

Serve and Return

Create conversation through back-and-forth communication between your child and others.

How does it work?



Respond meaningfully to any communication from your child, whether it's simple sounds or more complex language. The key is to keep the conversation flowing by responding and waiting for your child's response.

Why do we do it?



When your child attempts to communicate with an adult or peer, the adult or peer responds to what your child is trying to say.



When starting a conversation, use eye contact and wait time to encourage your child to respond.



Expand what your child says by adding comments and keeping the conversation going.

Tips for success:



When “serving,” don’t jump in too soon. Use the *Wait Time* and *Expectant Look* strategies while you wait for them to return part of the conversation. Make eye contact and ask open-ended questions. Who, what, where, and when are great to start conversations!



When responding to your child, expand on what they say. If they say 'truck,' you might add, 'Yes, your blue truck drove to our house!' Adding words helps keep the conversation going.