



## LANGUAGE STIMULATION

### TIPSHEET-1: CHOICE MAKING

**What is it?** Choice making is one of my favourite strategies to use with children to encourage communication. Choice making is simply as it sounds. It involves providing alternative choices and helps your child to learn that they have the control to get what they may want or need.

**What's involved?** In order for your child to learn to make choices, you need to offer them the choice between two things. It is often easier to use something that you know they really like (highly preferred; eg. bubbles) versus something you know they are not as interested in (non-preferred; eg. shoe).

Show your child the two items and label each object clearly (eg. "bubbles; "shoe") Ask them simply "want bubbles?" or "shoe?" holding out each object as you label it.

Encourage your child to show or tell you what they want. If your child is not yet talking they may look, reach or point for what they want. If your child is talking they may say the word as well as reach for what they want.

If your child can clearly show or tell you what they want, reinforce by repeating the name of the object, praising them and giving them the object. (eg. "bubbles, you want bubbles, good boy you told me you want bubbles")

If your child is having trouble showing you or telling you what they want, show them the two objects again and repeat the names of the objects. If you know what your child wants, take their hand and touch the object, label it and then reward your child by giving it to them.

**Good times to use choice making:** Choice making can be used anywhere or anytime, and often works best when you have a good idea of what your child already might want. Give your child choices between different foods, toys, games, DVD's. Once your child is successfully choosing between objects, you can progress to giving choices using photos, pictures or written or spoken words.

**REMEMBER:** It is important to reward your child's choice making consistently. Even if they choose the object you know that don't really want (eg. "shoe") give them this object anyway. If they get upset, give them the choice again and help them choose what they may really want or need.

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Visit [www.ChewChewChatter.com.au](http://www.ChewChewChatter.com.au) for more information

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