareness that you are expecting a response.

- During a tickle game, hold up your fingers (and exaggerate your gestures), say, “I’m going to get you,” and then wait for your child to communicate before you tickle him.
- If you and your child are playing with trains on a track, push your train and then stop, while giving your child an expectant look. Wait for your child to communicate before you move your train on the track.



If your child does not respond to you when you wait with anticipation, follow him to the next activity and try this technique again.

Figure 3.1 shows a mother adjusting her communication with big gestures and facial expression. When she waits, her child looks at her and smiles. Mom responds with a smile and continues with big gestures. The sequence graphic below illustrates this interaction.



On page 41 you’ll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Use Animation*. The form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use **Adjust Your Communication** (including both *Use Animation* and *Model and Expand Communication*, which you will learn next). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



FIGURE 3.1. *Use Animation.* Jessica's mom uses big gestures ("So big!") and an exaggerated facial expression to increase Jessica's engagement and understanding of nonverbal gestures.



Try This at Home! for *Use Animation*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Wake-up time

Is lying in bed when he wakes up

- Lie in bed with him and pretend to sleep.
- Cover yourself with a blanket, and exaggerate your snores.
- Suddenly pretend to wake up! Sit up in bed, stretch your arms, and say loudly, "Wake up!"
- Alternate between sleeping and waking up as long as your child shows interest.

Songs/social games

Is singing or listening to you sing

- Sing several lines, then pause with an expectant look or gesture to see whether your child gives any indication that you should continue.
- Sing or play songs that include gestures or movements, such as "Itsy-Bitsy Spider," "If You're Happy and You Know It," "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," "Ring around the Rosy," or "Wheels on the Bus."

Is playing peek-a-boo

- Hide your face in a scarf, and wait to see if your child does something to take the scarf off. If he does, say "Peek-a-boo!"

Is playing tickle

- Tickle your child, and then use big gestures to indicate that you will tickle him again. Wait with an expectant look, and see what he might do to indicate he wants more tickles.

Toy play

Is playing with a doll

- Exaggerate emotions that might come up during play.
- If the doll falls and gets hurt, pretend to cry or exclaim, "Oh, no!"

Is building a tower with blocks

- When the tower falls down, exaggerate your gestures by putting your hands to your face and say, "Oh, no!"

Is playing with cars

- Pretend that the cars crash, and exaggerate your gestures by putting your hands to your face and say, "Oh, no!"

Storytime

Is reading a book

- Briefly act out the content of the page, using exaggerated gestures. For example, if there is a picture of a bird, pretend to be a bird (flap your arms like wings and say, "Chirp, chirp"). If there is a picture of food, pretend to eat it off the page.

(continued)



Try This at Home! *(continued)*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Mealtime/snacktime

Is having a meal or snack

- Taste a small bite of his food, and exaggerate how it tastes with gestures and facial expressions. For example, take a bite of his apple, lick your lips, rub your belly, and say the word “Yummy!”
- Take a bite of a food your child doesn’t like, or pretend to take a bite of a nonfood item. Then stick your tongue out, scrunch up your face, and say “Yucky!”
- Alternate between “yummy” and “yucky” items as long as your child pays attention.

Bathtime

Is taking a bath

- Wash one body part at a time, using exaggerated speech and gestures. Say, for instance, “I am going to wash your . . . toes” (while making a big point to the toes).
- Pretend to smell each body part before you wash it and exaggerate that it is dirty. Plug your nose, scrunch up your face, and say, “Ooh, stinky!” Then wash it, pretend to smell it again, and say, “All clean.”

Is splashing in the bath

- Lean close so he gets your arm wet. Exaggerate your facial expressions and gestures. Point to your arm and say, “Oh, no, my arm is wet!”

Other daily activities

Is completing other daily activities

- Exaggerate your body language and facial expressions to indicate how you feel during the day. For example, if you are happy about something that happens, exaggerate your smile and body language (clap your hands), and label the emotion.
- If something happens that makes you sad (e.g., you stub your toe), indicate that you are sad by exaggerating your facial expressions, body posture, and language: “Ouch!!”
- Exaggerate your vocal quality in different settings. If you are in the library, whisper to indicate appropriate vocal volume. Or if you are on the playground, use a loud, excited voice when engaging in activities.

Model and Expand Communication

Both what you say and how you say it can affect your child's ability to understand and use communication. *Modeling* communication means using verbal (words and sentences) and nonverbal (gestures) language to describe what your child is doing, seeing, and hearing. *Expanding* communication is adding to your child's communication by restating what he says or does, and then adding a new gesture or language skill. You can use *Model and Expand Communication* during all activities to help your child:

- Learn new gestures, words, or sentences.
- Expand the reasons your child communicates.

Now let's discuss the key elements of *Model and Expand Communication*.

Talk about What Your Child Is Seeing, Hearing, or Doing

Talk about the things your child is paying attention to by commenting on, labeling, or describing what your child sees, hears, or does as it happens, almost like a sports commentator. This includes what you are doing when your child is watching.

- Model how language can be used for a variety of reasons, such as comments, gaining attention, requesting, protesting, or gaining information.
- Do not comment on every action your child does, because that may be too much information.
- Table 3.1 has examples of things to talk about, based on what your child is doing.



What language can you model around your child's interests?

Use Simple Language

Some children have difficulty understanding speech or gestures when we use too many words. By changing the way you speak, you can help your child understand what you say.

- Model new communication skills that are slightly more complex than the skills your child uses on his own. For example, if he communicates by using single words, model two-word phrases.



Avoid focusing on words that become overused, such as "more" and "want." Instead, pair an action word and a noun, or use descriptive words such as "big," "fast," or "red." For example, if you are playing a game of catch with your child, model "Throw ball" instead of "Want ball" or "More ball."



What type of communication can you model for your child?

- Remember to model different reasons for communication—for example, to request, get your attention, or gain information.
- Table 3.2 will help you decide what type of communication to model for your child, based on his current communication skills.

TABLE 3.1. Language to Model during Activities

When your child . . .	You can . . .	Examples
Is drinking juice	Label the juice, describe what your child is doing, or describe how the juice tastes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point and say the word “Juice.” • Say, “Drink juice.” • Say, “ You are drinking apple juice.” • Say, “Apple juice is yummy.”
Is feeding a baby doll	Label the baby, describe what the baby is doing, or suggest how the baby feels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point and say the word “Baby.” • Say, “Feed baby.” • Say, “ Baby is eating cereal.” • Say, “ Baby is hungry.”
Is getting dressed	Label each piece of clothing as you put it on, describe how it looks, or guess how your child feels about it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say the word “Shirt.” • Say, “It’s a red shirt.” • Say, “This is your favorite shirt.”
Wants to open the door	Talk about opening the door, describe how to do it, or guess where your child wants to go.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign “Open,” or tap on the door and say the word “Open.” • Say, “Turn knob.” • Say, “You are opening the door.” • Say, “You want to go outside.”
Looks at a car	Label the car, or describe how it looks, sounds, or drives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point and say the word “Car.” • Say, “There is a green car.” • Say, “The car is fast.”
Is looking for his blanket	Talk about what your child is thinking or wants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrug your shoulders and say, “Where is my blanket?” • Say, “I want my blanket.”

TABLE 3.2. Choosing What Type of Communication to Model

When your child . . .	You can . . .	Examples
Uses eye contact or preintentional gestures	Model intentional gestures and single words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point. • Sign “Open” or “My turn.” • Say the word “Go” or “Juice.”
Uses intentional gestures, makes word approximations, or uses single words	Model single words and word combinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say the word “Bubble.” • Say, “Blow bubble.”
Combines two or three words together	Model simple sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “I am eating an apple.” • Say, “This is my train.”
Uses simple sentences	Model complex sentences that include descriptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “Throw me the big red ball.” • Say, “We’re pushing our cars very fast.”
Uses complex sentences	Model complex sentences with language concepts such as time or emotions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “We walked to the park <i>yesterday</i>.” • Say, “I <i>am scared</i> of the dinosaur.”



Remember, your child may not use the gestures or words you model. That is OK. You will learn to help your child use new communication skills later in this program.

Use Gestures and Visual Cues

Use gestures and visual cues (such as pointing to or holding up an item) together with your words, to help your child understand your meaning. This technique is important for children who are not yet using verbal communication, as well as for children who have difficulty using and understanding nonverbal communication.

- Hold up, tap, or point to objects as you talk about them. For example, hold up a ball in front of your child and say the word “Ball.” When you are opening a door, tap on the door and say “Door.”
- Exaggerate your gestures to help your child understand the gesture’s meaning. For example, point your finger and move it toward a baby doll while saying the word “Baby,” to help your child notice the gesture and draw his attention to the doll.

Speak and Gesture Slowly

The more slowly you speak and gesture, the easier it will be for your child to learn new information.

- Slow down your rate of speech, and exaggerate your gestures.
- Make sure that your gestures match your rate of speech and are simple enough for your child to imitate.

Stress Important Words

Children often have a hard time recognizing the important words in sentences. Emphasize certain words, to draw your child’s attention to them.

- Pause before important words, and stress them by slowing your speech and varying your tone of voice.
- Add a gesture when you say an important word, to emphasize the word and its meaning. For example, say, “You have a *big* ball,” while making your arms into a big circle.

Be Repetitive

Children learn better when they hear something many times. Model the gestures and words that you would like your child to learn by using them multiple times each day.

- Use the same phrase or gesture repetitively during play. For example: “Down it goes. Down it goes.” Or you can repeat specific important words: “The car is rolling. Roll, roll. Rolling fast.”
- Use similar words and gestures in different situations. For exam-



It can feel strange to talk or gesture slowly and repeat your language, but to your child it will seem just fine.

ple, place your palms together, and then open them like a book while saying, “*Open book.*” Use the same movement for “*Open door,*” and again when the child has a container with a desired item inside it, “*Open jar.*”

Avoid Questions

Don’t ask questions; instead, make comments, and label objects and actions. This gives your child an opportunity to communicate and to give an example of the language he can use.

- Avoid filling up the space with questions that don’t require an answer, like “Are you being silly?” or “Do you see the doggie?”
- Avoid asking “test” questions to demonstrate your child’s knowledge, like “What color is the ball?”, “How many blocks do you have?”, or “What letter is this?” These questions do not help your child use back-and-forth communication.
- Rephrase any question you want to ask into a comment or label. Table 3.3 provides examples of ways to rephrase questions into comments.
- **Teach New Skills** (see Chapter 5) will help you ask questions that get a response and encourage back-and-forth communication.



How can you expand your child’s communication?

Expand Your Child’s Communication

Expand on your child’s communication by adding new words or appropriate grammar. By doing these things, you revise and complete your child’s speech, *without directly correcting it.*

- Repeat your child’s speech while adding information. Table 3.4 gives some examples of adding new words and concepts.
- Repeat your child’s speech, but use appropriate grammar. Stress the appropriate words. Table 3.5 gives some examples of modeling appropriate grammar.
- Continue to respond to your child’s communication in a logical way.

In Figure 3.2, Jimmy’s mom is helping him get dressed. The mom models the word “Shirt,” Jimmy says “Shirt,” and his mom expands by



If your child is not yet making sounds, expand on your child’s gestures, and model communication.

TABLE 3.3. Ways to Avoid Questions

Instead of asking . . .	Say . . .
“Do you like this song?”	“You like this song.”
“Is the boy going down the slide?”	“The boy is going down the slide.”
“Can I play with you?”	“I’m going to play with you.”

TABLE 3.4. Expanding Language by Adding New Words

When your child says . . .	You say . . .
“Train.”	“Push train.”
“Push train.”	“Push the train fast.”
“Push train fast.”	“Push the red train fast.”
“Push the red train fast.”	“Push the red train through the tunnel.”

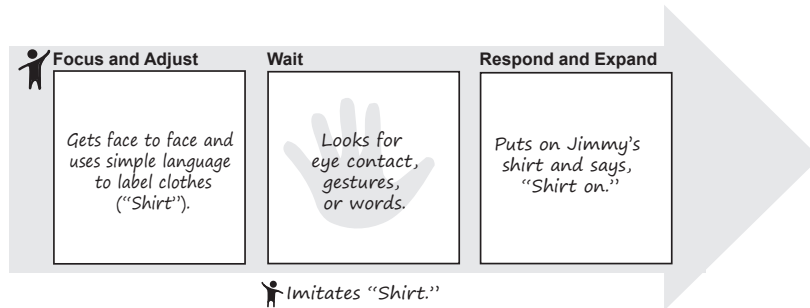
TABLE 3.5. Expanding Language by Using Appropriate Grammar

When your child says . . .	You say . . .
“Buh.”	“Bubbles.”
“Baby cry.”	“The baby is <i>crying</i> .”
“Juice drink.”	“You want to <i>drink juice</i> .”
“Daddy goed bye-bye.”	“Daddy <i>went</i> bye-bye.”



FIGURE 3.2. Model and Expand Communication. Jimmy’s mother uses repetitive language (“Shirt,” “Shirt on,” “Shirt on”) to improve his vocabulary.

saying, “Shirt on.” The sequence graphic below shows the sequence of techniques that Jimmy’s mom uses.



On the facing page you’ll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Model and Expand Communication*. The form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use **Adjust Your Communication** (including both *Use Animation* and *Model and Expand Communication*). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



Try This at Home! for *Model and Expand Communication*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Toy play

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Is building a tower | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label the items in a repetitive manner. For example: “Block . . . Block . . . Red block.” • Describe what he is doing: “You are building a tall tower.” |
| Is playing with cars | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label the items: “Car . . . Big car . . . Big red car.” • Describe what he is doing: “You are pushing the car,” “You are crashing the car into the truck.” |

Storytime

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Is reading a book | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point to the pictures and label them. Label objects, actions, locations, and emotions. • Describe the picture. Say what you see and what the character is doing or where the item is. • Give an opinion about the picture or item. |
|-------------------|--|

Mealtime/snacktime

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Is having a meal or snack | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label what he is eating. For example: “Apple . . . Crunchy apple . . . Red apple.” • Describe what he is doing. For example: “Eat the apple . . . Apple on plate . . . Take a bite of the apple.” |
| Is helping to prepare a meal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label the items you are using. • Describe what you are doing. |

Dressing

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Is getting dressed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label the items you are about to put on and label your child’s body parts. For example, when putting your child’s shirt on, you could say, “Shirt . . . Red shirt . . . Hand in . . . Arm in . . . Head in.” • Describe what he is doing if he is dressing himself, and what you are doing if you are helping him. For example, you could say, “Arms through the sleeves . . . soft pants on my legs . . . blue socks on feet.” |
|--------------------|--|

Bathtime

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Is taking a bath | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label the body parts as you are washing him: “Arm . . . Hand . . . Foot.” • Label the bathtub toys: “Water wheel . . . Cup . . . Crayons.” • Describe what you are doing as you give your child a bath: “I am washing your toes,” or “I am pushing the boat.” |
|------------------|---|

(continued)



Try This at Home! *(continued)*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Household chores

Is helping you with laundry

- Label the items: “Shirt . . . Red shirt . . . Big red shirt.” Use attributes such as “clean,” “dirty,” “big,” “small,” and colors.
- Describe what you are doing: “I am sorting the laundry . . . I am putting dirty clothes in the washer . . . I am putting wet clothes in the dryer.”

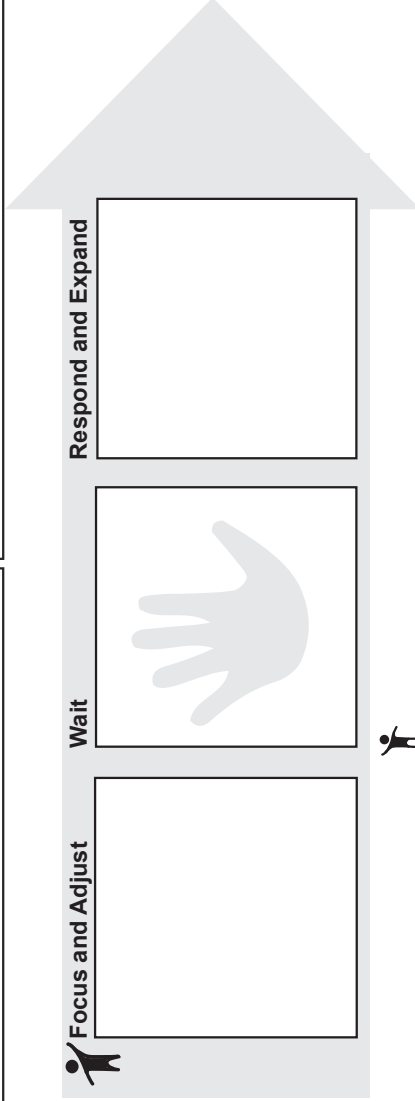
Is helping you with the dishes

- Label items: “Plate . . . Cup . . . Fork.”
- Describe what you are doing: “I am putting the dirty plate in the dishwasher . . . I am washing the yellow plate.”

Practice Plan— Adjust Your Communication

Date:

PLANNING	
Goal(s):	What will be hard?
Activity/activities:	Possible solutions:



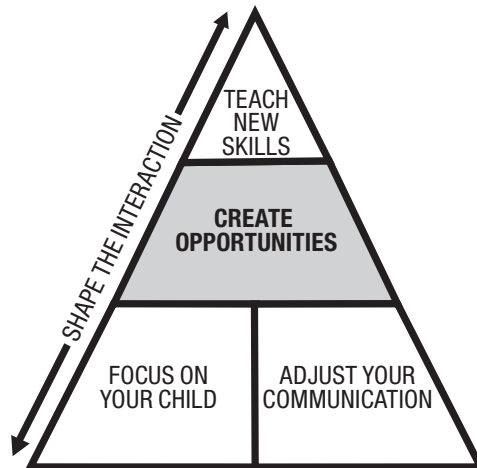
REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	

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CHAPTER 4

Create Opportunities



Create opportunities for your child to initiate and for you to gain his attention.

Playful Obstruction

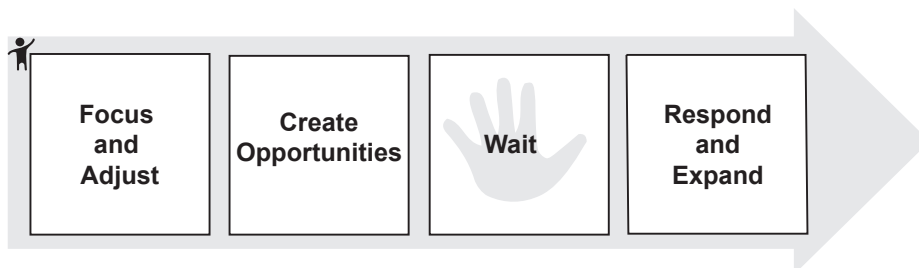
- Help your child anticipate an interruption.
- Playfully block your child's activity.

Balanced Turns

- Help your child anticipate turns.
- Take a turn.
- Model play during your turn.

Communicative Temptations

- Put fun things in sight and out of reach.
- Control access to items.
- Give small portions.
- Use items that require your assistance.
- Have an item missing.
- Present a silly situation.



Focus on Your Child and **Adjust Your Communication** set the foundation for engagement. However, sometimes these strategies are not enough by themselves to help a child with social communication challenges initiate or pay attention to you. **Create Opportunities**, the **C** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S., is used when your child does not initiate on his own, or when you need to get his attention. This strategy increases the number of chances he has for learning new skills. There are three sets of **Create Opportunities** techniques: *Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*. You will choose the technique or techniques that best fit your routine and that cause the least frustration for your child. You may use different techniques, depending on your child's goals and the activity.

Begin an interaction by using **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. As shown in the sequence graphic on the facing page, if your child does not initiate or if you need to get his attention, you will choose a **Create Opportunities** technique to help him. Once you create an opportunity, wait for your child to respond, and then respond and expand on his behavior in a logical way. Use this strategy for about two-thirds of the interaction.

At this point, you will concentrate on creating opportunities for your child to use the skills he already has. In Chapter 5, you will learn how to help your child communicate and play in new ways that he does not yet do on his own.

Playful Obstruction

One way to **Create Opportunities** is to use *Playful Obstruction*. With this technique, you join in your child's play and then interrupt it in a playful way, to give him a reason to initiate to continue the activity. You can do this with your body, toys, objects, or motor activities. *Playful Obstruction* is helpful when your child is not ready for turn taking just yet, gets very upset when you take a turn, or is not involved with toys. You can use this technique to:

- Increase back-and-forth interactions.
- Help your child request or protest.
- Gain your child's attention.

Now let's discuss the key elements of *Playful Obstruction*.

Help Your Child Anticipate an Interruption

Use a consistent phrase and big gestures to let your child know you are about to interrupt his play. This lets him know what to expect, so he doesn't get upset. It also gives him a chance to protest the interruption before it happens.

- Choose a phrase to let your child know you are about to interrupt him. Say the phrase immediately before you playfully interrupt what your child is doing. Table 4.1 provides some examples of phrases you can use during play.



What phrase you can use consistently to help your child anticipate the interruption?

TABLE 4.1. Anticipatory Phrases to Use

When your child . . .	You can say . . .
Is pushing a train	“I’m going to get the train . . . ” “Here comes the gate . . . ” “One, two, three . . . stop!”
Is running back and forth	“Here I come. . . . ” “I’m going to get you . . . ” “Stop . . . and . . . go!”

Playfully Block Your Child’s Activity

Once you have used the consistent phrase, try playfully blocking what your child is doing, or playfully gaining access to his toy.

- Use a puppet, blanket, or other toy to get your child’s toy or to block his toy play. This can be less frustrating for your child than using just your hand.
- If your child is wandering aimlessly or running back and forth, you can playfully get in the way of where he wants



If your child responds to your phrase with a protest *before* you interrupt his play, this is communication. Respond in a meaningful way by modeling communication, such as “No!” or “Stop, Mom!”, and then back away.

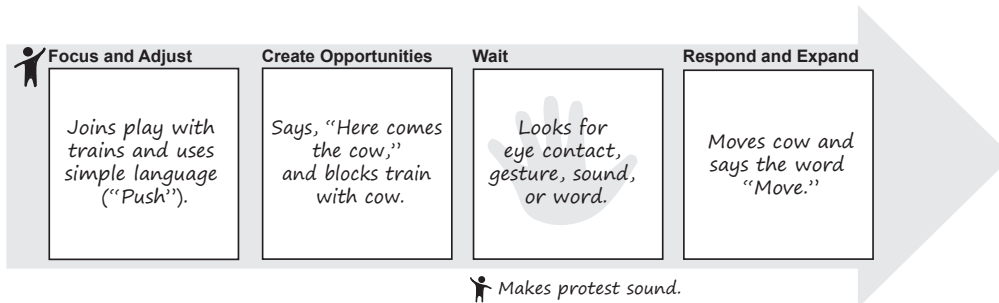


What are some ways you can playfully block your child’s play?

to go.

- Keep it playful! Make the obstruction part of the play activity. For example, if your child is pushing a car, you can place your leg in front of the car and tell the child, “A log fell in the road!”
- Stay animated, to keep it fun!

In Figure 4.1, Paul is pushing a train around the track. His dad is using *Playful Obstruction* to increase his son’s engagement and communication. As shown in the sequence graphic below, Paul’s dad helps Paul anticipate the obstruction by saying, “Here comes the cow,” and then he blocks the tracks with a toy cow. When Paul protests, his dad moves the cow and expands on Paul’s communication by saying the word “Move.”



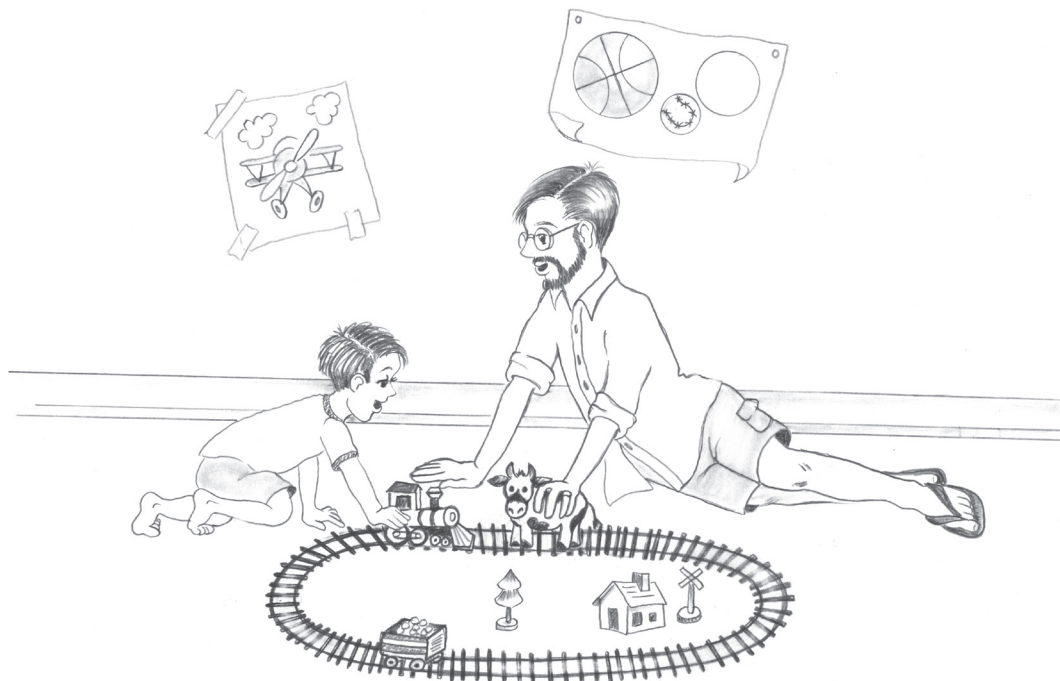


FIGURE 4.1. *Playful Obstruction.* Paul's dad blocks the movement of the train to create an opportunity for Paul to communicate, and models the language he would like Paul to use ("Move").

On page 56 you'll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Playful Obstruction*. The form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use all three **Create Opportunities** techniques (*Playful Obstruction*, as well as *Balanced Turns*, which you will learn next, and *Communicative Temptations*). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



Try This at Home! for *Playful Obstruction*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Toy play

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Is pushing a car | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “Beep, beep!” and block the car’s path with another car. Wait for a response, move the car, and say, “Move!” |
| Is holding a ring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “Bear is hungry, yum, yum!” and have a stuffed animal “eat” the ring out of the child’s hand. Wait for a response, give him back the ring, and say, “Delicious!” |
| Is lining up toy animals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “Where did it go?” and put a blanket, scarf, or hat over one of the animals. Wait for a response, and pick it up and say, “There it is!” |
| Is dropping balls down a ball chute | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “And . . . stop!” and put your hand over the top of the chute, so that he can’t put the ball in. Wait for a response; then move your hand and say, “And . . . go!” |

Active play

- | | |
|---|---|
| Is running back and forth between the couch and the chair | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “I’m going to get there first!” and run ahead of him and sit in the chair. Wait for a response, move out of the way, and say, “Mom move!” |
| Is wandering aimlessly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “Close the gate!” and place your arms loosely around your child to stop his movement. Wait for a response, let him go, and say, “Open the gate!” |
| Is swinging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “One, two, three . . . stop!” and hold back the swing in the air. Wait for a response, let him go, and say the word “Go!” |
| Is going down the slide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “Ready, set, stop . . .” and reach out and block his movement down the slide. Wait for a response, move out of the way, and say “Go!” |
-

Balanced Turns

Another way to **Create Opportunities** is to use *Balanced Turns*. With this technique, you help your child take turns during play. Turn taking is a developmental skill. It becomes more complex as children develop. Children begin taking turns during vocal play; then during structured activities, such as throwing a ball back and forth; and then by sharing or trading toys. This technique is helpful when the materials support taking turns, when your child benefits from seeing new ways to play, and when turn taking is a goal. Some toddlers may not be ready for turn taking with toys. Talk to your coach about your child's goals. When your child is ready for *Balanced Turns*, you can use it to:

- Help your child take turns.
- Teach your child to request.

Now let's discuss the key element of *Balanced Turns*.

Help Your Child Anticipate Turns

Help your child anticipate turns by always using the same word or phrase, paired with a gesture, before taking a turn.

- When it is your turn, tap your chest and say, "Mommy's turn" or "My turn." When it is your child's turn, tap his chest and say, for example, "Noah's turn" or "My turn" (meaning the child's).
- If your child is beginning to learn pronouns, say, "My turn" (while gesturing toward yourself) and "Your turn" (while gesturing toward him).
- If your child is beginning to imitate language, you can say, "My turn" (while gesturing toward your child), to model the language you would like him to use.



What word, phrase, or gesture can you use to help your child anticipate your turn?



What activity or toy would work well for taking turns?

Take a Turn

Make sure to take your turn, even if your child protests or moves away from you. If you allow your child to keep the toy after he screams or protests, you may accidentally teach your child that he does not have to share if he fusses!

- Keep your turn short! Some children cannot wait very long before they lose interest. Be sensitive to your child's ability to wait.
- In the beginning, your turns should only last a few seconds. As your child becomes more comfortable with turn taking, you can increase the length of your turns and take turns more often.
- Some children think that losing access to a toy means that it is gone for good. Teach your child that he can get the toy again by returning it, even if he walks away. If he does not

respond, leave the toy next to him and follow his lead to the next activity before taking another turn.



Some children have a hard time taking turns even if a parent's turn is short. In this case, try trading toys instead of taking turns with one toy. This is less frustrating, because your child keeps an object. It is easier to trade identical toys than different toys.

- Some young children may not be ready for taking turns with toys. If this is the case, you can model taking turns with another adult or child.

Model Play during Your Turn

Once your child is able to take turns with you, model a new and exciting way to play with the toy. This can show your child new play skills.

- Show your child different ways that a toy can be used. For example, if your child is spinning the wheels of a toy car, you can model the action of pushing the car.
- Think about all of the different ways to play with your child's favorite toys. Here are some examples of different ways to play with a car:
 - Taking people in and out of the car.
 - Pushing the car up and down a ramp.
 - Washing or drying the car.
 - Getting gas.
 - Driving to a location such as a park.
 - Crashing and needing repairs.
- Table 4.2 can be used to help you choose types of play actions to model.

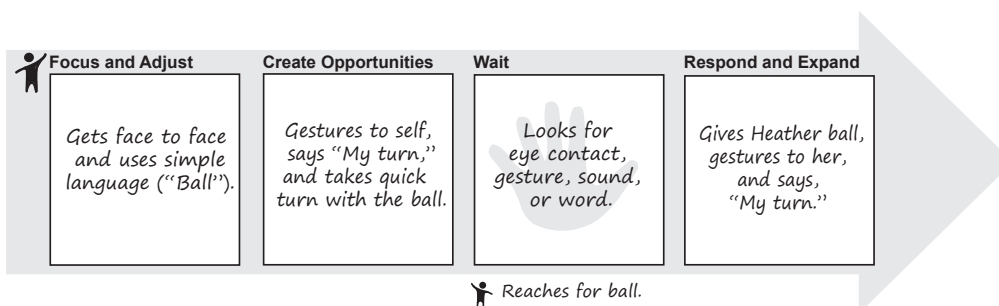


What new play skills can you model when you take a turn?



Watch other children play to learn different ways to play with toys.

In Figure 4.2, Heather is playing with a ball. The sequence graphic below shows the steps Mom takes to use *Balanced Turns*. She first helps Heather anticipate the turn by gesturing to herself and saying, "My turn." She then takes a quick turn with the ball. Heather reaches for the ball, and Mom gives it to her, expanding the communication by gesturing toward Heather and saying the word "Turn."



On page 60 you'll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Balanced Turns*. The form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use all three **Create Opportunities** techniques (*Playful Obstruction* and *Balanced Turns*, as well as *Communicative Temptations*, which you will learn next). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.

TABLE 4.2. Choosing What Types of Play to Model

When your child . . .	You can . . .	Example
Explores toys and objects	Put toys together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put blocks in a cup. • Nest cups inside each other. • Hide toys under a blanket.
Puts toys and objects together	Show him how to activate toys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play with pop-up toys. • Put balls down a ball chute.
Understands that his actions with toys make things happen	Show him what to do with objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive a car down a ramp. • Roll a ball to him. • Kiss him, then kiss a baby doll.
Plays with miniature toys	Show him how to pretend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend that a car is “dirty,” and wash it with a block. • Pour pretend tea into cups. • Pretend that a bear figurine is afraid.
Pretends with toys and other objects	Show him how to tell a story with toys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend that his train is broken and you need to fix it. • Pretend to make dinner with toy food.
Pretends to be different characters	Show him how to act out a story.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend to be sick and have him be the doctor. • Pretend that there is a fire and you are both firefighters.



FIGURE 4.2. *Balanced Turns.* Heather’s mother uses an anticipatory phrase (“My turn”), paired with a gesture (hand to chest), to help Heather take turns with the ball.



Try This at Home! for *Balanced Turns*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Wake-up time

Is lying in bed when he wakes up

- Lie in bed with him, cover yourself with a blanket, and pretend to sleep. Suddenly pretend to wake up (exaggerate this with *Use Animation*). Encourage your child to take turns with you by covering himself with the blanket and “waking up”!

Toy play

Is playing with vehicles such as cars, trains, trucks, or helicopters

- Help him anticipate turns: You could say, “Mommy’s turn, my turn,” and gesture toward yourself.
- Take a turn and model a new pretend game, such as washing the car or getting gas.
- Wait for a response and give him back a turn. Say, “Johnny’s turn,” “My turn,” or “Your turn,” depending on his communication skills.

Active play

Is playing on playground equipment such as swings, slides, or a trampoline

- Take a quick turn on the equipment. He may find it funny to see you take a turn.

Storytime

Is reading a book

- Take turns turning the pages and pointing to pictures in the book.

Mealtime/snacktime

Is having a meal or snack

- Try sharing the food. Give him a bite, then take a bite.
- If your child helps himself, it helps to have a large item that you have control of, such as a big graham cracker, or to give your child one piece of a snack at a time.
- Say, “My turn” or “Mommy’s turn,” and “Your turn” or “Johnny’s turn.”

Communicative Temptations

The *Communicative Temptations* techniques set up natural situations for your child to initiate with you, seek you out to continue an activity, or get something he wants. These techniques are easy to use during daily routines, such as meals and snacks, dressing, bathtime, and bedtime. It is often helpful to set these up in advance. These techniques can be used in place of *Playful Obstruction* and *Balanced Turns* during play activities, particularly if interrupting your child's play frustrates him. *Communicative Temptations* are used to:

- Increase opportunities for your child to initiate.
- Gain your child's attention.
- Expand the reasons your child communicates.

Now let's discuss the key elements of *Communicative Temptations*.



Some temptations are better than others for teaching specific reasons for communication, such as requesting, protesting, or gaining attention. The choice of which temptation to use is based on the activity and your child's communication goals.

Put Fun Things in Sight and out of Reach

Put your child's favorite things where he can see them, but not get them, like up on a high shelf. This will encourage him to get your attention to show you what he wants and ask for help. *Caution:* Be sure to put these things in a place your child cannot climb to!



How can you put your child's favorite things in sight and out of reach?

- Put toys in clear containers that are hard to open, so your child sees the toy but needs to communicate for your help to get it.
- If your child is very independent and helps himself to food, toys, tablets, or videos, place locks on the locations where these items are kept. This strategy helps your child to communicate with you, rather than getting what he wants by himself.

Control Access to Items

Keep control of items your child likes, to gain his attention and help him ask for things he wants.

- Hold up an item your child wants, so that he cannot grab it away from you.
- Hold the item at your eye level, so that he makes eye contact with you while looking at the object.



For some children, controlling access to items is more frustrating than having the objects in sight and out of reach, because they see the parent as "interfering" with their ability to get the desired object. If this technique makes your child frustrated, put items in sight and out of reach instead.

Give Small Portions

Give your child small portions of something he likes, to motivate him to ask for more.

- Give your child a small amount or a piece of the item he has requested, and wait to see whether he communicates for more. For example, if your child lets you know that he wants crackers, give him one cracker and wait to see if he asks for another.
- During play with toys that have similar parts, such as blocks, marbles, Legos, and puzzles, give your child one piece at a time and wait for him to let you know that he wants another piece.



What items does your child like that have multiple similar parts?



If your child becomes frustrated when you give him a small portion, give him the rest of the items and use another **Create Opportunities** technique.

- Make sure your child can see the item, and stay face to face so your child knows he can ask you for more.

Use Items That Require Your Assistance

Use toys, materials, or activities that require some assistance, to encourage your child to ask for help.

- Play with toys and materials that your child needs your help to use. These could include bubbles, tops, wind-up toys, balloons, tickle games, and chase.
- Start an activity, and then pause to see if your child will ask for more.
- Give your child items that he will need your help to open, like a snack still in a wrapper.



For what favorite items or activities does your child need your assistance?

Have an Item Missing

Leave out a piece or part of a favorite activity, to encourage your child to ask questions to find the missing part.

- Give your child only part of the object or materials he has requested, and then wait to see if he asks for what's missing. For example, if your child requests juice, give him the juice in a container he cannot open, without a cup. Then wait until your child requests a cup. If your child does not respond, show him the missing item.



For what activities could you have an item missing?



If your child does not know the routine or the parts of the activity, having an item missing won't work. Instead, use small portions to increase initiations.

- Table 4.3 has examples of missing items.

Present a Silly Situation

Do a routine the wrong way, to encourage your child to show or tell you the right way to do something.

- Do something in a silly or obviously “wrong” way, while looking expectantly at your child. For example, instead of putting your shoe on your foot, put it on your hand. When you and

TABLE 4.3. Examples of Missing Items

When your child . . .	You can . . .
Is coloring	Give him only the paper.
Is playing with trains	Have all of the trains missing.
Is playing with a dollhouse	Have all of the people missing.

your child are playing with a dollhouse, put the food in the bed instead of putting the baby in the bed.

- Change part of a predictable routine. For instance, sing the wrong letters in the alphabet song.
- If your child does not respond to the silly situation, exclaim that it is silly (be sure to *Use Animation* here), and complete the routine as expected.



If your child doesn't understand the right way to complete the routine, use another temptation.

Figure 4.3 and the sequence graphic below show Todd's mother using the **Create Opportunities** technique of putting something in sight and out of reach to encourage her son to communicate. She has his favorite toy in a glass jar he cannot open. She places it nearby in his line of sight. She focuses on him by following him to the jar, and waits for him to communicate. Todd responds

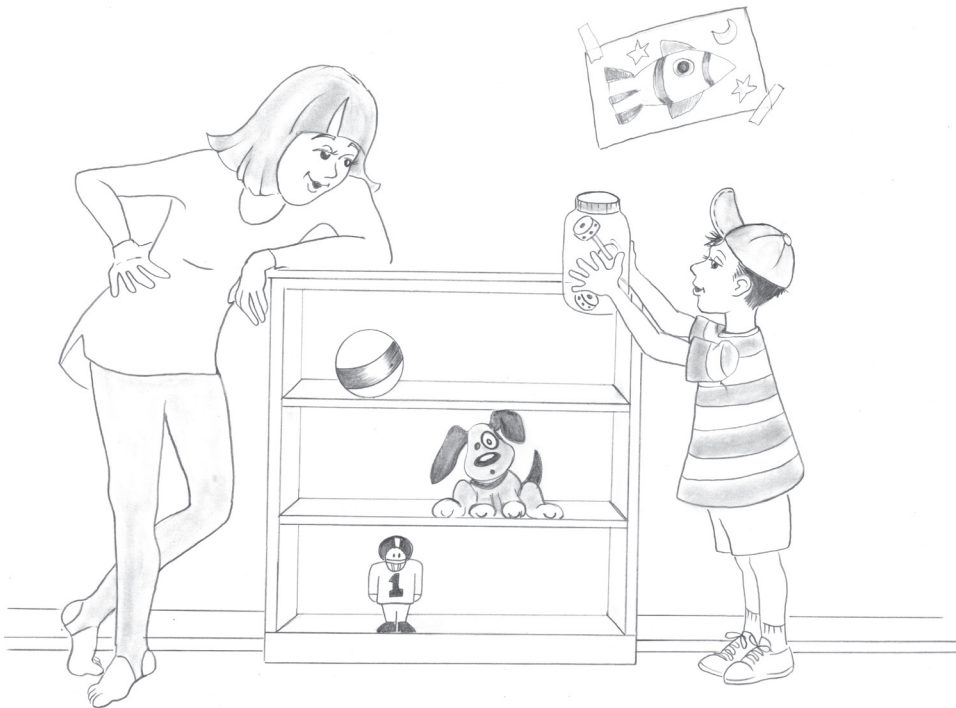
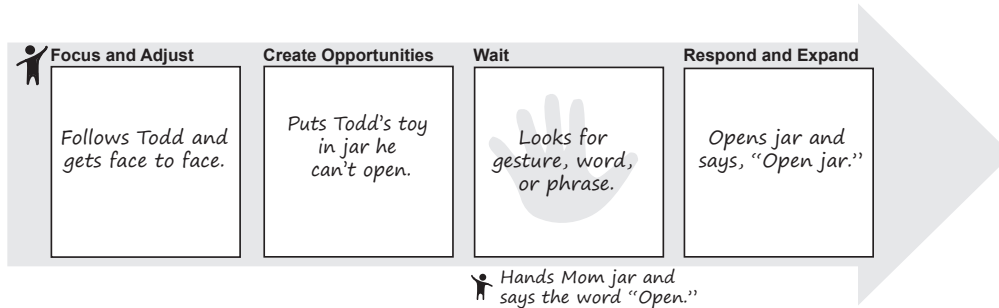


FIGURE 4.3. *Communicative Temptations.* Todd's mom puts his favorite toy in a jar that he cannot open (in sight and out of reach), to create an opportunity for Todd to communicate.

by handing his mother the jar and saying the word “Open.” His mother responds by opening the jar, and expands by saying, “Open jar.”



On the facing page you'll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Communicative Temptations*. The form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use all three **Create Opportunities** techniques (*Playful Obstruction*, *Balanced Turns*, and *Communicative Temptations*). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



Try This at Home! for *Communicative Temptations*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Mealtime/snacktime

Is having a meal or snack

- Serve him a small amount of food, and wait so that he can request more. Keep the rest in plain sight, so that he knows he can get more.
- Pour a small amount of his drink into his cup from a larger pitcher, and wait so that he can request more. Keep the pitcher on the table, so that he knows he can get more.
- Give him the container of juice but not the cup when he asks for juice. Wait to see if he uses gestures or words to request the cup. Bring the cup into his line of sight if he does not ask.

Likes foods that need to be prepared

- Give him his snack still in its packaging, and wait so that he can ask for your help to open it.
- Serve him his food whole, and wait so that he can ask for your help to cut it up.

Is having a meal with you

- Pretend to eat a napkin so that he can tell you the right thing to eat. *Use Animation* to show you are being silly, wait, and then say, “Oh, I can’t eat this; I need to eat the food!”

Dressing

Is getting dressed

- Hold two shirts in his line of sight. Wait to see if he requests a specific shirt.
- Put on only one sock, and wait so that he can request the other sock.
- Pretend to put your child’s shoe on his hand instead of his foot, and wait so that he can tell you the right way to do it. *Use Animation* to show you are being silly, wait, and then say, “Oh, your shoe goes on your foot!”

Is getting undressed

- Pretend to take your child’s sock off before you take off his shoe, and wait so that he can tell you the right way to do it. *Use Animation* to show you are being silly, wait, and then say, “Oh, I need to take your shoe off first.”

Bathtime

Is playing with toys in the tub

- Put your child’s favorite bath toys on a shelf by the tub that he can see but cannot reach, so that he can ask for your help to get them.
- Put your child’s bath toys in a clear plastic container with a lid, and wait so that he can ask for your help to open it.
- Give him bath toys that wind up, and wait so that he can ask for your help to make them go.

Likes getting washed

- Wash only one body part, and wait so that he can request you to keep washing.

(continued)

**Try This at Home!** *(continued)****If your child . . .******You can . . .***

BedtimeLikes hearing a story
at bedtime

- Read one page of your child's favorite bedtime story, and wait so that he can request you to turn the page.

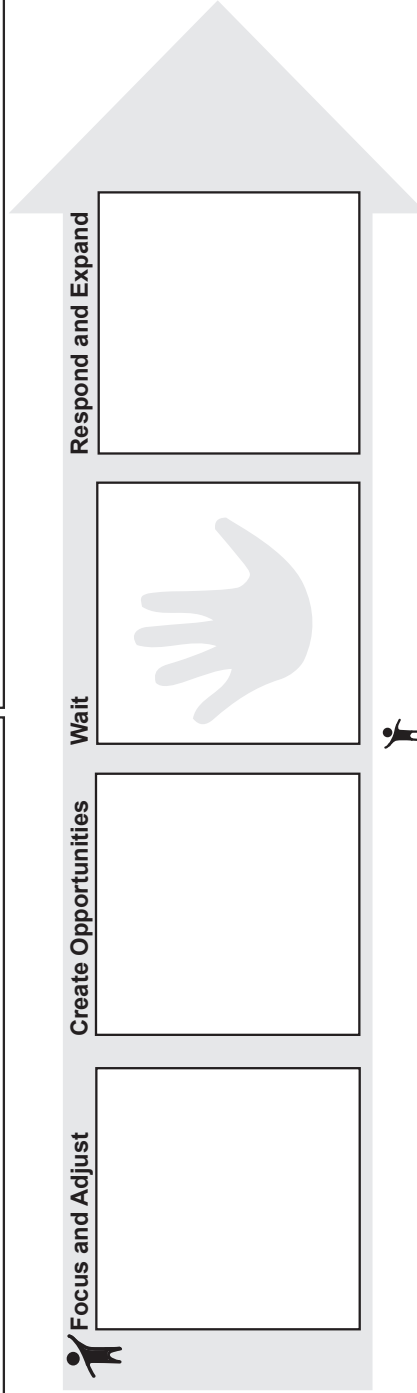
Likes hearing a lullaby

- Sing or play a few lines of your child's favorite lullaby, and wait so that he can request you to continue.
-

Practice Plan— Create Opportunities

Date:

PLANNING	
Goal(s):	What will be hard?
Activity/activities:	Possible solutions:



REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	

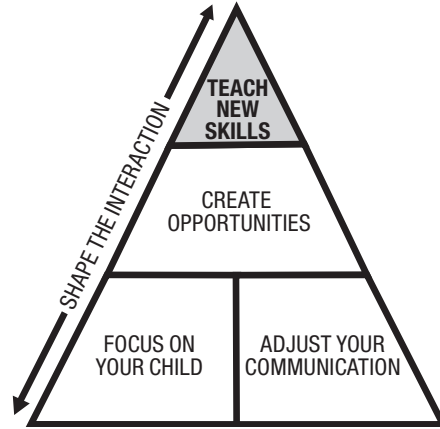
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CHAPTER 5

Teach New Skills

Teach your child new and more complex social communication skills.



Prompts and Rewards

- Make sure your child is motivated.
- Prompt a more complex skill related to what your child is doing.
- Use clear prompts.
- Wait after giving a prompt.
- Give more support as needed.
- Give less support over time.
- Make sure your child does what you ask.
- Give the reward immediately.
- Use a natural reward.
- Only reward positive behaviors.

Prompts for Using Communication

- Use a time delay.
- Ask a question.
- Use a fill-in-the-blank sentence.
- Give a choice.
- Model language for your child to imitate.
- Use a verbal routine.
- Model a gesture for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Prompts for Understanding Communication

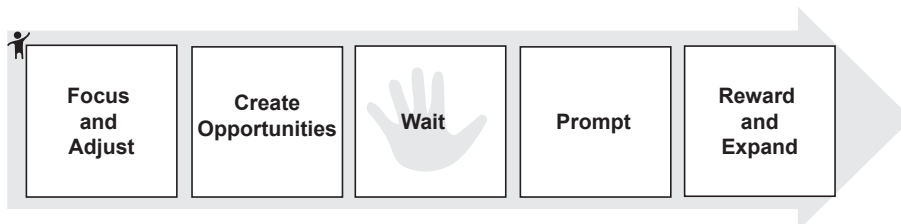
- Use a verbal instruction.
- Use a gesture prompt.
- Model the action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Prompts for Imitation

- Model an action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.

Prompts for Expanding Play

- Make a leading comment.
- Ask a question.
- Give a choice.
- Use a verbal instruction.
- Model an action for your child to imitate.
- Use physical guidance.



You have learned to **Focus on Your Child**, **Adjust Your Communication**, and **Create Opportunities** to help your child engage and initiate. These are the **F**, **A**, and **C** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. So far, you have been responding immediately and expanding on these initiations, without requiring your child to use new or more complex skills. For many children with social communication challenges, however, these strategies are not enough to learn new skills. In the next part of the program, you will learn the **T** of the F.A.C.T.S., which stands for **Teach New Skills**. You will teach your child to use new and more complex ways to communicate and play by using *Prompts and Rewards*.

As before, begin the interaction by focusing on your child, adjusting your communication, creating opportunities, and waiting for your child to respond or initiate. Now, rather than responding to any action your child does, you will prompt him—that is, cue him—to use a specific new skill, and you will wait to respond until he does, as shown in the sequence graphic on the facing page. When your child uses the specific skill, you will reward him and expand on his response.

When you begin to prompt a new skill, your child may become frustrated, because you have changed the rules and are now making him use a new skill before he receives what he wants. If this happens, don't worry! This frustration is common and usually happens because your child doesn't understand the new expectations yet. For most children, this frustration decreases as soon as they understand what is now expected—that they need to use a specific skill. The best way to limit this frustration while still teaching your child is to be consistent. The more consistently you follow through with these techniques, the quicker your child will learn the new expectations, and the faster his frustration will decrease.

Be sure to use this strategy set only about one-third of the time during your interactions, to make sure your child doesn't get discouraged. The rest of the time, you will continue to respond to his initiations without prompting a new skill.

The first part of this chapter describes how to use *Prompts and Rewards*. The rest of the chapter explains in more detail on how to use specific *Prompts for Using Communication*, *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, *Prompts for Imitation*, and *Prompts for Expanding Play*. Toddlers may not be ready for some of the prompts described in this chapter. Your coach can help you decide which types of prompts will be best for your child.

Prompts and Rewards

Prompts are cues that help your child respond with a new skill. There are many different levels of prompts, from giving just a little hint to giving physical guidance. Prompting helps your child know what is expected and how to respond, and prevents him from getting frustrated. A *reward* (sometimes called a *reinforcer*) is a positive consequence that you give your child after he succeeds at using the new skill. It can be anything your child likes, including your smile, laughter, or attention; doing a fun activity with you; or playing with a favorite toy. When you help your child do or say something new or better, you should reward him. This will increase the chances that he will use the new skill again. The following suggestions will help you make your prompts and rewards most effective.



What activities would be good for prompting your child to use new skills?

Make Sure Your Child Is Motivated

The best time to prompt your child to use a new skill is when he is doing something he likes. He may become frustrated or move away from the activity if he is not motivated, or if the prompt doesn't give him enough support.

- Prompt for a new skill when your child is highly motivated by the activity. By focusing on your child, you can be sure that he is interested in the activity.
- Avoid prompting a new skill if your child is not interested in the activity, or if he is unhappy, frustrated, tired, or sick.



If your child is not engaged or motivated by the activity, try offering different activities, or use **Focus on Your Child** or **Adjust Your Communication**.

Prompt a More Complex Skill Related to What Your Child Is Doing

To help your child learn best, prompt your child to use a skill that is slightly more complex than his current skill(s) and is related to what he is doing. If you prompt for an unrelated skill, such as labeling a picture on a flash card or asking your child his name while he is playing with a fire truck, he is much less likely to respond.

- Think about your child's current communication and play skills, and move just one step up to get to the next skill level. For example, if your child is pointing to an apple but not using single words, prompt him to make a sound ("Ah"), to try to say a word (word approximation "App"), or to use a specific gesture to indicate the word (fingers to mouth for "Eat").
- Use materials, toys, and activities that your child is already engaged with to provide a prompt. For example, if your child is playing with blocks, use small portions and give him only a few of the blocks. Prompt your child to say or gesture "Block" before you give him another one.
- Help your child use skills that are meaningful in relation to the materials he is using. For example, if your child is rolling a ball, prompt him to say, "Roll the ball!" rather than label the color of the ball.



What are some language or play skills you would like your child to use?

- The more complex language and play skills you have been modeling are great skills to begin prompting your child to use.
- Use the goals you have set for your child to help you decide what to prompt. You can also use the tables on social communication development in Chapter 1 (Tables 1.1 through 1.4) to decide on the next skill to prompt.

Use Clear Prompts

Use prompts that are clear, to help your child understand what you want him to do. This can keep him from getting frustrated.

- Pause before giving a prompt.
- Gain your child's attention, and use simple language.
- Only use one prompt at a time. Avoid using several prompts together, each asking for a

slightly different answer, such as “Do you want this block?” (target answer: “Yes”), “What should I do?” (target answer: “Give me the block”), and “Tell me, ‘I want the block’” (target answer: “I want the block”).

Wait after Giving a Prompt

Just as you have learned to wait for your child to respond when you use a **Create Opportunities** technique, you need to wait after giving a prompt.

- Give your child enough time to respond. Try counting in your head to 5 slowly before giving another prompt. Some children may need even longer to respond.
- Providing prompts too quickly can frustrate your child and keep him from learning how to respond on his own.



The amount of time you wait will depend on your child’s skill, motivation, and mood. Talk to your coach about how long to wait between prompts.

Give More Support as Needed

Prompts range in the amount of support they give, from the most to the least helpful. To help your child become independent, use the least supportive prompt necessary for your child to respond correctly. If your child is not successful after you prompt a new skill, you can give him more support to follow through. We do this through what we call the “three-prompt rule”:

- Try to make sure that your child is successful by the third prompt, by giving him more support if he needs it.



Some children may protest a little when you start teaching new skills. That’s OK! You can model communication around your child’s emotions and provide more helpful prompts as needed.

- Start with the least supportive prompt.
- If your child does not respond, repeat the prompt or use a more supportive prompt.
- If your child is still not getting it, give more support so that your child can be successful.
- Figure 5.1 shows how you can add support when prompting your child to use a new communication skill (point to request).

- The three-prompt rule is only a general guideline. If your child is very motivated, you may be able to prompt more than three times to get a correct response. If he is not motivated or is easily frustrated, you may need to help him be successful after fewer than three prompts.

Give Less Support over Time

As your child learns, you will give less and less help, until he uses his new skills on his own.

- When your child is beginning to use a new skill, use a more supportive prompt. Your coach can help you identify the level of help your child needs at first.
- After your child is able to respond successfully at one prompt level, start using a less supportive prompt.

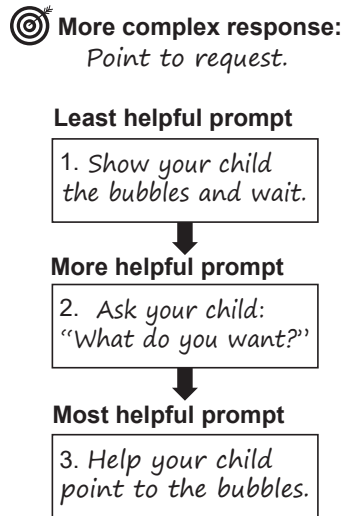


FIGURE 5.1. Example of adding support to help your child use a new communication skill.

- If your child becomes frustrated with your prompts, you may need to use a more supportive prompt.
- Switch the types of prompts you use within and across activities, so your child doesn't expect the same thing every time.

Make Sure Your Child Does What You Ask

When teaching a new skill, you want your child to respond to your prompt before you reward him. This way, he learns that using the new skill gets him what he wants, and he will be more likely to use it again.

- If you prompt your child to use a specific new skill, do not reward him until he has tried to use the new skill, either alone or with your help. If your child does not respond to your prompt, give him a more supportive prompt. For example, if you prompt your child three times to say the word "Ball," only give him the ball if he says "Ball," if he makes a good attempt by saying "Buh," or if you help him point to the ball.
- It is OK to reward good trying, even if it is not exactly the response you were expecting. For example, if your child reaches for the bubbles and you prompt him to say "Bubbles," you can blow bubbles when he makes a good attempt, such as saying "Buh" or pointing clearly.



If you give your child the reward when he does not make a good attempt, then he learns that he does not have to try hard, and he may not try to respond again in the future.

Give Your Child the Reward Immediately

An immediate reward helps your child make a connection between his behavior and what happens afterward.

- Give the reward immediately after your child uses the new skill, even if you have had to prompt him. Try to give the reward within a few seconds. For example, if you ask your child to get the truck and he does it, quickly begin playing trucks with him.
- Don't ask your child to respond more than once before giving him what he wants. This may frustrate him. He may also learn that his communication is not effective. For example, avoid asking your child to point to the juice, and then asking him to say "Yes" when you ask, "Do you want juice?" Choose one of those skills to practice, and either help him point or help him respond to your question, but not both.
- You can prompt your child to use new skills multiple times within an activity, as long as you reward each response. Break up the reward into smaller portions, and reward him each time he uses the new skill. For example, if your child asks for a cracker, give him a small piece each time he asks with a new skill.
- As you reward your child, continue to expand on his response by modeling a more complex communication or play skill. For example, if your child says, "I want to drive car," after you prompt him, give him the car and say, "I want to drive the car very fast."

Use a Natural Reward

A reward is natural when it is related to your child's behavior, action, or communication. Natural rewards increase the chances that your child will use appropriate behavior during everyday activities.

- Reward your child with something that is related to what he is doing and/or saying. For example, if your child sees a toy car and you prompt him to say the word "Car," he is rewarded by getting to play with the car. Now he is more likely to say "Car" in the future. This is a more natural reward than if he is rewarded with a piece of candy for saying "Car."



What are some ways you can reward your child for using a new skill during daily activities or play?



If your child is not responding, remember to use **Focus on Your Child** to make sure he is motivated by the item or activity.

- By focusing on your child, you can get a good idea of what could be a good reward in the moment.
- For teaching some skills, it may not always be possible to use a reward that is related to what your child is doing. You may need to give an extra reward, such as a favorite toy, activity, or treat, for using the new skill. Your coach can help you decide when to use extra rewards.

Only Reward Positive Behaviors

A reward will increase whatever behavior it directly follows. So only reward the behaviors that you want to see more of.

- Do not reward challenging behaviors, because your child will learn to keep using them to get what he wants. You can acknowledge that your child is upset, and redirect him or



What behaviors do you want to avoid rewarding?

move to a new activity. For example, do not give your child the train if he is yelling loudly for it and yelling is not something you want him to do.

- Using rewards consistently at the right time takes practice. Ask your coach for extra help if you need it.

The first form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use *Prompts and Rewards*. Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



Be careful with rewards if your child is using a new skill and a challenging behavior at the same time. For example, if your child says the word “Cookie” at the same time as he is hitting you, do not give him the cookie. You could accidentally reward the hitting and cause him to do it more.

Prompts for Using Communication

Now that you know the basics of how to **Teach New Skills** by using *Prompts and Rewards*, you can use these strategies to teach your child to use new communication skills, such as gestures, words, word combinations, or sentences. This can also help decrease inappropriate behaviors that your child might be using to get his needs met. You can increase your child’s:

- Use of gestures.
- Use of verbal language skills.
- Use of nonverbal and verbal skills together.
- Reasons for communicating

When giving your child *Prompts for Using Communication*, begin by focusing on him and adjusting your communication to make sure he is motivated. If your child doesn’t initiate communication on his own, use a technique to create an opportunity and wait for him to communicate. Next, prompt him to use a new or more complex communication skill. After your child uses the new communication skill, reward him by giving him the object or activity that he wants, even if you have had to help. Remember, only reward your child after a good attempt, and don’t reward inappropriate behavior.



What new communication skill can you prompt that is slightly more complex than your child’s current skills?

- Wait for your child to communicate. Then prompt him to use a skill that is slightly more complex than his first communication, and that is related to what he is doing.
- Use Table 5.1 and your child’s goals to help you decide what new communication skills to prompt for your child.
- Table 5.2 describes the different *Prompts for Using Communication*. It starts with the least supportive prompt and ends with the most supportive prompt.
- Start with the least supportive prompt needed for your child to respond correctly. If your child is not able to use the new communication skill with this prompt, use a more supportive prompt so that your child is successful.
- Remember the three-prompt rule: Make sure you are providing enough support that your

TABLE 5.1. Choosing What Type of Communication to Prompt

When your child . . .	You can . . .	Examples
Uses eye contact or preintentional gestures	Prompt intentional gestures and single words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point. • Gesture for “Open” or “My turn.” • “Push” or “Car.”
Uses intentional gestures, makes word approximations or uses single words	Prompt single words and word combinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ball.” • “Throw ball.”
Combines two or three words	Prompt simple sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Give me crackers.” • “I want more tickles.”
Uses simple sentences	Prompt complex sentences that include descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Put on my red shirt.” • “Turn on the cold water.”
Uses complex sentences	Prompt complex sentences with language concepts such as time or emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let’s go outside <i>after lunch</i>.” • “I <i>don’t like</i> to eat broccoli.”

child can respond correctly by the third prompt. Your coach can help you decide what communication prompts are the best place to start.

- Use less supportive prompts over time to help your child use the new skill spontaneously.



What three prompts can you use to help your child use a new communication skill?



How can you reward your child for using this new communication skill?

- Only prompt a more complex communication skill about one-third of the time, to make sure your child doesn’t get discouraged. The rest of the time, continue to respond to his spontaneous communication.

In Figure 5.2, Vivian is eating a snack. Her mom is using *Prompts for Using Communication* to teach her to use a single word to request. The sequence graphic below shows the steps Vivian’s mom follows. She holds up a cracker and waits to see how Vivian will communicate. Vivian responds by reaching for a cracker. Her mother then prompts Vivian to say the word “Cracker” by asking a question. When Vivian does not respond,



Remember, the three-prompt rule is only a general guideline. If your child is very frustrated, you may need to help him be successful after fewer than three prompts.

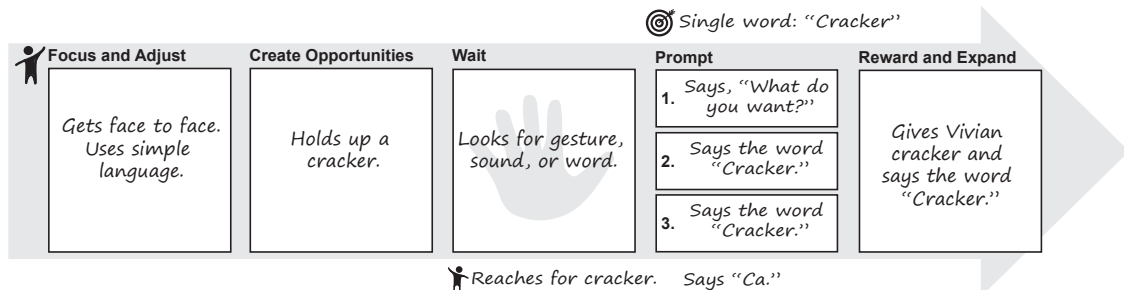


TABLE 5.2. Types of Prompts for Using Communication

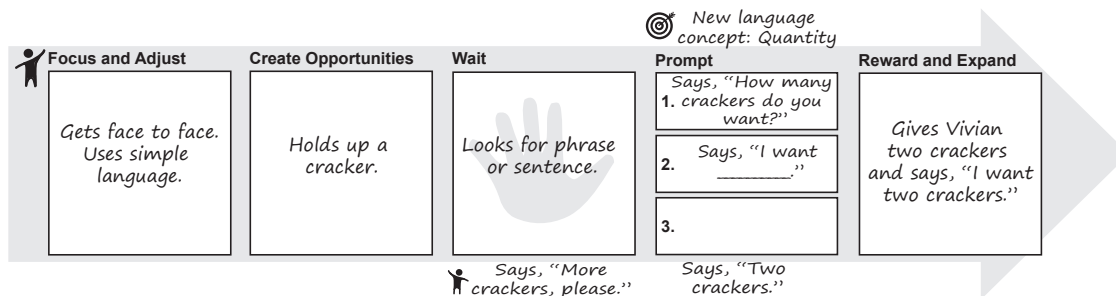
Prompt type	Description	Examples
Use a time delay.	Wait with an expectant look for your child to use a more complex communication skill on his own. If your child does not respond in about 10 seconds, add a more supportive prompt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child finishes his juice and looks at you for more, hold up the container and wait for him to point to the juice. • If your child says the word “Car,” wait with an expectant look to help him say, “I want car.”
Ask a question.	Ask your child a question to help him communicate and expand his vocabulary. “What,” “where,” and “who” questions are easier than “how,” “why,” or “when” questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While getting your child ready for the bath, point to the faucet and ask, “What do you want?” to help him say, “Turn on water.” • During a tickle game, ask your child, “Where do you want tickles?”, “Who do you want to tickle you?”, or “How many tickles do you want?” to help him use more language.
Use a fill-in-the-blank sentence.	Leave off the last part of a sentence, to allow your child to fill in the missing word or gesture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer your child two different snacks and say, “I want . . .” to help him point to or tell you the snack he wants. • Place a baby doll in a bed and say, “The baby is in the . . .” Wait for your child to say the word “Bed.”
Give a choice.	Present your child with two choices to answer a question. If your child always repeats the second choice, give choices between something he likes (say it first) and something he doesn’t (say it second). If he repeats the second item, give it to him, even though you know he doesn’t want it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold up a toy car and a napkin, and ask your child, “Do you want car or napkin?” Your child can choose by using a gesture or words. • Hold up a red and a blue shirt, and ask, “Do you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt?” to help him tell you what he wants.
Model language for your child to imitate.	Model a word or phrase you want your child to imitate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child wants a car, hold one up and say “Car.” Wait for your child to repeat the word.
Use a verbal routine.	Verbal routines are meaningful phrases your child has heard <i>many times</i> . To use a verbal routine as a prompt, start the phrase, but leave off the last part and wait with anticipation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before blowing another bubble, say, “Ready, set . . .” and wait for your child to fill in “Go.” • Before helping your child jump up in the air, say, “One, two, three . . .” and wait for your child to fill in “Jump” or “Go.”
Model a gesture for your child to imitate.	Demonstrate the gesture you want your child to use. Pair it with a spoken word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child wants to leave an area, model waving and saying “Bye-bye,” and wait for him to imitate you. • When your child wants a toy, point to it and name it, and wait for him to imitate the point.
Use physical guidance.	Physically help your child complete a gesture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child is looking at a toy on the shelf that he wants, physically raise and shape his hand to point to the toy. • When your child wants to go outside, take his hand and help him tap on the door.



FIGURE 5.2. *Prompts for Using Communication.* Vivian’s mother asks a direct question to prompt Vivian to use a more complex skill.

her mother uses a more supportive prompt by modeling the word. Vivian doesn’t respond, so her mother models the word again. This time Vivian responds by saying “Ca.” Her mother rewards this communication by giving Vivian the cracker and expands by saying “Cracker.” Notice that Vivian’s mom uses three prompts to help Vivian say “Cracker,” and that she does not reward her with the cracker until Vivian makes a good attempt by saying “Ca.”

As Vivian develops better communication skills, her mother can prompt phrases or sentences and introduce new language concepts, like number, size, or shape. The sequence graphic below shows what the steps might look like when Vivian begins to combine words. Notice here that Vivian’s mom only needs to use two prompts to help Vivian use a new communication skill.



On page 78 you’ll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Prompts for Using Communication*. The second form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use any or all of the **Teach New Skills** techniques (*Prompts for Using Communication*, as well as *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, *Prompts for Imitation*, and *Prompts for Expanding Play*). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you have had the chance to practice at home.



Try This at Home! for *Prompts for Using Communication*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Toy play

Is playing with blocks

- Hold up a block and ask, “What do you want?”, “How many blocks?”, or “Where should I put the block?”

Is playing with activities that require preparation or have multiple steps (such as water balloons or arts and crafts)

- Have him tell you the steps: “What should I do?”, “Where does it go?”, or “What should I do next?” Be sure to reward him after he responds to the prompt before you prompt him to tell you the next step.

Mealtime/snacktime

Is having a snack or is hungry

- Give your child a choice of what to eat. For example: “Do you want fish crackers or fruit snacks?” Try offering him a preferred food and a nonpreferred food, to help him make more meaningful choices.
- Serve your child his favorite food a few pieces at a time. When he wants more, prompt him to tell you what he wants: “What do you want?” Or prompt how much he wants: “How many pieces do you want?”
- Have your child help you make a favorite meal or snack. Give him an ingredient to add, but before he can put it in, prompt him to tell you what needs to be done: “Chocolate in.”

Dressing

Is getting dressed

- Give your child choices about what to wear and the order of dressing, and prompt him to tell you his preference. For example, hold up two shirts of different colors and ask, “Do you want red or blue?” Or “What comes first, pants or shirt?”
- Prompt your child to tell you where his clothes go. For example, while putting on your child’s shoes, say, “Shoes go on your . . . [feet],” while pointing to your child’s feet.

Needs help putting on his shoes or another clothing item

- Hand him his shoes, and wait with an expectant look. If he doesn’t respond, prompt him to tell you: “What do you need?” (“Help” or “Shoes on.”)

Bathtime

Needs help undressing

- If your child needs help undressing, only take off one item of clothing at a time. Prompt him to tell you what item needs to come off next.

Likes water toys

- Have toys that he needs assistance with, such as wind-up toys. Prompt your child to ask you to activate a toy.

(continued)



Try This at Home! *(continued)*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Likes being washed

- Wash one body part at a time and wait. For example, wash one hand and then wait. Prompt him to tell you which part to wash next.

Bedtime

Likes reading books

- Read one page at a time. Prompt him to tell you to turn the page.
- You can also wait before you start reading the page and prompt him to tell you to read.

Prompts for Understanding Communication

You can also use *Prompts and Rewards* to teach your child to understand communication and follow your directions. Familiar daily routines are great times to teach your child to understand communication, since your child already has an idea of the steps involved in these activities and can more easily understand your directions. You can also use natural rewards. *Prompts for Understanding Communication* will help your child:

- Follow your directions.
- Understand new words, phrases, or language concepts.



What directions can you give during daily routines?

When teaching your child to understand communication, you will usually begin by focusing on your child and adjusting your communication to make sure he is motivated. Next, create an opportunity to gain his attention. Once you have his attention, prompt your child to follow a direction. After your child follows your direction, even if you have had to help, praise him by telling him what he did right, and immediately reward him by letting him do the activity he wants. This will make it more likely that he will understand and follow your directions again.

Sometimes your child needs to follow your directions during routines or activities he doesn't choose, such as brushing his teeth or putting away his toys. In these daily routines, you may not start by focusing on your child and may not be able to use a natural reward. Instead, begin by creating an opportunity to gain his attention and then give the direction. You may need to give an extra reward, such as a favorite toy, activity, or treat, for following your direction. Your coach can help you decide when to use extra rewards.

- Start with a clear verbal instruction that tells your child exactly what to do. Make sure not to ask a question when you mean to give a direction. For example, instead of saying "Can you put your shoes on?," say, "Put your shoes on."
- Keep your verbal instruction simple. Only give a one-step direc-



Before you give any direction, make sure you have your child's attention.

tion, unless your child is working on following multistep directions. For example, instead of saying, “Get your shoes and coat on and let’s go,” say, “Get your shoes on.” Once your child responds, give the second step of the direction: “Get your coat on.”

- If your child has difficulty responding, add more support by repeating the verbal instruction or using a more supportive prompt. Remember the three-prompt rule: Make sure you help your child be successful by the third prompt.
- Table 5.3 describes the different *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. It starts with the least supportive prompt and ends with the most supportive prompt. Your coach can help you decide the best prompt to start with.
- Be sure not to repeat your instruction over and over without following through with physical guidance, or your child may learn that he does not need to respond!



How can you reward your child for following your directions?



What three prompts can you use to help your child follow your directions?

- Use less supportive prompts over time, so that your child can learn to follow your directions without help.
- As with other types of prompts, be sure that you only use *Prompts for Understanding Communication* about one-third of the time.

In Figure 5.3, James’s dad is using *Prompts for Understanding Communication* to teach James to follow a one-step direction at breakfast. The

TABLE 5.3. Types of Prompts for Understanding Communication

Prompt type	Description	Examples
Use a verbal instruction.	Tell your child exactly what to do. Keep it simple, and avoid giving too much information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While getting your child dressed, say, “Put your shirt on.” Wait for your child to put his shirt on. • When coloring with your child, say, “Use the red pen.” Wait for him to color with the red pen.
Use a gesture prompt.	Use a gesture with your verbal instruction to cue your child how to respond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When making a snack with your child, say, “Get the peanut butter,” and point to it. Wait for your child to get the peanut butter. • When it’s time to leave, say, “Put your coat on,” and hold up your child’s coat. Wait for your child to put on his coat.
Model the action for your child to imitate.	Model the action with your verbal instruction to show your child how to respond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When getting ready for a snack, say, “Wash your hands,” and model putting your hands under the faucet. Wait for your child to wash his hands. • When shopping with your child, say, “Put cereal in,” and model putting the cereal in the cart. Put it back on the shelf, and wait for your child to put the cereal in the cart.
Use physical guidance.	Physically guide your child to respond to your verbal instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When it is time to go outside, say, “Get your shoes,” and physically help your child get his shoes. • When playing with the ball, say, “Throw me the ball,” and physically help your child throw a ball. • When it’s time to clean up, say, “Put your toys in the box,” and physically help your child put a toy in the box.

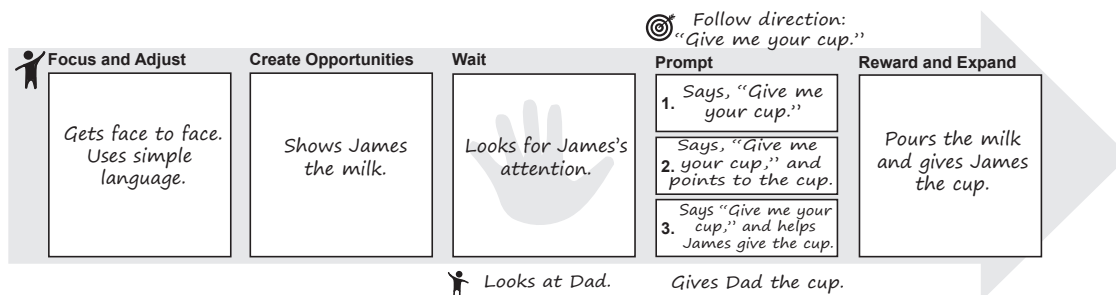


FIGURE 5.3. *Prompts for Understanding Communication.* James’s dad give James a clear direction (“Give me your cup”), paired with a visual prompt (pointing to the cup), to improve James’s ability to follow directions.

sequence graphic below shows the sequence of steps James’s dad uses. His dad shows James the milk and waits to get James’s attention. He then gives a clear verbal instruction. When James doesn’t respond, his dad repeats the instruction and uses a gesture prompt by pointing to the cup. James still doesn’t respond, so his dad then uses physical guidance to help James pick up the cup and give it to him. His dad then rewards James by pouring the milk and giving it to him.



If your child is having a hard time following directions even when you use more supportive prompts, review Chapter 8, **Manage Your Child’s Challenging Behavior**, with your coach.



On page 82 you’ll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Prompts for Understanding Communication*. The second form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use any or all of the **Teach New Skills** techniques (*Prompts for Using Communication* and *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, as well as *Prompts for Imitation* and *Prompts for Expanding Play*). Your coach will



Try This at Home! for *Prompts for Understanding Communication*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Toy play

Is driving a car

- Give him a figurine and tell him, “Put in,” while pointing to the car. Be sure to return to *Follow Your Child’s Lead* in play, once he has responded.
- Teach your child new language concepts (such as color, shape, size, or number) during his play. For example: “Get the *red* car,” or “Give me *two* cars.”

Is playing with activities that have multiple steps (such as water balloons or arts and crafts)

- Give your child directions in the activity. For example, to make water balloons, tell him, “Get balloon. Put balloon on. Turn on water.” Use gestures and modeling to help him understand the steps. Offer him help if he has difficulty, but after you let him try himself.

Mealtime/snacktime

Is helping prepare a meal or snack

- Tell your child to get each item as needed. For example, hold up the juice container and say, “Give me your *cup*,” while pointing to your child’s cup. It helps to have all of the needed items available.
- Give your child directions to follow while he helps you make a highly preferred snack. For example: “Pour milk. Squeeze chocolate sauce. Stir.”

Dressing

Is getting dressed

- Give him directions to follow, such as “Get shirt” or “Put shoes on.” It helps if the needed clothing items are easily available. This works best when your child is really motivated to get dressed, such as when he needs to get his shoes on so he can go outside and play.

Bathtime

Is getting ready to take a bath

- Give your child directions to help prepare for the bath: “Get your towel. Get the soap. Turn on water.”

Is taking a bath

- Teach your child body parts by telling him to give you a specific body part for you to wash. For example, “Give me your *foot* . . . Give me your *hand*.”

Household chores

Is helping with laundry

- Give your child one-step (“Get the soap”) or two-step (“Get the soap and pour it in”) directions.

Is helping set the table

- Give directions to work on spatial (“on,” “under,” “next to”) or temporal (“first,” “next,” “last”) concepts. For example, “Put the plate on the table,” “Put the fork on the table,” and “Put the napkin under the fork.” Or “First put on the placemat, then get the plates.”

help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.

Prompts for Imitation

Another way you can use *Prompts and Rewards* is to teach your child to imitate your actions and gestures during play. This can help your child connect with you and learn new ways to play through imitation. Toys that can be used in many different, creative ways are best for teaching imitation. It helps to have two of the same or similar toys, so that you and your child can imitate each other at the same time. You can use *Prompts for Imitation* to:

- Build your child’s imitation skills.
- Teach your child new ways to play.
- Teach your child to use new gestures.

To teach imitation, engage your child in a back-and-forth “social game,” where you and your child take turns imitating each other during play. Start the interaction by imitating your child. When it is your turn, create an opportunity by using *Playful Obstruction* or *Balanced Turns* to help your child pay attention to you. Once you have your child’s attention, prompt him to imitate you. As soon as your child imitates you, reward him with praise, and then let him play the way he likes. Reward your child even if you have physically prompted him to imitate and go back to imitating him.

- Once your child is engaged, model a play action or a gesture that is related to his play. The action can be silly and playful, as long as it is fun for your child.
- Tables 5.4 and 5.5 give examples of play actions and gestures you can model.
- Use simple language to describe what you are doing as you model the action. For example,

TABLE 5.4. New Play Actions to Model

When your child is . . .	You can . . .	Say . . .
Pushing a train on the track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have two trains crash. • Push a train under a bridge. • Put a cow on the train. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Crash!” • “Train goes under.” • “Cow on the train.”
Rolling a ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bounce the ball. • Kick the ball. • Throw the ball in a basket. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Bounce.” • “Kick the ball.” • “Ball goes in the basket.”
Playing with sand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pour the sand in a cup. • Hide a figure in the sand. • Dig the sand with a shovel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sand in.” • “Where did he go?” • “Dig a big hole.”
Drawing with markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color fast and slow • Use a new color. • Draw a face. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Fast . . . slow.” • “Red.” • “It’s a happy face.”

TABLE 5.5. New Gestures to Model

When your child is . . .	You can . . .	Say . . .
Playing with toy food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pat your tummy. • Wipe your lips. • Blow on the food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yummy!” • “Wipe mouth.” • “It is hot.”
Playing with a baby doll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blow a kiss. • Put your finger to your lips. • Press your hands together by your face. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Blow kiss.” • “Shh, baby is sleeping.” • “Baby is tired.”
Playing with a toy dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk your fingers across the table. • Wag your finger as if scolding the doggy. • Shrug your shoulders with your palms up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Dog is walking.” • “No, doggy!” • “Where is doggy?”
Playing with blocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clap your hands. • Move your hands apart vertically. • Slap your hands together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yay! You made a tower.” • “It is so tall.” • “It crashed.”

if you model bouncing a ball, say, “Bounce, bounce.” If you model pushing a car, say, “Vroom, vroom.” This helps your child pay attention to your model.

- Once you model the new action, wait to give your child a chance to imitate the action on his own.

What gestures can you model that relate to your child’s play?

- If he doesn’t imitate after about 5 seconds, add more support by modeling the same action with the same simple language again. You can do this twice. However, remember the three-prompt rule: If your child still does not imitate your action after your second model, physically prompt him to do so.

- Table 5.6 describes the two types of *Prompts for Imitation*: modeling and physical guidance.

What play actions can you model with your child’s favorite toy?

TABLE 5.6. Types of Prompts for Imitation

Prompt type	Description	Examples
Model an action for your child to imitate.	Model a new play action with a toy or a gesture related to your child’s play. If he doesn’t imitate you, model the action again.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After rolling a ball back forth with your child, model bouncing the ball and say, “Bounce, bounce.” • After building a tower, model clapping your hands and say “Yay!” Wait for him to imitate.
Use physical guidance.	If your child doesn’t imitate after your second model prompt, physically guide him to complete the action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically help your child push the ball and say, “Bounce, bounce.” • Physically help your child clap his hands and say “Yay!”

Your coach can help you decide the best number of times to model before you use physical guidance.

- During the interaction, you will be doing most of the imitating, and your child will only be expected to imitate you about one-third of the time.

Figure 5.4 shows Jordan’s mom teaching him to imitate a play action with an object. Jordan is playing with a Slinky by shaking it up and down. The sequence graphic below shows the steps Jordan’s mom follows to teach him to imitate play with an object. His mom sits face to face and imitates his play with another Slinky. After a few minutes, Jordan’s mom gets his attention, says “Ball in,” and models dropping it down the Slinky. She waits for Jordan to imitate her. When he doesn’t, she models the action, describes it again, and waits. When he does not respond, she models the action one



If your child has difficulty imitating, model actions your child does with the toy on his own, even if they are unusual. For example, if your child only plays with cars by spinning their wheels or lining them up, model spinning the wheels when your child is lining up cars.

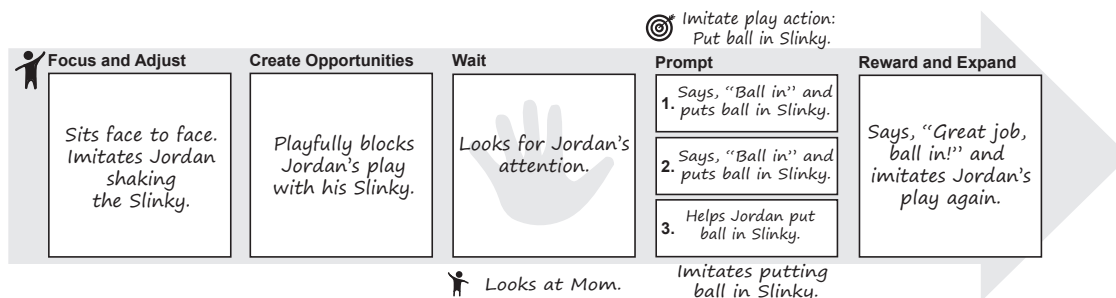
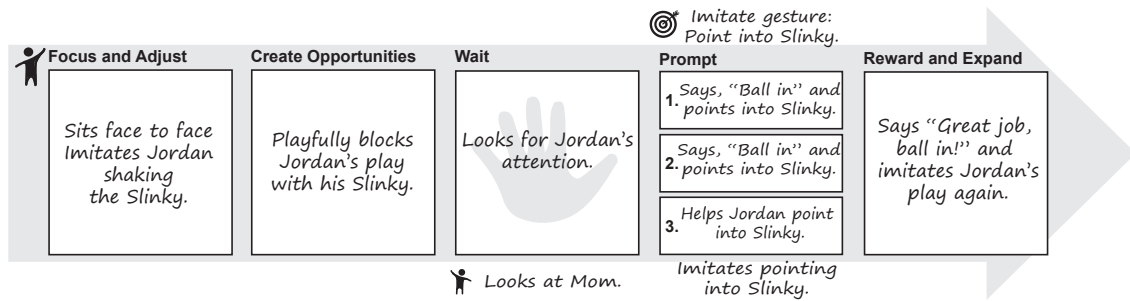


FIGURE 5.4. Prompts for Imitation. Jordan’s mom prompts Jordan to imitate a new play action with an object by modeling the new play and describing the play (“Ball in”).

more time. Jordan still doesn't respond, so she uses physical guidance to prompt him to imitate. After he does, she rewards him and imitates his play some more.

The next sequence graphic shows the steps Jordan's mom follows to teach him to imitate a gesture during play. She says, "Ball in," and models a gesture (pointing into the Slinky), then drops her ball in. When Jordan doesn't respond after two more models, his mom uses physical guidance to prompt him to point into the Slinky. Notice that she is prompting only one skill at a time by focusing on having Jordan imitate her gesture and not the play action.



On the facing page you'll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Prompts for Imitation*. The second form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use any or all of the **Teach New Skills** techniques (*Prompts for Using Communication*, *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, and *Prompts for Imitation*, as well as *Prompts for Expanding Play*). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part.



Try This at Home! for *Prompts for Imitation*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Songs/social games

Is singing or listening to you sing

- Use gestures and movements that go with the song. Then add a new action and help your child imitate the new action. For example, if you are singing “Wheels on the Bus,” add a new action, such as arms moving back and forth for the wipers on the bus, hands open and closed for the doors on the bus, or a point up and down for people on the bus.

Is playing with musical instruments such as drums, maracas, or the piano

- Imitate his pattern, and then model a new pattern and help him imitate you.

Toy play

Is pretending to feed a doll or other figurine

- Imitate your child feeding the doll, and then pretend to wash the doll’s face. Help your child imitate the new action.

Is playing with cars

- Imitate your child pushing the car down the ramp and crashing the car. Then model a new play action, such as fixing the car, and help your child imitate you.

Active play

Is running back and forth or wandering aimlessly

- Imitate your child’s behavior and run back and forth. Then model a new action, such as jumping, marching, spinning, or falling down, and help him imitate you. This activity works well when you are taking a walk or at the park.

Is looking at something

- Point toward the item and say, “Look at that!”
- Flap your arms when looking at a bird and say, “Bird is flying.”
- Cup your hand around your ear and say, “What is that noise?”

Storytime

Is reading a book

- Act out the content of the page, using exaggerated gestures.
- If there is a picture of a bird, pretend to be a bird (flap your arms like wings and say, “Chirp, chirp”). Help your child imitate this new action.
- If there is a picture of food, pretend to eat it off the page. Help your child imitate this new action.

Mealtime/snacktime

Is having a snack

- Imitate your child by eating at the same time as he does. Then model a new action, such as wiping your mouth with a napkin before the next bite, and help him imitate you.

Prompts for Expanding Play

Prompts and Rewards can also be used to teach new play skills. So far, you have learned to teach your child to imitate new play actions and gestures. You can also expand your child's play skills by using verbal prompts that help your child follow your directions and suggestions in play. *Prompts for Expanding Play* are usually more successful for children with better play and language skills. So, if your child has difficulty responding to verbal directions, you should instead use *Prompts for Imitation* to help your child expand his play skills.

With *Prompts for Expanding Play*, you can:

- Increase the number of different actions your child does with a favorite toy.
- Teach your child to play with new toys.
- Teach your child to play in more complex ways.



What new play skills can you prompt your child to use?

Begin, as usual, by focusing on your child and adjusting your communication to join him in his play. Then use a **Create Opportunities** technique to gain your child's attention. Next, prompt him to use a new or slightly more complex play skill than he does on his own. After your child uses the new play skill, reward him by praising him and letting him play the way he wants.

- Wait for your child to start playing. Then prompt him to use a new or slightly more complex play skill that is related to what he is doing. Use the toy your child is playing with, or include his toy in a new activity.
- Use Table 5.7 and the goals you have set for your child for ideas of what play skills to prompt.
- Table 5.8 describes the different *Prompts for Expanding Play*. It starts with the least supportive prompt and ends with the most supportive prompt.



Thinking of new ways to play with toys can be challenging! Try brainstorming different ways to play with your child's favorite toys when you're not interacting with your child.



What three prompts can you use to help your child use a new play skill?

- Start with the least supportive prompt needed for your child to respond correctly.
- Remember the three-prompt rule: Add more support if needed to help your child be successful. Your coach can help you decide which play prompts are the best ones to start with.
- Be sure that you only prompt a new play skill about one-third of the time, and then continue to *Follow Your Child's Lead*.



Be aware of your child's language skills, since some play prompts, such as giving a verbal instruction, rely on your child's ability to understand language.

In Figure 5.5, Tina is playing with a doll. Tina's mom is teaching her pretend play. The sequence graphic on page 91 shows the sequence of steps the mom uses to teach Tina. Her mom takes a turn with the doll. When Tina looks at her, her mom prompts Tina to feed the doll with the block, first by using a leading comment. When Tina doesn't respond, her mom uses a more supportive prompt by repeating the comment and asking a ques-

TABLE 5.7. Choosing What Type of Play Skills to Prompt

When your child . . .	You can . . .	Examples
Explores toys and objects	Prompt him to put toys together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put marbles in a jar. • Put a shape in a shape sorter. • Stack rings.
Puts toys and objects together	Prompt him to activate the toys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push buttons on a pop-up toy. • Push buttons on sound toys. • Turn the handle on a jack-in-the-box.
Understands that his actions with toys make things happen	Prompt him to use the objects in a meaningful way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a person in the car. • Push a train on the track. • Cut toy food.
Plays with miniature toys	Prompt him to pretend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend that a toy stove is hot. • Pretend to give a baby doll a bath . • Pretend that the doll is hurt
Pretends with toys and other objects	Prompt him to tell a story with toys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend that a doll is sick and take it to the doctor. • Pretend that a figurine is getting ready in the morning and going to school.
Pretends to be different characters	Prompt him to act out a story.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend to be a student and have him be the teacher. • Pretend that a toy car is broken and you are both mechanics.

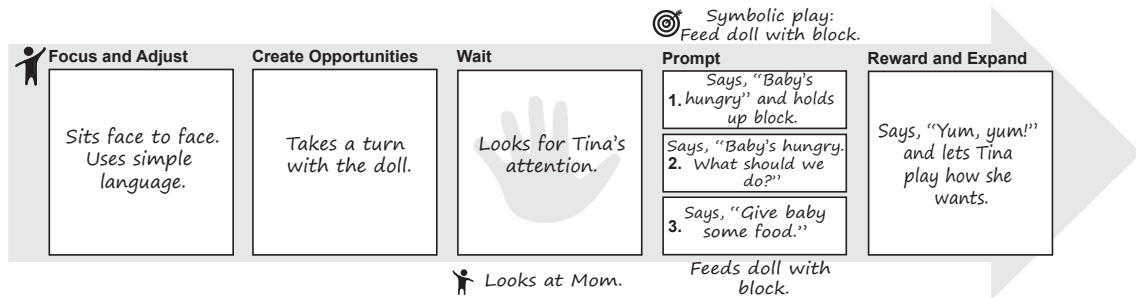


FIGURE 5.5. *Prompts for Expanding Play.* Tina's mom uses a verbal instruction ("Baby's hungry. Give the baby some food") to increase the complexity of Tina's play.

TABLE 5.8. Types of Prompts for Expanding Play

Prompt type	Description	Examples
Make a leading comment.	Make a comment that cues your child what to do next or how you would like to get involved. Pair it with a gesture to help your child respond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child is dressing and undressing a baby doll repetitively, show your child some food and say, “Your baby looks hungry,” to help him feed the baby. • When your child is driving a car in circles, say, “Oh, no, the car broke down!” to help him fix the car. • When you are playing with a dollhouse, say, “Oh, no, it is on fire!” Show him a tube to help him pretend to be a firefighter and put the fire out with a hose.
Ask a question.	Ask your child a question to cue him to do something new with the toy. Your child should respond to your question by showing you the answer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child is rolling his car back and forth, ask him, “Where should the car go next?” to help him drive the car to a new place. • When your child is finished putting the animals around the table, ask, “What should the animals do now?” to help him feed the animals. • When you are playing with toy food, say “Chef, what’s for dinner?” to help him pretend to be a chef.
Give a choice.	Give your child a choice of two new ways to play with the toy, to help him expand his play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child is holding the toy food, ask, “Should we cook the food or eat the food?” to help him use the food in a new way. • When your child is rolling a train back and forth, ask, “Do you want to drive to the station or drive through the tunnel?” to help him drive the train to a new place. • When you are playing with a toy pet shop, have the dog say, “Cat, should we have some lunch or go to sleep?” to help your child pretend to be a cat.
Use a verbal instruction.	Tell your child what else to do with the toy he is playing with. Be sure to <i>Follow Your Child’s Lead</i> and give play instructions related to his activity of choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child is pushing a car, hand him a person and say, “Put the person in the car,” to help him put toys together. • When your child is rolling a ball, place a bucket in front of him and say, “Make a basket,” to help him do something new with the ball.
Model an action for your child to imitate.	Model a new action for your child to imitate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child is rolling a ball, kick the ball to help him kick the ball. • When your child is playing with Play-Doh, make a snake or a ball to help him make something new with the Play-Doh.
Use physical guidance.	Physically guide your child to imitate the play action or follow the verbal instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help your child put the ball in the basket. • Help your child put the person in the car.

tion. When Tina still doesn't respond, her mom adds more support by showing her the block and giving a verbal instruction. Tina then responds by using the block to feed the baby. Her mom praises her and lets her play with the doll the way she wants.



On page 92 you'll find Try This at Home! ideas for *Prompts for Expanding Play*. The second form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use any or all of the **Teach New Skills** techniques (*Prompts for Using Communication*, *Prompts for Understanding Communication*, *Prompts for Imitation*, and *Prompts for Expanding Play*). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you have had a chance to practice at home.



Try This at Home! for *Prompts for Expanding Play*

If your child . . .

You can . . .

Toy play

Is playing with cars

- Hold up a figurine, and use prompts to help him put the figurine into a car.
- Build a tower with blocks, then have your car crash into the tower and knock it over. Prompt him to build the tower and knock it over with his car.
- Hold up a toy car and say, "This car is dirty!" Give him more support until he uses the new action of pretending to wash the car.
- Help your child to develop a shared play theme in which you and your child both have pretend roles. For instance, pretend to be a police officer directing traffic.

Is playing with toy animals

- Help your child act out the roles of the animals. For example, if you are playing with a dog, have your child pretend to be a dog by helping him crawl on all fours and bark like a dog.
- Hold up pretend food, and help your child use a new action of feeding the dog.
- Pretend to be the pet owner, and help him pretend to be the vet who is giving the animal a checkup.

Active play

Is swinging on a swing

- Bring a stuffed animal or a doll outside, and help your child give it a turn.

Is playing with a ball

- Take a turn and model a new action with the ball, such as kicking it, throwing it into a container, rolling the ball, or throwing the ball.

Mealtime/snacktime

Is having a snack

- Bring a stuffed animal, puppet, or doll to the table. Help your child pretend to feed it, wash its face, or make it clear the table.

Likes foods that have to be prepared

- Have him help you measure, stir, mix, or shake the ingredients. This can be a great sequence to act out later with toys!

Bathtime

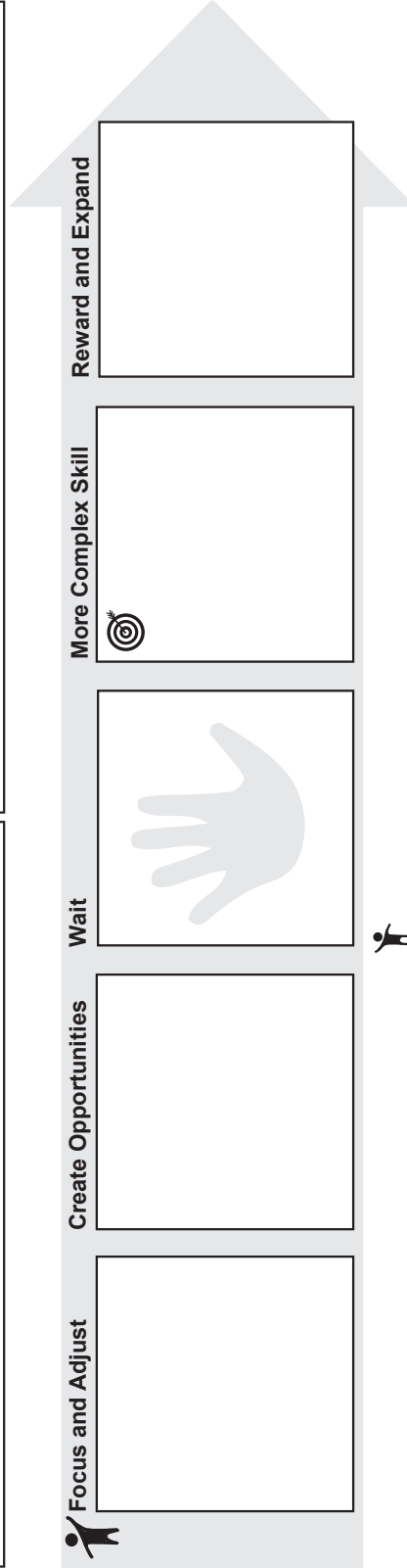
Is taking a bath

- Bring in new toys, such as water wheels, cups, containers, rubber toys that float, wind-up toys, or bath crayons. Help your child play with the toys in either a functional or a pretend way.
- Add another step to his play. For example, if he likes to pour water, help him pour water over an object and pretend to wash it.

Practice Plan— Prompts and Rewards

Date:

PLANNING	
Goal(s):	What will be hard?
Activity/activities:	Possible solutions:





REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	

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Practice Plan— Teach New Skills

Date: _____

PLANNING					REFLECTION			
<p>Goal(s):</p> <p>Activity/activities:</p>	<p>What will be hard?</p> <p>Possible solutions:</p>	<p>Focus and Adjust</p>	<p>Create Opportunities</p>	<p>Wait</p> 	<p>Prompt</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p>	<p>Reward and Expand</p>	<p>What went well?</p> <p>What was hard?</p>	<p>Possible solutions:</p>

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CHAPTER 6

Shape the Interaction



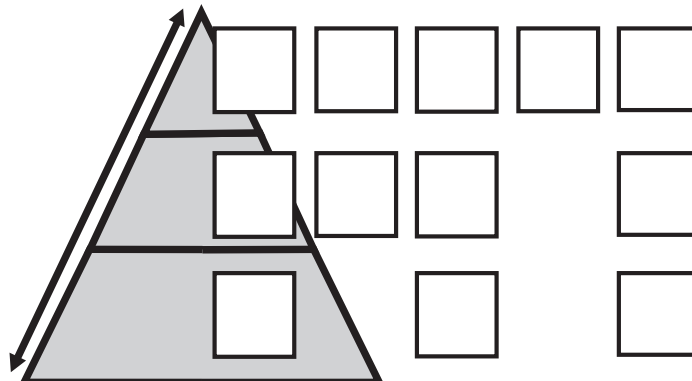
Use the Project ImPACT techniques together to improve your child's social communication skills.

Shape the Interaction

- Move up and down the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid to keep your child engaged and learning.
- Select the strategy to use based on your child's motivation, mood, and the activity.

Use Project ImPACT in the Community

- Bring your child's favorite things.
- Create many, brief learning opportunities.



The last step in the program is to **Shape the Interaction** by using the strategies together to improve your child's social communication skills. This is the **S** of the Project ImPACT F.A.C.T.S. The goal of the basic *Shape the Interaction* skill set is to keep your child engaged and having fun, while also learning new skills. If you haven't already, you can also start to *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*.

Remember the F.A.C.T.S. Always start with **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, because these strategies help your child engage with you and the activity. If your child doesn't initiate on his own, or if you need to get his attention, move up the pyramid to **Create Opportunities** and then wait. Once your child responds, you can respond to his behavior as meaningful, or you can move up the pyramid to **Teach New Skills**. Notice that sometimes you will respond to the child's behavior right away, and sometimes you will prompt him to use a new skill. The strategy you select will depend on your child's skills, motivation, and mood, as well as the activity.

Shape the Interaction

Learn how to *Shape the Interaction* with your child so that he is engaged and having fun, while also learning new skills. You can do this by deciding which Project ImPACT strategies to use, based on how your child is responding. It's a delicate balance, and when it's done right, it should look like a dance.

Move Up and Down the F.A.C.T.S. Pyramid to Keep Your Child Engaged and Learning

Figure 6.1 can help you think about how often to use the different strategies to *Shape the Interaction*, and for what purposes.

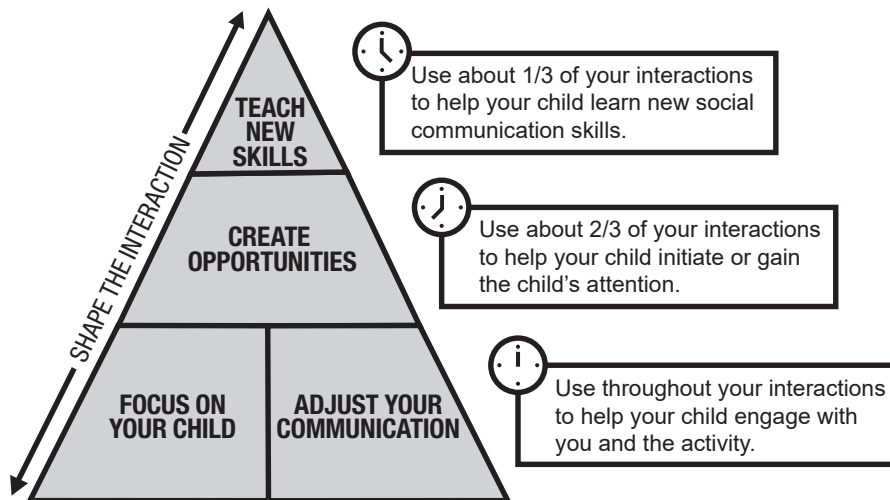


FIGURE 6.1. A guide to how often to use the different F.A.C.T.S. strategies and for what purposes.

- Start with the techniques at the base of the pyramid, **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, to help your child engage with you and the activity. Use these techniques most of the time you are interacting with your child.
- If your child does not respond to the techniques at the base of the pyramid, or if you want to teach a new skill, move up the pyramid and use a **Create Opportunities** technique, to encourage your child to initiate or to gain his attention. Respond to your child's initiations about two-thirds of the time.
- About one-third of the time, you will move further up the pyramid to **Teach New Skills**.
- If your child loses interest or becomes frustrated as you move up the pyramid, move back down to get your child engaged again. Remember that *Shape the Interaction* involves keeping the activity fun and playful, while also teaching your child new skills.



If you try to spend too much time at the top of the F.A.C.T.S. pyramid, your child will get frustrated. If you spend too much time at the bottom level, you won't challenge your child enough.

Select the Strategy to Use Based on Your Child's Motivation, Mood, and the Activity

Usually you want to use the intervention strategies together to improve your child's social communication skills, but there are times when it's better to use some strategies over others. This will depend on your child's motivation and mood, as well as on the specific activity. Use Figure 6.2 to decide which strategies to use. Ask yourself:

- *Is my child motivated?* When your child is very motivated for an item or activity, such as having a favorite snack or playing with his favorite toys, he is more likely to work hard for it.

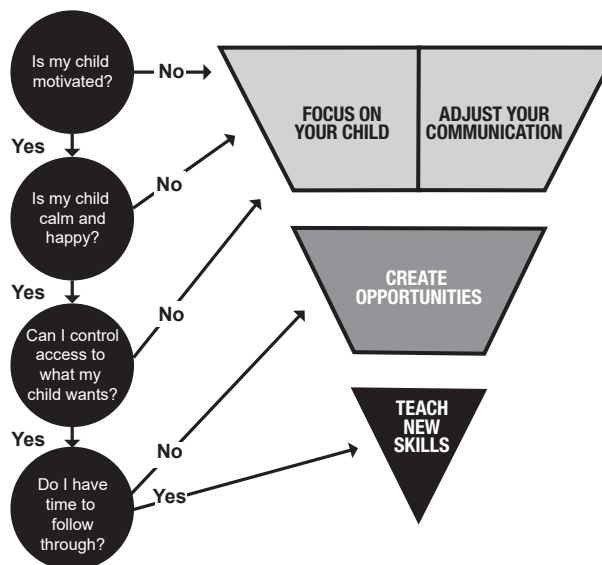


FIGURE 6.2. How to select the strategies based on your child's motivation and mood, as well as the activity.

- When he's motivated, try **Create Opportunities** or **Teach New Skills**.
- When your child is not motivated for an item or activity, such as getting dressed or putting away his toys, try **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.



Which of your daily activities are best for **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**?

- *Is my child calm and happy?* If your child is calm and happy, he probably will respond better to more techniques.
 - When your child is feeling good, you can try **Create Opportunities** or **Teach New Skills**.
 - If he is very frustrated, tired, or upset, he may have a tantrum if you block his play or ask for new skills. At these times, you can **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**.
- *Can I control access to what my child wants?* Some activities may be better than others for certain strategies.
 - If you can control whether your child can get to items or activities he likes, you can try **Create Opportunities** and **Teach New Skills**. For example, if you can use small portions during snacktime, you can respond to his initiation or prompt him to use a new skill.
 - If you can't control whether your child gets things or follows your instructions, use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**. For example, if controlling access will lead to a tantrum when you need to avoid it, try using *Follow Your Child's Lead*, *Imitate Your Child*, *Use Animation*, or *Model and Expand Communication* instead.
- *Do I have time to follow through?* Make sure you have enough time to help your child do what you ask when you are teaching new skills.
 - If you have time to follow through with a prompt or instruction, this is a great time to use **Teach New Skills**.
 - If you do not have time to follow through—for example, you are rushing to get out of the house—it's better to use techniques like **Focus on Your Child**, **Adjust Communication**, and **Create Opportunities** instead.



Which of your daily activities are best for **Teach New Skills**?

Once you are comfortable with using Project ImPACT strategies, you can use them throughout your child's day. It only takes a moment to create a learning opportunity. Over the course of a day, your child will have many opportunities that will help build his social communication skills. Work with your coach to choose the best times for your family to integrate each strategy. You may find that different techniques work better within different activities.

In Figure 6.3, Jerome's mom adjusts her communication by labeling the clothes as Jerome is getting dressed. Figure 6.4 shows how she targets Jerome's goal of using single words across different activities. When she is getting Jerome dressed in the morning (an activity he does not like), she adjusts her communication by using single words to label each item of clothing. During his snack (an activity Jerome like a lot), she prompts him to use a single word to request. Jerome enjoys watching his mom unload the dishwasher, but this is an activity she typically needs to do quickly,



FIGURE 6.3. *Shape the Interaction.* Jerome’s mom uses **Adjust Your Communication** by labeling the clothes as Jerome is getting dressed.

<p>Activity: <i>Dressing</i></p> <p>Labels Jerome’s clothes as she puts them on.</p>	<p>Activity: <i>Snack</i></p> <p>Prompts Jerome to say “Help” before she opens his snack.</p>	<p>Activity: <i>Dishes</i></p> <p>Labels silverware as she unloads dishwasher.</p>
<p>Activity: <i>Going outside</i></p> <p>Prompts Jerome to say “Open” before opening the door.</p>	<p>Activity: <i>Bath</i></p> <p>Prompts Jerome to say “On” before turning on water.</p>	<p>Activity: <i>Bedtime</i></p> <p>Sings familiar lullaby and leaves off last word of each line.</p>

FIGURE 6.4. How Jerome’s mom practices *Shape the Interaction* to help Jerome use single words across different activities.

so she labels each item as she takes it out. Jerome loves going outside and running water, so she prompts him to say a single word to request before going outside and at bedtime. At bedtime, she sings Jerome lullabies. She starts leaving off the final word of his favorite songs to encourage him to fill it in. Notice how Jerome's mom chooses to use the strategies at the base of the pyramid during nonpreferred activities and when she's in a hurry, and to use **Teach New Skills** during highly preferred activities.

The first form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you use **Shape the Interaction** (including both the basic *Shape the Interaction* approach and *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*, which you will learn next). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.

Use Project ImPACT in the Community

There may be times when you can use the Project ImPACT strategies to play and interact with your child out in the community. These strategies can help keep your child engaged during community outings, and can reduce his boredom and frustration. Practice in the community can also help your child use skills in new settings with more people. Use the Community Activity Schedule (the second form at the end of this chapter) to help you and your coach identify the best times to use these strategies during community outings. There are a few pointers that can help make *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* a success.

Bring Your Child's Favorite Things

Seeing familiar toys and materials during community outings may help your child interact with you and follow your directions.

- Bring familiar and favorite toys with you during outings, to help your child use new skills in a different environment. For example, bring your child's favorite book, and look at it together while you are waiting at the doctor's office.
- You can also use a favorite toy or item as a reward for following your directions in community settings. For example, let your child play with his favorite fire truck after he follows your direction to get out of the water at the pool.



Which of your child's favorite things can you bring to engage him during community outings?

Create Many, Brief Learning Opportunities

Use the Project ImPACT strategies to create small, meaningful learning opportunities when you are out in the community. These brief learning opportunities will build over time to encourage your child's development of social communication skills.

- Try to create brief learning opportunities for your child in many different places. This will help him use his skills more often, with more people, and in more settings. For example,

imitate your child’s sounds and body movements while you are waiting for the bus, or give your child small bits of a favorite meal and have him ask for more from you when you are at a favorite restaurant.

- Using these strategies does not have to be time-intensive or prolonged. For example, when getting into the car, prompt your child to say the word “Open” before opening the car door, and then move on with your outing.



What are some good community activities for using Project ImPACT strategies?



How can you use the strategies during these activities to address your child’s goals?

- Again, your choice of which strategy(s) to use should be based on your child’s motivation and mood, as well as the setting you are in. Remember, the techniques in **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication** are appropriate for nearly all your interactions with your child. The techniques in **Create Opportunities** and **Teach New Skills** may be more challenging to use in the community.

- If there are some activities that are particularly difficult for your child, you can work with your coach to think of ways to improve interactions during these specific times.



Some parents find it helpful to practice community outings in familiar settings, or during times when the setting is less crowded or busy.

Figure 6.5 shows how a father targets his daughter’s goal of using a point across a number of different community settings. Notice how Mai’s dad chooses to teach new skills at the library, at the park, at the pool, and in the car, when she is motivated and

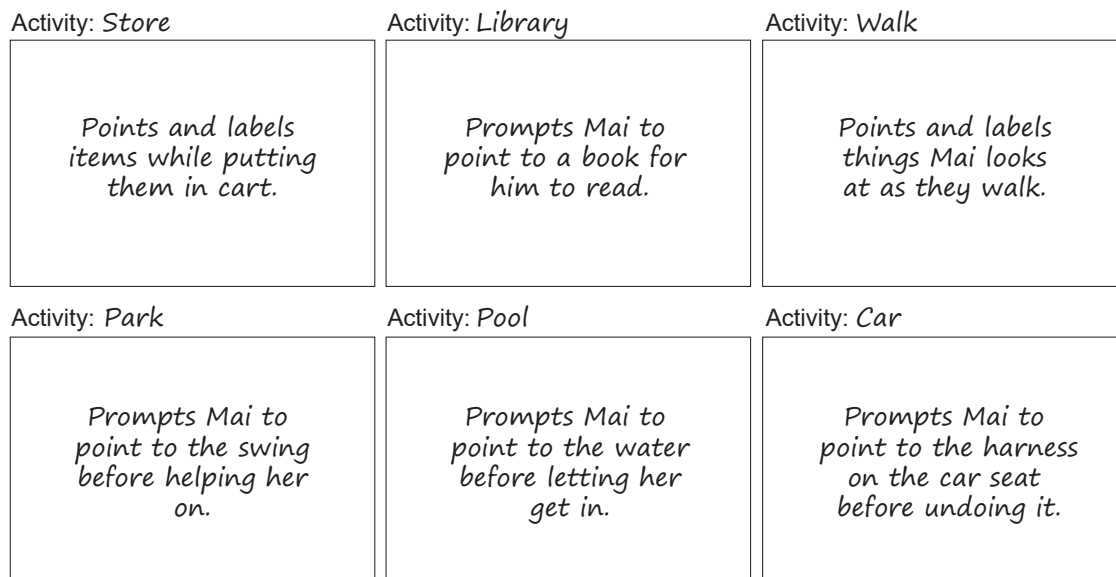


FIGURE 6.5. How Mai’s dad practices *Use Project ImPACT in the Community* to help Mai learn to point in a variety of community settings.

he can control access to what she wants. He uses the strategies at the base of the pyramid at the store and during a walk, when he cannot control access to items as easily.

The table on the facing page provides suggestions for ways you can *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. You can use the Practice Plan for **Shape the Interaction** (the first form at the end of this chapter) for both the basic *Shape the Interaction* approach and *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*. Again, your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice in the community.



Try This at Home! for *Use Project ImPACT in the Community*

If your child is . . . You can . . .

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| At the grocery store | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Try putting your child in the cart so that you can be face to face. ● Label the items as you put them in your cart. You can describe how they look, feel, or taste. ● Hold up two similar items, and let your child choose which one to put in your cart. For example, show him two boxes of cereal, and let him choose his favorite with a gesture or words. ● If your child likes to ride in the cart, stop pushing it and wait for him to ask to go again. ● Ask him if he wants to go fast or slow. ● Give your child directions to follow with the items you are shopping for. For example, when shopping for fruit, you could hold up an apple and a banana and say, “Get banana.” ● Teach your child new language concepts by telling him to pick items out by color, shape, or size, or number. For example: “Get <i>three</i> apples” or “Find the <i>yellow</i> pencils.” ● Teach your child to request items by giving him a choice of snacks and asking him what he wants. Remember to use a Create Opportunities technique before prompting language. |
| At the park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Point out interesting things at the park. ● If your child is sifting sand in the sandbox, sift sand next to him, or pour sand on his fingers. ● Prompt your child to tell you what he wants to play at the park. Remember to use <i>Playful Obstruction</i> (catch him) or a <i>Communicative Temptation</i> (hold the swing up) to gain his attention before you prompt him. ● If your child likes to swing, push him and then stop. Prompt him to tell you to push him again. ● If your child likes to play on the slide, you can take turns going down the slide. |
| Going for a walk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talk about the things you see and hear. You can count flowers or houses, find things of a certain color, or talk about shapes. ● Pick up an interesting rock or leaf on your walk, and show it to your child. Wait to see if he will ask for it. ● When you come to an intersection, prompt your child to choose which way to walk. He can indicate his choice by using gestures or words. ● If your child is in a stroller, stop pushing it, and wait for him to tell you to go. ● Play a stop-and-go game as you walk. For example, say “Go” and walk a few steps, and then say “Stop” and help your child stop. If he is interested, let him say the words “Stop” and “Go.” ● Take turns walking in different ways, such as hopping, skipping, running, or walking on tiptoes. Help your child imitate you when it’s your turn. |

(continued)



Try This at Home! *(continued)*

If your child is . . . You can . . .

At the library

- Give your child a direction to find the books he likes. For example, “Get the dinosaur book,” if he likes dinosaurs.
- Hold up two books, and let him choose which one you will read to him.
- Prompt your child to ask to check out a favorite book.

Riding with you in a car

- Talk about what you see out of the window as you are driving. For example: “I see a water tower,” “I see a bicycle.”
 - Talk about where you are going. For example: “We’re going to the store. We’re going to buy crackers and milk.”
 - Describe what you are doing when stopping at a light or stop sign. For example: “Red light means stop; green light means go.”
 - Play your child’s favorite music, and then stop the music and model what you think he wants. For example: “More music” and turn the music back on.
 - Remember, when you are in the car you can’t easily use **Create Opportunities** and follow through if your child does not respond. So you should use **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, rather than **Create Opportunities** and **Teach New Skills**.
-

Practice Plan— Shape the Interaction

Date:

PLANNING			
Goal(s):	Activity:	Activity:	What will be hard?
Activity:	Activity:	Activity:	Possible solutions:
Activity:	Activity:	Activity:	

REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	



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Community Activity Schedule

Child: _____ **Parent:** _____ **Date:** _____

Describe at least three activities or routines that you do regularly with your child in the community. For each activity, provide a brief description, how often you do it with your child, and how much time you can add to it. In the last column, indicate whether your child [E]njoys, [T]olerates, or [R]esists the routine.

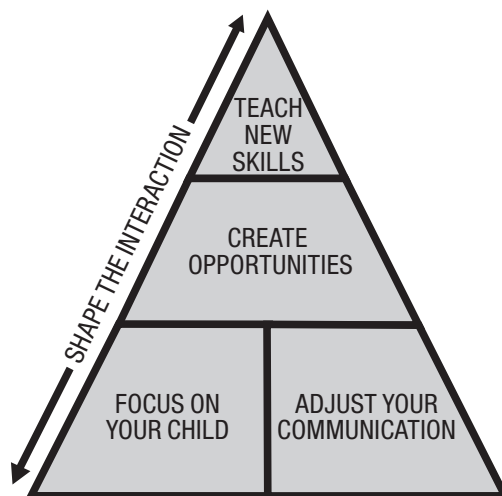
Activity	Description	How often?	Time to add?	Child's response

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CHAPTER 7

Moving Forward



Make Project ImPACT part of your family's life.

Update Your Child's Goals

- Review your child's progress.
- Develop new goals as needed.

Plan for Continued Success

- Recognize your family's accomplishments.
- Problem-solve continuing challenges with using Project ImPACT.
- Get others on board.
- Identify your family's needs.

You should now have the skills to make Project ImPACT part of your family's life. It takes effort to learn and practice the techniques in this program, and to use them all together. But the more you practice, the easier they will get. Learning to use these techniques is a little like learning to drive a car; in the beginning, you may have to think about every little thing but as you do it more and more, it becomes natural and requires less thought.

Now is a good time to *Update Your Child's Goals* so you know what to work on next. As you

move forward, be sure to *Plan for Continued Success*; this process includes gathering the support you need to continue using Project ImPACT strategies to support the development of your child's social communication skills. Most importantly, it also includes recognizing the accomplishments and progress that both you and your child have made!

Update Your Child's Goals

Now is a good time to review your child's progress toward his goals and to set new goals as needed. This will help you know what to work on next.

Review Your Child's Progress

Reviewing your child's progress toward his goals and measuring his current social communication skills will help you know where to go from here.

- Look at the goals you set for your child at the beginning of the program (using the Child Goals form in Chapter 1). For each goal, think about your child's current skills.



Has your child made progress toward his goals?



If your child has not made much progress, talk to your coach about whether changing or adding new services would help.

- Use the Social Communication Checklist (the first form at the end of this chapter) to understand your child's current skills. Compare this information to the same checklist you completed at the beginning of the program (see Chapter 1) to see your child's overall progress.
- Your coach may have other assessments for you or your child to complete to measure his progress and current skills.

Develop New Goals As Needed

If your child has met one or more of his goals, it's time to set new goals. If he is still working on the same goals, think about whether one or more different goals might be more appropriate.

- Use the Social Communication Checklist (the first form at the end of this chapter) to set new goals.
- Remember, the goals you choose should be meaningful and important to you, and should be achievable within 3 months! Good skills to teach are ones that your child can do "Sometimes, but not consistently" as marked on the Social Communication Checklist.
- Moving forward, continue to review and update your child's goals every 3–4 months.
- Write down the goals you select on the Practice Plan for *Update Your Child's Goals* (the second form at the end of this chapter). Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part after you practice at home.



Talk with your coach about any additional social communication goals you have for your child that have not been addressed.

Plan for Continued Success

This is a good time to talk with your coach about next steps for your child.

Recognize Your Family's Accomplishments

Remember to notice your child's and your own accomplishments!

- Try writing down something good your child does every day, even if it is small. It could be a new gesture or word that he said, a new play skill that he used, or a smile that warmed your heart. When you are feeling frustrated or overwhelmed, these small accomplishments can remind you that your child is making progress every day.
- Remind yourself of all of the things you do for your child every day. Give yourself credit for helping your child develop his social communication skills, and tell yourself that you are doing a good job!



What are your child's and your own accomplishments in this program?

Problem-Solve Continuing Challenges with Using Project ImPACT

- Think about the Project ImPACT strategies that work best for your child. Ask about and review any strategies that have been particularly difficult for you to use.
- Think about any challenges you have had in learning or using Project ImPACT with your child. Talk to your coach about ways to make it easier to incorporate Project ImPACT into your daily routines.
- Talk to your coach about additional supports you may need to help you continue to use Project ImPACT strategies.
- Set a follow-up appointment with your coach to keep up your skills, and plan for additional appointments. Talk with your coach about how often you would like to meet.



What will be hard about using Project ImPACT as you move forward?

Get Others on Board

Now that you know the intervention, you can teach others how to use Project ImPACT strategies with your child.

- Share the strategies with other service providers who are working with your child.



If you have difficulty teaching others, ask your coach to share the strategies with them.

- You can also teach your family members and friends how to use the strategies. Partners, grandparents, neighbors, and day care providers can all be great support.
- Your other children can be taught some of the techniques from **Focus on Your Child** and **Adjust Your Communication**, to help their sibling play with them.



Who can you teach to use Project ImPACT strategies?

Identify Your Family's Needs

Think about the types of services and support your child and family might need as you move forward. Your coach may be able to help with suggestions and recommendations.

- Think about goals you have for your child that were not addressed in this program.
- Discuss your child's continued intervention plan. Think about other services that might benefit your child.
- Talk about supports or services that may benefit you and your family.



What goals do you have for your child that were not addressed in Project ImPACT?

The third form at the end of this chapter is a Practice Plan that will help you *Plan for Continued Success*. Your coach will help you complete the top part of the Practice Plan and show you how to complete the bottom part at home.

Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version)

Child: _____ Parent: _____ Date: _____

Complete the Social Communication Checklist to help you better understand your child's current social communication skills, and to help you choose appropriate goals in the areas of social engagement, communication, social imitation, and play. Skills are listed in the order they usually develop in young children. **Please complete this form based on what your child can do on his or her own (i.e., without help from you).**

- For each skill, indicate whether your child uses it *Usually (at least 75% of the time)*; *Sometimes, but not consistently*; or *Rarely or not yet*.
- For items 32–36, if your child uses the skill *Usually* or *Sometimes*, please also indicate the strategy type (nonverbal strategies or verbal language) your child uses *more often*.
- If your child used to use an earlier skill, but no longer does because he or she now uses a later skill (e.g., the child used to babble, but is now using words), check *Usually* for the earlier skill.

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Social Engagement			
1. Does your child enjoy face-to-face interaction with you?			
2. Does your child prefer to be near you or other family members?			
3. Does your child maintain simple social games for at least three turns (e.g., peek-a-boo, chase, pat-a-cake)?			
4. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during social games for at least 5 minutes?			
5. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during social games for at least 10 minutes?			
6. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during toy play for at least 2 minutes?			
7. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during toy play for at least 5 minutes?			
8. Does your child remain actively engaged with you during toy play for at least 10 minutes?			
9. Does your child lead play or try to continue with play once you have stopped (e.g., make eye contact, smile at you, vocalize, touch you)?			
10. Does your child respond to your attempts to draw his or her attention to something or someone (when you use a point, use language, or shift your gaze)?			
11. Does your child make eye contact while interacting or communicating with you?			
12. Does your child initiate activities or play with you (e.g., offer you a toy or find you to come play with him or her)?			
13. Does your child take turns with you?			
14. Does your child point or show you objects that interest him or her for the purposes of sharing?			
15. Does your child provide greetings and farewells when people come into or leave the room?			

(continued)

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Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (page 2 of 4)

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Using Communication—Form (Expressive Language)			
16. Does your child babble or use speech-like sounds?			
17. Does your child use gestures to request items or actions (e.g., lead you to an object, point, sign)?			
18. Does your child communicate a clear choice when presented with two alternatives by reaching, using eye gaze, using sounds, or saying words?			
19. Does your child imitate your speech sounds or language?			
20. Does your child use single words spontaneously?			
21. Does your child name objects?			
22. Does your child name actions?			
23. Does your child combine words into simple phrases (e.g., “Go car,” “Push train”)?			
24. Does your child use words to describe objects (e.g., “Big red ball,” “Little green ball”)?			
25. Does your child use pronouns appropriately?			
26. Does your child use a variety of tenses (e.g., words with “-ing” or “-ed” endings)?			
27. Does your child consistently use sentences to communicate?			
28. Does your child answer simple questions about him- or herself (e.g., “What is your name?”, “How old are you?”)?			
29. Does your child answer simple questions about his or her wants, needs, or environment (e.g., “What do you want?”, “What is it?”, “Where is it?”)? If yes, please check the type of questions: <input type="checkbox"/> What <input type="checkbox"/> Where			
30. Does your child answer “who,” “why,” or “how” questions (e.g., “Who is driving the car?”, “Why are you sad?”)? If yes, please check the type of questions: <input type="checkbox"/> Who <input type="checkbox"/> Why <input type="checkbox"/> How			
Using Communication—Function (Expressive Language)			
31. Does your child babble or use speech-like sounds in a way that is intentionally directed at you (i.e., to communicate)?			
32. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to request desired items or activities? If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i> , please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities: <input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds) <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)			
33. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to protest or tell you he/she does not want something? If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i> , please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities: <input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds) <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)			

(continued)

Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) *(page 3 of 4)*

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Using Communication—Function (Expressive Language) <i>(continued)</i>			
<p>34. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to ask for help?</p> <p>If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i>, please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)</p>			
<p>35. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to share information (e.g., pointing, “I see a plane”)?</p> <p>If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i>, please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)</p>			
<p>36. Does your child use gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, sounds, or language to gain your attention (e.g., “Mom, come here”)?</p> <p>If your child uses this skill <i>Usually</i> or <i>Sometimes</i>, please indicate which strategy your child more often uses to request desired items or activities:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nonverbal strategies (gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or sounds)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal language (words or sentences)</p>			
<p>37. Does your child use words to tell you how he or she is feeling (e.g., “hurt,” “mad,” or “happy”)?</p>			
<p>38. Does your child use words to tell you what to do (e.g., “Feed the baby,” “Push the car”)?</p>			
<p>39. Does your child tell you about events that have already occurred (e.g., about the day at school)?</p>			
<p>40. Does your child use words to tell you a simple story?</p>			
<p>41. Does your child ask you questions for information (e.g., “What is that?”, “Where is dog?”)?</p>			
<p>42. Does your child ask “who,” “why,” or “how” questions?</p>			
<p>43. Does your child participate in a conversation that is initiated by an adult for three consecutive turns?</p>			
<p>44. Does your child participate in a conversation that is initiated by an adult for more than three consecutive turns?</p>			
<p>45. Does your child initiate conversations with others?</p>			
Understanding Communication (Receptive Language)			
<p>46. Does your child consistently look when his or her name is called?</p>			
<p>47. Does your child look to people/photos of people when they are named?</p>			
<p>48. Does your child respond by stopping actions in response to inhibitory words (e.g., “No,” “Stop”)?</p>			
<p>49. Does your child identify several named body parts?</p>			
<p>50. Does your child respond appropriately to one-step directions in natural play, dressing, or eating routines (e.g., “Get your cup”)?</p>			

(continued)

Social Communication Checklist (Parent Version) (page 4 of 4)

Skill	Usually (at least 75% of the time)	Sometimes, but not consistently	Rarely or not yet
Understanding Communication (Receptive Language) (continued)			
51. Does your child follow directions with more than one step in natural play, dressing, or eating routines (e.g., “Get your cup and put it on the table”)?			
52. Does your child retrieve several requested objects that are in the room but not directly in front of him or her?			
53. Does your child complete a task and then put away the play materials?			
Imitation			
54. Does your child imitate facial expressions or movements (e.g., tongue thrust)?			
55. Does your child imitate actions or body movements within songs or known routines (e.g., “Wheels on the Bus” movements)?			
56. Does your child imitate conventional gestures (e.g., wave bye-bye, blow kisses, clap hands)?			
57. Does your child imitate familiar play actions (actions that your child does on his or her own) after seeing you do them?			
58. Does your child imitate novel play actions (actions that your child does not do on his or her own) after seeing you do them?			
59. Does your child engage in longer imitative interactions with you during play, in which you take turns imitating each other?			
Play			
61. Does your child use toys in an exploratory manner (e.g., touching, mouthing, smelling, looking)?			
61. Does your child combine objects (e.g., nesting one object in another, putting objects in containers, lining, stacking, ordering toys in certain ways)?			
62. Does your child use cause-and-effect toys (e.g., mechanical toys, pop-up toys)?			
63. Does your child use toys for their intended purpose (e.g., throw a ball, push a car)?			
64. Does your child direct familiar pretend play actions toward him- or herself (e.g., pretend to eat, pretend to sleep, pretend to talk on a toy phone)?			
65. Does your child direct basic pretend play toward another person or a doll or other toy (e.g., pretend to feed a parent or a baby doll, dress a doll, put a doll to bed)?			
66. Does your child pretend that one thing represents another (e.g., pretend that a block is a car or a stack of blocks is a building), attribute characteristics to an object that it does not have (e.g., pretend that toy food is “hot” or tastes “yummy”), or animate objects (e.g., make a figurine walk or have a doll hold a cup rather than placing a cup to the doll’s mouth)?			
67. Does your child link several pretend actions together or tell an extended story with toys (e.g., put a doll in a car and push the car to the store)?			
68. Does your child take on an imaginary role (e.g., pretend to be a doctor, firefighter, mommy/daddy) during play?			
69. Does your child tell an extended story while taking on an imaginary role with at least one other person (e.g., child is doctor, parent is patient; child is mommy, sibling is baby)?			
70. Can your child switch between directing the play and following another person’s idea within an extended play sequence?			

Practice Plan— Update Your Child’s Goals

Date: _____

PLANNING		
Goal	Activities	Strategies

What will be hard?

Possible solutions:

REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	

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Practice Plan— Plan for Continued Success

Date:

PLANNING	
Accomplishments:	What will be hard?
Next steps:	Possible solutions:
Additional supports:	

REFLECTION	
What went well?	Possible solutions:
What was hard?	

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CHAPTER 8 (OPTIONAL)

Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior

Help your child use appropriate behavior in daily routines.

Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior

- Recognize the reasons for challenging behavior.
- Gather information on your child's challenging behavior.
- Identify patterns in the challenging behavior.

Prevent the Challenging Behavior

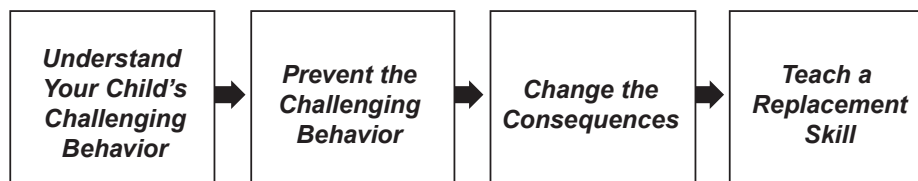
- Avoid the trigger.
- Give clear instructions and expectations.
- Make tasks easier or more fun.
- Give choices.
- Follow challenging routines with preferred routines.
- Give information about upcoming events and changes in routines.

Change the Consequences

- Start rewarding good behaviors.
- Stop rewarding the challenging behavior.

Teach a Replacement Skill

- Choose a replacement skill.
- Use prompts and rewards to teach the replacement skill.



Many children with social communication delays use inappropriate or challenging behaviors such as tantrums and aggression to communicate their emotions and needs. As their social communication skills improve, their behavior often gets better. However, if your child is still having challenging behavior after you have learned to use Project ImPACT, or if one or more specific behaviors are getting in the way of completing the program, you may benefit from using the additional strategies in this chapter to manage those behaviors.

The behavior management strategies in this program are based on *positive behavior support* (PBS), an evidence-based approach that begins with assessment to understand why a child uses challenging behavior. A specific plan can then be developed to help the child use an appropriate behavior to communicate his emotions or needs. PBS fits very well with Project ImPACT, because it uses a positive approach to address behaviors, focuses on teaching new skills, and discourages the use of punishment. You can use these strategies together with Project ImPACT strategies to help your child develop more appropriate skills to get his needs met.

The image on page 117 illustrates the steps you can follow to develop a behavior plan to address your child's challenging behavior and support his use of new, appropriate skills. You may learn and practice these steps one at a time, to see what works best for each step. Once you and your coach have developed a plan that works for your family, you can write the whole plan down. A form for doing this is one of the forms provided at the end of this chapter.



If your child's behaviors are very extreme or dangerous, talk to your coach about additional supports beyond the strategies presented here.

Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior

All behavior, both good and bad, serves a purpose. Children with social communication delays may use challenging behaviors to get their needs met because these behaviors work, or because they do not have another way to communicate their feelings and wants. For example:

- If your child has difficulty telling you what he wants, needs, or doesn't like, he may have a tantrum or become aggressive to communicate these feelings instead.
- If your child doesn't understand what you are asking him to do or why it is important, he may not follow directions.
- If your child has limited play skills, he may engage in inappropriate play, such as ripping up books, climbing on the furniture, or pulling things out of drawers.
- If your child has difficulty calming himself, he may flap his hands, squeal, or bite himself when he is afraid, upset, or overexcited.

Recognize the Reasons for Challenging Behavior

The first step in developing a behavior plan is to understand the purpose of your child's challenging behavior, so you can use specific strategies to address it. For young children, most challenging behavior occurs for one or more of the following reasons:

- To get something they want, such as a favorite toy, food, or activity.
- To get someone's attention (this can be true even when the attention isn't positive, such as being scolded or lectured).
- To get out of, avoid, or delay something they don't like, such as doing a household chore or self-care routine, having an unpleasant sensory experience, or having to stop a favorite activity.

Sometimes challenging behavior happens for a fourth reason:

- The behavior itself is enjoyable or helps them calm themselves in some way. This is usually the case for self-stimulatory or repetitive behaviors, such as high-pitched squealing, hand flapping, or ripping paper. In this case, the child would behave this way whether or not someone else is present; he is acting this way because he likes the way it feels.

Challenging behavior, like all behavior, is influenced by the situations and events that surround it. Specific events that happen immediately before and after your child's challenging behavior are important for understanding the reasons why your child behaves the way he does.

- Certain situations, called *setting events*, can influence your child's behavior by making it more likely for problems to happen. Examples may include:
 - Specific times of day, specific places, or activities.
 - Times when certain people are or are not there.
 - Times when your child is hungry, tired, or feeling sick.
- Specific events that happen just *before* the challenging behavior are called *triggers* or *antecedents*. They set off the behavior. Examples may include telling your child to put on his shoes to go outside, or asking him to wait for food during lunch.
- Specific events that happen just *after* the challenging behavior are called *consequences*. These events usually keep the behavior going. Examples may include getting to play with a favorite toy, being given attention (positive or negative), or getting out of having to clean up toys.

Figure 8.1 shows an example of how the situations and events that happen before and after a challenging behavior can influence the behavior and keep it going.

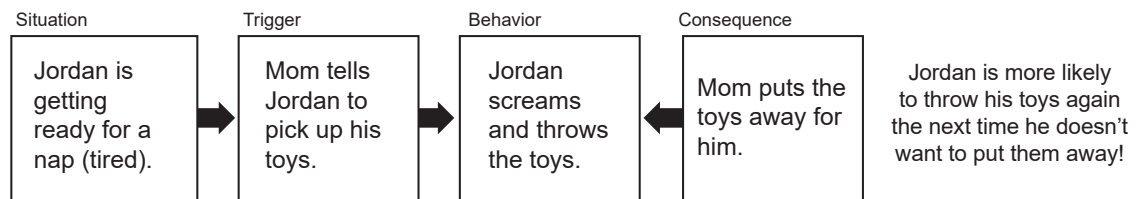


FIGURE 8.1. Example of how situations and events can influence challenging behavior.

Gather Information on Your Child's Challenging Behavior

Your coach will interview you to get a better understanding of your child's challenging behavior, the situations in which it is most and least likely to happen, and what you have tried before to address it. It also helps to record your child's challenging behavior each time it happens, as well as the situations and events surrounding it. This takes some effort, but it can be very helpful in identifying important patterns that can be missed when you are thinking back on your child's behavior. You and your coach will use this information to understand the reasons for your child's behavior.



Don't try to address all of a child's challenging behaviors at once. If your child has more than one type of challenging behavior, choose one to start with. As this first behavior gets better, you can begin to address other behavior problems.

DESCRIBE THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

To gather consistent information about what may be influencing your child's behavior, it helps to have a clear description of what your child's challenging behavior looks or sounds like.

- The description should be specific—what your child does, rather than a general description. Table 8.1 provides examples of clear and unclear descriptions.
- The description should be clear enough that other family members, teachers, or friends would agree on when the behavior happens.

RECORD THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

Once you have an idea of what your child's challenging behavior looks like, you can gather information to identify patterns in the behavior. The Challenging Behavior Record (the first form at the end of this chapter) can help you record triggers and consequences of your child's behavior at home. Record the following information on the Practice Plan each time your child has a challenging behavior:

- *Situation.* Write down any important information about the situation that might contribute to the behavior problem, such as the time of day, place, activity, being with certain people, or being hungry or tired.

TABLE 8.1. Examples of Clear and Unclear Descriptions of Challenging Behavior

Clear description	Unclear description
Jordan screams, drops to the floor, and throws things.	Jordan has fits.
Carlos climbs on furniture, grabs Mom's things, and runs away with them.	Carlos clowns around.
Sophie hits, pushes, pinches, scratches, and takes toys away from her brother.	Sophie is mean to her brother.

- *Trigger.* Write down a description of the specific event that happened just before the behavior. This can help you better understand common triggers for your child.
- *Behavior.* Write down the description of what the behavior looked and sounded like. You can also indicate how long or severe it was.
- *Consequence.* Write down a description of what happened just after the behavior. This will give you and your coach information about what may be influencing your child's challenging behavior.



It can be hard to find time to record all your child's challenging behaviors if they happen a lot. Don't put pressure on yourself. Talk to your coach about the best times to record the behavior, or ways to record it more easily.

Figure 8.2 is an example of a completed Challenging Behavior Record for Jordan. His mother is concerned about his frequent tantrums, which involve screaming and throwing things he is holding.

It also helps to keep track of how much your child's challenging behavior is interfering with your family life each week. This helps you see whether the behavior is getting better, getting worse, or staying the same.

- Note how much your child's challenging behavior disrupts your routines over the week on the "Behavior Tracking" section in each of the Practice Plans in this chapter. You and your coach will use this information to see whether your behavior plan is working and to make adjustments as needed.

The Practice Plan for *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior* (the second form at the end of this chapter) can be used to help you talk with your coach about tracking your child's behavior at home. Your coach will help you complete the top of the practice plan and will show you how to complete the behavior tracking portion and the bottom part at home.

Challenging Behavior(s): <i>Screaming, dropping to the floor, throwing things</i>			
Situation <i>What was going on?</i>	Trigger <i>What happened just before?</i>	Behavior <i>What did it look like?</i>	Consequence <i>What happened just after?</i>
<i>Dressing for school. Slept poorly, hard to wake up.</i>	<i>Told to get dressed for school.</i>	<i>Threw clothes and screamed.</i>	<i>Let him stay in PJs, carried him to breakfast.</i>
<i>After school, playing with Legos.</i>	<i>Told to take a nap.</i>	<i>Screamed and fell on the floor.</i>	<i>Waited for him to calm down, then took him to his room.</i>
<i>Dinnertime. Ate a late snack (not hungry).</i>	<i>Served new food at dinner.</i>	<i>Threw food and screamed.</i>	<i>Told him, "No throwing food," and put him in his room.</i>

FIGURE 8.2. Challenging Behavior Record for Jordan.

Identify Patterns in the Challenging Behavior

After you have gathered information on your child's behavior and the situations surrounding it, are ready to look for patterns. Work with your coach to identify situations that are most likely to trigger the problem.

- Think about the kinds of situations in which your child is most likely to have challenging behaviors. Is there a pattern in the routines, places, or times of day? For example, does your child usually have difficulty right before bedtime or naptime, when he is tired?
- Now think about the triggers you've written down or discussed with your coach. Do these triggers have something in common? For example, before your child hits his sister, are you usually busy or paying attention to someone else (talking on the phone, making dinner, playing with your other child)?
- Once you have identified the likely trigger(s) for the behavior record this on the Summary Statement Form (the third form at the end of this chapter).



What are the most common triggers for your child's challenging behavior?

Next, you want to understand the reason for your child's challenging behavior, or what it is communicating. Usually, whatever follows the challenging behavior is keeping it going. To understand the reason for the behavior, look for patterns among the consequences.

- Do the consequences you've written down have something in common? For example, when your child hits his sister, does he usually get your attention in some way (being told "No," being picked up and carried away from his sister, being told to apologize to his sister, being taken to time out)?
- If similar types of consequence are not consistently present, there may be more than one reason for the behavior. For example, your child may scream to get out of something he doesn't like *and* to get something he does like. Or the behavior itself is enjoyable in some way. For example, ripping the pages of books may be rewarding in itself.
- Once you have identified the likely consequence(s) for the behavior, record this on the Summary Statement Form (the third form at the end of this chapter).



What are the consequences of your child's challenging behavior?

After you have a good idea of the triggers and consequences of your child's challenging behavior, you can think about the reason or reasons it is happening. For example, if your child usually has a tantrum after you give him an instruction, and you then usually help him do the task or let him out of obeying the

instruction, the most likely reason for his behavior is to get out of doing something he doesn't like. Your coach will help you write this information down on the Summary Statement (the third form at the end of this chapter) to guide your behavior management plan.

Here is an example of how Jordan's mom uses the information she gathered on the Challenging Behavior Record (see Figure 8.2)



What is the most likely reason for your child's challenging behavior?

to identify patterns in his behavior. When his mom looks at the triggers for the behaviors she recorded, she notices that they usually involved asking or telling Jordan to do a task or start an activity that he didn't like or was hard for him (getting dressed, taking a nap, sitting at the table). When she looks at the pattern of the consequences, she sees that with each consequence, Jordan was able to get out of, or delay starting, the task or activity. For example, when Jordan threw his clothes and screamed, his mom let him stay in his PJs. When he screamed and fell on the floor over being told to take a nap, she let him calm down, and he didn't have to go to bed right away. When he threw food at dinner, she put him in his room, and he didn't have to sit at the table. From this pattern, his mother realizes that the main reason for his tantrums is to get out of or put off things he doesn't like. She writes this pattern on the Summary Statement form to help her choose intervention strategies, as shown in Figure 8.3.

Prevent the Challenging Behavior

After you have a clearer idea of when and why your child is using specific challenging behaviors, you can develop a plan to address them. Often the easiest way to stop a challenging behavior is to prevent it from happening in the first place. You can do this by avoiding the trigger altogether. Or you can make difficult situations easier, so that the trigger is less likely to set off your child's challenging behavior. The best prevention strategies address the triggers and the reason(s) for the challenging behavior you have identified in *Understand Your Child's Challenging Behavior*.

Avoid the Trigger

The easiest way to prevent problems from happening is to avoid the situations or events that usually trigger challenging behavior. Possible triggers and ways to prevent the behavior are listed below.

- Prevent your child from seeing or getting access to things that cause a problem. For example, if your child gets upset when he can't have your smartphone to play with, don't use your phone in front of him. If he goes into your closet and pulls all your clothes off the hangers, put a lock on your closet door.
- If your child uses challenging behavior to get your attention, give him a little extra attention or get him involved in a favorite activity before starting something that takes your attention, such as an important phone call. For instance, play with your child for 10 minutes before you start making dinner.

Trigger(s)	Behavior(s)	Consequence(s)	Reason(s)
Asked to do nonpreferred activity or difficult task.	Screams, drops to the floor, throws things.	Doesn't have to get dressed. Delays naptime. Gets out of dinner.	Gets out of or puts off things he doesn't like.

FIGURE 8.3. Summary Statement for Jordan.

- If your child misbehaves when he has to wait for something he wants, have necessary items prepared ahead of time. For example, wait to bring your child to the dinner table until the food is on his plate.
- If your child uses challenging behavior to get out of situations that are loud or otherwise overwhelming, plan those activities during times when there is less unpleasant sensory stimulation. For example, take him grocery shopping during times when the store isn't crowded.



How can you avoid the trigger for your child's challenging behavior?



Avoiding the trigger may stop the behavior in the short run, but it is not always a good long-term solution, because your child still needs to learn how to handle unpleasant situations. Sometimes you may need to start by avoiding the trigger while you work on teaching a replacement skill, which is discussed at the end of this chapter. You can also use the following strategies to make difficult situations easier.

- Avoid challenging routines when your child is sick, hungry, tired, or frustrated. Instead, schedule them during times of day when your child is usually calm.

Give Clear Instructions and Expectations

Children may misbehave when they don't understand what they are supposed to do or if they aren't sure whether or not they need to respond. Giving clear instructions about expected behavior in upcoming situations can often help.

- Get your child's attention before giving instructions, and give instructions in a firm but friendly voice.
- Keep directions short and simple. Make sure that you only give one instruction at a time. The *Prompts for Understanding Communication* section in Chapter 5 gives more detail on how to give clear instructions.
- Give instructions as statements, not questions. For example, say, "Clean up," instead of "Are you ready to clean up?"
- Tell your child what he should be doing, rather than what he shouldn't be doing. For example, say, "Use your walking feet," rather than "Stop running." Or say, "Use your inside voice," rather than "Don't yell!"

Make Tasks Easier or More Fun

Children may use challenging behavior when they feel that a task or activity is too hard, frustrating, or boring. You can often prevent challenging behaviors in these situations by making a task easier or shorter, providing help early on, or making it more fun.

- Make the task easier or shorter. At first, you may need to provide a little more help, so that a task is easy enough or short enough for your child to get through it without a problem. For example, rather than having your child zip his coat himself, start the zipper and have him finish it. Or, instead of asking your child to sit through a family dinner, have him sit at the table for 2 minutes, and then let him get up. A timer that shows how long he has to wait may help. Once your child's behavior is under control, you can gradually increase the difficulty or length of the task.

- Provide help early. Don't wait for your child to get frustrated.
- Make unpleasant tasks more fun by adding songs, games, or your child's favorite toys. For example, sing a cleanup song or have a cleanup race when it is time for your child to put away his toys. Or let your child play with his cars while sitting at the dinner table.
- Plan activities for when your child can't avoid waiting. For example, bring special toys, activities, or snacks with you when you know you might have to wait at the doctor's office.



How can you make challenging tasks easier or more fun?

Give Choices

Letting children have some control over activities they don't like often helps them become more compliant. One way to do this is to allow your child to make a choice about how he would like to complete the activity, or a choice about what he would like to do after the activity.

- Let your child make choices during routines he resists. For example, when you are helping him get dressed, give him a choice of whether he wants to put on his pants or shirt first. Or say, "You need to get dressed. Do you want to do it, or do you want me to do it?"
- Don't give him a choice that you don't want him to select! Make sure you are OK with either choice, and that you respect the choice he makes.

Follow Challenging Routines with Preferred Routines

Schedule your daily routines so that activities that are hard for your child are followed by ones he enjoys. An activity or routine that your child likes then becomes a reward for completing a challenging routine.

- Use the Daily Activity Schedule (on page 21) to identify routines your child resists and ones he enjoys.



How can you reschedule your day to follow challenging routines with preferred routines?

- Try to follow routines he resists, such as getting dressed or brushing teeth, with routines he enjoys, such as playtime or snacktime.
- Let him choose what he would like to do after he completes the routine he resists. For example, say, "It is time to get dressed. After you get dressed, do you want to eat breakfast or read a book [preferred activities]?"

Give Information about Upcoming Events and Changes in Routines

Transitions between activities and changes in routines often trigger challenging behaviors in young children. Let your child know what to expect by giving clear information at a level he can understand.

- Use a picture schedule to help your child know what will happen during the day. Before moving to a new activity, show him his schedule. If possible, allow your child to participate and make choices about which activities to do when.
- Provide clear warnings before changing activities. For example, give your child a 5-minute

warning, followed by a 2-minute warning, before leaving the park. You can also set a timer to help your child understand.

- Give your child an item that lets him know what is coming next. For example, give your child his plate to let him know it's time for lunch, or his favorite bath toy to let him know it is bathtime.
- Explain the activity, rules, and consequences before beginning a challenging activity. You may want to add a reward after the challenging activity is complete. For example, before going into the grocery store, say, "We are going to buy milk, eggs, and cereal. You need to sit in the cart and use an inside voice. When we're done, you can listen to music in the car [reward]."



How can you help your child understand what is coming next?



You may need to start by using multiple strategies to prevent the challenging behavior. As your child gains skills and you learn what works best, you will be able to reduce the number of prevention strategies you have to use.

Figure 8.4 shows the techniques Jordan's mother uses to prevent his tantrums. (This figure shows how she has filled out part of the Practice Plan for *Prevent the Challenging Behavior*, which is the fourth form at the end of this chapter.) These techniques include avoiding their triggers and making difficult situations easier. As described above, Jordan's mom has discovered by using the Challenging Behavior Record that the triggers for his tantrums seemed to be requests to do a task or activity that he didn't like or that

was hard for him. After thinking about the activities that were most challenging for Jordan (getting dressed, taking a nap, sitting through dinner), she has adjusted the family's schedule so that these activities will happen during times when Jordan is well rested and not too hungry. She also makes sure that they all get up a few minutes earlier so that they will not be rushed. In addition, she has begun giving him 5-minute and 2-minute warnings before telling him to do a task or unpleasant activity.

Jordan's mom has also brainstormed ways to make challenging tasks easier. For example, she has started asking Jordan to sit at the dinner table for only 5 minutes rather than through the whole family meal. She has also begun giving him choices during challenging tasks and trying to make them more fun. For example, when getting him dressed, she lets him choose what to wear and the order in which to put on his clothes, and she works all this into a dressing song.

Change the Consequences

The consequences your child receives after using a challenging behavior—including the way you and others react—can reward it and keep it going even if the consequence seems unpleasant to you. If the consequence results in what he wants and needs, he will probably continue to use the behavior. For example:

- If your child becomes more and more disruptive when he wants something, then giving in can make him more likely to do it again.
- If he misbehaves when he wants your attention, then scolding or lecturing him can make

Behavior(s): Screams, drops, throws things.	Trigger(s): Asked to do nonpreferred activity or difficult task.
<p>Avoid triggers: Get Jordan dressed after breakfast. Get up 15 min. earlier.</p> <p>Make difficult situations easier: Give 5- and 2-min. warnings before activities. Ask Jordan to sit for dinner for only 5 min. Give choices of what to wear and what order to put on clothes. Sing a dressing song.</p>	

FIGURE 8.4. Strategies Jordan's mother uses to prevent his challenging behavior.

him more likely to act up, because any attention—even negative attention—is often better than no attention.

- If your child gets upset when he does not like something, then leaving a place or stopping an activity can make him more likely to use this behavior again.

You can help your child stop a challenging behavior by changing the consequences, as shown in Figure 8.5. You will change the consequences in two ways *at the same time*:

- Start rewarding good behaviors. This is called *positive reinforcement*, and it teaches him what behaviors you want him to use. For example, you will give your child lots of positive attention when he is sitting nicely at the dinner table.
- Stop rewarding the challenging behavior. This is called *extinction*. This teaches him that his challenging behavior no longer gets him what he wants. For example, you will no longer call his name and try to coax him out (attention) when he crawls under the dinner table.

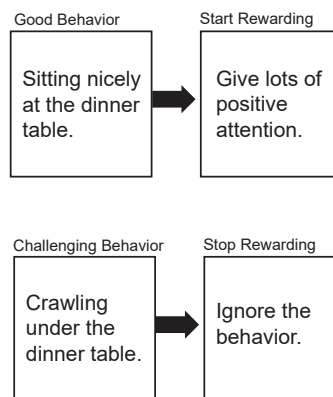


FIGURE 8.5. Example of how to change the consequences.

Start Rewarding Good Behaviors

Think about what behaviors you want your child to use instead of the challenging behavior, and start rewarding these behaviors. When you start giving your child lots of rewards for using appropriate behaviors, he will learn that he can use these behaviors instead of the challenging behavior to get his needs met. Table 8.2 can help you think about how to start rewarding good behaviors, based on the reason(s) for your child's challenging behavior.

- If your child misbehaves to *get things he wants*, such as food, toys, or activities, try to give him what he wants when he asks for it appropriately, such as with a gesture, word, or sentence. Your coach can help you decide which strategy may work best with your child.
 - Reward as many of his appropriate requests as you can at first. Over time, you can begin to ask your child to wait for longer periods to get the things he asks for.
 - Sometimes a thing your child wants cannot be an option, and that is OK. You can use pictures to show your child what items or activities are and are not possible choices. For example, when you don't want your child to watch videos, you can show him a video picture with a line through it and pictures of two other preferred activities, and say, "Video is not a choice right now. You can choose Play-Doh or cars."
- If your child acts up to *get your attention*, give him lots of positive attention when he is behaving appropriately.
 - Positive attention includes praising your child, making positive comments, giving gentle touches, and using the **Focus on Your Child** Project ImPACT strategy set.
 - How much attention you give your child will depend on how often his challenging behavior usually happens in a particular routine. For example, if your child acts up throughout dinner, you may need to give him positive attention at least once every 30 seconds. But you may only need to give your child attention every few minutes when he is doing an activity he enjoys, like swimming.
- If your child uses challenging behavior to *get out of a task or activity* that he doesn't like, such as a having to brush his teeth or put away his toys, reward your child for engaging in

TABLE 8.2. How to Change the Consequences, Based on the Reason for Your Child's Challenging Behavior

Reason for challenging behavior	Start rewarding good behavior	Stop rewarding challenging behavior
To get items and activities	Give your child what he wants when he asks appropriately.	Don't let your child have things he wants when he uses the challenging behavior.
To get attention	Give your child lots of positive attention when he is behaving appropriately.	Stop making eye contact with and speaking to your child when he uses the challenging behavior.
To get out of tasks and activities	Reward your child for doing the task or activity without using challenging behavior.	Physically guide your child through the task or activity.

the task or activity appropriately. For example, you can let your child watch a favorite video if he stays calm while you brush his teeth.



The reward for good behavior has to be more motivating than the reward for challenging behavior, or your child will use the challenging behavior instead.

- Don't require too much at first. For example, you can reward your child if he stays calm for 30 seconds while you brush his teeth, even if you haven't brushed his teeth all the way. Over time, you can slowly increase what you ask your child to do, or the amount of time he needs to do the task or activity, before you reward him.
- The rewards you use will depend on what your child enjoys and how upsetting he finds the activity. For easier tasks or activities, praise may be a strong enough reward. For very challenging tasks or activities, you will likely need to use a more motivating reward. Your coach can help you decide what rewards will work best.
- Remember, you can often prevent challenging behaviors by making tasks your child doesn't like easier. Give your child a break, reduce demands, or offer help during an activity that he doesn't like when your child is behaving appropriately.



How can you start rewarding your child's good behaviors?

Stop Rewarding the Challenging Behavior

When you stop rewarding your child's challenging behavior, he will learn that it no longer helps him meet his needs. Over time, he will be less likely to use it. Use Table 8.2 to help you think about how to stop rewarding challenging behaviors, based on the reason(s) for your child's challenging behavior.

- If your child misbehaves to *get or keep things he wants*, such as food, toys, or activities, don't let him have them when he uses the challenging behavior.
 - This can be hard in public places, such as a grocery store. If you know this could be a problem, try to prevent the challenging behavior while your child is learning more appropriate ways to get his needs met. For example, let him hold his favorite toy while you are shopping, or let him have a snack in the cart.
 - You may need to put away certain items that cause a problem while you get his behavior under control. For example, if your child screams whenever he sees your tablet because he wants to play with it, you may need to keep it hidden until he has learned more appropriate ways to ask for it.
- If your child acts up to *get your attention*, stop making eye contact with him and speaking to him when he uses the challenging behavior.
 - This can be hard, because many parents feel that they need to correct their child's misbehavior. But remember that even negative attention can be rewarding to your child.
 - If your child is being unsafe or destructive, such as climbing, hurting himself or others, running away, or breaking things, you will need to step in. Try to physically guide him out of the situation without making eye contact or talking to him.

- If your child uses challenging behavior to *get out of a task or activity* that he doesn't like, such as having to brush his teeth or put away his toys, don't let him get out of or avoid the situation when he misbehaves.
 - Physically guide your child through the task or activity. You may need to keep it short and simple to get him through it.
 - Be matter-of-fact about guiding him through the task or activity. Use short, clear instructions in a calm voice. Do not give him lots of attention, encouragement, or even scolding to get him through the activity, since any of these may reward his challenging behavior.



It can be very upsetting when your child is acting up. Try to keep calm and deal with your child's behavior in a matter-of-fact way, even if you are feeling emotional. It may help to give yourself a break before you start an activity you know your child does not like.



How can you stop rewarding your child's challenging behaviors?

Stopping rewards sounds straightforward, but it isn't always easy. When you first stop rewarding your child's challenging behavior, it will probably get a little worse before it gets better. This is because your child hasn't yet learned that the behavior doesn't work any more. For example, if yelling has always gotten you to let your child use your iPad before, but now you are not responding to it, your child may yell a little louder or kick a little. This increase usually only lasts a little while, as your child learns that the consequences have changed.

Figure 8.6 shows how Jordan's mother changes the consequences that are keeping his tantrums going. (This figure shows how she has filled out part of the Practice Plan for *Change the Consequences*, which is the fifth form at the end of this chapter.) Again, the reason for Jordan's tantrums seemed to be to get out of doing things that he didn't want to do or were hard for him. His mom has thus begun praising



It's important that you don't give in if your child's challenging behavior gets worse, because he may learn that he just needs to use more challenging behavior to get his needs met.

Behavior(s): <i>Screams, drops, throws things.</i>	<i>Gets help dressing, delays naptime, gets out of dinner.</i>
Start rewarding good behavior: <i>Praise Jordan for doing nonpreferred activities (dressing, nap, dinner) without a tantrum.</i> <i>Let Jordan play with trains for 10 min after dressing without a tantrum.</i> <i>Give Jordan small treat after sitting calmly at dinner for 5 min.</i>	
Stop rewarding challenging behavior: <i>If Jordan has a tantrum, physically guide him through activity right away.</i>	

FIGURE 8.6. Strategies Jordan's mother uses to change the consequences.

Jordan whenever he engages in a nonpreferred activity without a tantrum. Since dressing and dinner are particularly challenging for Jordan, she has begun letting him play with his favorite trains for 10 minutes if he gets dressed without screaming or throwing clothes, and giving him a small treat if he is calm during dinner for 5 minutes. At the same time, she has decided that when he has a tantrum, she will physically guide him through the task or activity right away. For example, if he has a tantrum while getting dressed, she will ignore it and put clothes on him anyway, or if he has a tantrum at naptime, she will carry him to his room.

Teach a Replacement Skill

Children may still use a challenging behavior when you try to prevent it and change the consequences. They may not yet know what to do to communicate their needs in a more appropriate way. Therefore, the last step in **Manage Your Child's Challenging Behavior** is to teach your child to use a replacement skill—a skill that serves the same purpose as the challenging behavior and can be used instead of it. For example:

- If your child becomes disruptive in order to get food, toys, or activities, teach him to ask for these things by using gestures, words, or sentences. Talk to your coach about what skills may work best for your child.
- If your child misbehaves to get your attention, teach him more appropriate ways to get your attention, such as tapping your arm, saying your name, or saying, “Play with me.”
- If your child uses challenging behavior to get out of a task or activity that is hard for him or that he doesn't like, teach him how to ask for a break or your help by using gestures, words, or sentences.
- If your child uses challenging behavior because it is enjoyable, teach him to get similar sensory input in more appropriate ways, such as biting a chewy tube instead of his clothes, or ripping scrap paper instead of the pages of books.

Choose a Replacement Skill

Decide what skill your child can use instead of the challenging behavior to communicate his needs.

- The skill you teach should be easier to use than the challenging behavior and simple for your child to use when he is upset.
- The skill should be acceptable to you and others who know your child, such as family members, teachers, and friends.
- This new skill must be respected. This means that if your child uses it, you need to respond to it. Over time, you can respond less and less as your child learns to use more appropriate skills.

Table 8.3 gives examples of replacement skills you can teach, based on the reason for your child's challenging behavior.



What skill can you teach your child to use to replace the challenging behavior?

TABLE 8.3. Examples of Replacement Skills to Teach

Reason for challenging behavior	Replacement skills
To get items and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point to item. • Label item or activity. • Say, "I want _____."
To get attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap on parent's arm. • Say, "Look, Mom," or "Play with me."
To get out of tasks and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign "All done" or "Help." • Shake head "No." • Say, "No," "All done," or "I don't want to _____."
To get sensory input (self-stimulation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play with toys. • Use materials that give same sensory input as challenging behavior.

Use Prompts and Rewards to Teach the Replacement Skill

You will use the same prompt-and-reward strategies to teach your child the replacement skill as you use in Project ImPACT's **Teach New Skills**. Chapter 5 has more information on how to use prompts and rewards effectively. To teach your child the replacement skill, you will:

- Set up a situation similar to the challenging situation. Show and describe the new skill, and help him use it before he uses the challenging behavior. Practice as often as possible, when everyone is calm and you are not in a rush.
- Use clear prompts to help your child use the new skill. You may need to start with the most supportive prompt for teaching the replacement skill. Your coach will help you decide on the best prompts to use.
- Immediately reward your child for using the replacement skill. The reward should match the reason for his challenging behavior. For example, if your child has been pinching you to get your attention, give him your attention as a reward when he taps your arm instead, even if you had to use physical guidance to help him. If your child has been screaming until you give him his favorite drink, give him his drink as a reward when he points to the juice instead.
- Once your child can use the new skill on his own, prompt him to use it during his daily routines before the challenging behavior happens. For example, before starting an activity that can be frustrating for your child, say, "If you need help, say, 'Help me.' Let's practice."
- Reward your child every time he uses the replacement skill at first. Once he is consistently able to use the replacement skill, you can gradually reward him less and less. If your child stops using the replacement skill, you've moved too fast. Go back to more frequent rewards.



Challenging behaviors are common during routines or activities that are hard. If your child uses challenging behaviors to get out of certain tasks or activities, you can teach him the skills to engage in these tasks more independently. Talk to your coach about which new skills may help your child be successful during challenging routines.

Figure 8.7 shows how Jordan's mom is teaching Jordan to use a replacement skill. (This figure shows how she has filled out part of the Practice Plan for *Teach a Replacement Skill*, which is the sixth form at the end of this chapter.) Again, the reason for Jordan's tantrums was to get out of or put off doing things that he didn't want to do. So his mom has decided that she will use prompts and rewards to teach him to say the word "Break" to briefly stop activities he doesn't like. This way, he has a more appropriate way to communicate that he needs a break. Before starting a non-preferred activity, she reminds him that he can ask for a break. When he is showing signs of getting frustrated, she prompts him to ask for a break by looking at him expectantly; saying, "What do you need?"; and then modeling the word if necessary. Once Jordan says the word "Break," his mom rewards him by giving him a brief break from the activity. His mom will continue to reward him with a favorite activity or treat if he is calm during a nonpreferred activity, and to physically guide him through the activity if he begins to have a tantrum. As Jordan gets better at getting dressed and sitting at the table, he will need fewer breaks.




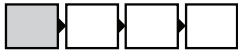
Behavior(s): <i>Screams, drops, throws things.</i>		Reason(s): <i>Gets out of or puts off things he doesn't like.</i>	
Replacement skill(s): <i>Say "Break" to stop activity briefly.</i>			
 <i>Say "Break" spontaneously.</i>			
 Set Up Situation <i>Say, "It's time to get dressed. If you need a break, tell me 'Break.'"</i> <i>Watch for signs Jordan is getting frustrated.</i>	Prompt 1. <i>Look expectantly.</i> 2. <i>Say, "What do you need?"</i> 3. <i>Model "Break."</i>		Reward <i>Say, "Nice asking for a break."</i> <i>Give Jordan a short break from getting dressed.</i>
	 <i>Says "Break."</i>		

FIGURE 8.7. Example of how to teach Jordan to use the replacement skill of saying the word "Break" to stop a nonpreferred activity.



Summary Statement

Date:

Trigger(s)	Behavior	Consequence(s)	Reason(s)

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Practice Plan— Prevent the Challenging Behavior

Date:

PLANNING	
<p>Behavior(s):</p> <p>Trigger(s):</p> <p>Avoid triggers:</p> <p>Make difficult situations easier:</p>	<p>What will be hard?</p> <p>Possible solutions:</p>
BEHAVIOR TRACKING	
<p>How much did your child's behavior disrupt your family routines this week?</p>	<p>What went well?</p> <p>What was hard?</p> <p>Possible solutions:</p>
REFLECTION	



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Practice Plan— Change the Consequences

Date:




PLANNING	
<p>Behavior(s):</p> <p>Start rewarding good behavior:</p> <p>Stop rewarding challenging behavior:</p>	<p>Consequence(s):</p> <p>What will be hard?</p> <p>Possible solutions:</p>
BEHAVIOR TRACKING	
<p>How much did your child's behavior disrupt your family routines this week?</p>	<p>REFLECTION</p> <p>What went well?</p> <p>What was hard?</p> <p>Possible solutions:</p>

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Practice Plan— Teach a Replacement Skill

Date: _____

PLANNING		REFLECTION	
Behavior(s):	Reason(s):	What went well?	Possible solutions:
Replacement skill(s):		What was hard?	
  Set Up Situation	Prompt 1. <input type="text"/> 2. <input type="text"/> 3. <input type="text"/>	Reward <input type="text"/>	
		BEHAVIOR TRACKING How much did your child's behavior disrupt your family routines this week? 	

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Behavior Plan

Trigger(s)	Behavior(s)	Consequence(s)	Reason(s)

Prevent the Challenging Behavior
Change the Consequences
Teach a Replacement Skill

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