

# Talking Tips

Families **talk** now

## What are gestures?

A gesture is a form of non-verbal communication made with your hands to help express words, feelings and thoughts. Lots of people use gestures naturally when they talk.

## Using everyday gestures

Using gestures can help some children to start using and understanding words and learn the language. Using gestures does **not** delay a child beginning to use words. In fact it actually **helps** them to start to communicate.

When children see adults using gestures, they may start to copy the gestures. If you use gestures lots, your child will copy you naturally. This is the beginning of the child communicating with people around them. The first step on the road to talking!

## How do gestures help?

**Gestures help children begin to use more words because:**

- If a child gestures, it helps adults understand what the child is thinking or trying to say
- Adults who use gestures often slow down their speed of talking, which helps children 'tune in' to the things adults are saying
- A gesture is often clearer than a stream of words or sounds
- Gestures are visual, so you see the word as well as hearing it.

## Some gestures you could use...

<b>Stop</b>	Palm out like a policeman directing cars
<b>Where?</b>	Palms upwards
<b>Don't know</b>	Shrug shoulders
<b>Drink</b>	Mime drinking with a cup
<b>Hungry</b>	Rub belly
<b>Rain</b>	Rain drops down with your fingers
<b>Bye bye</b>	Waving your hand

It is very important  
not to make your child  
use gestures!

**ALWAYS** use the words  
when you use gestures. Don't  
use gestures without talking!

There are lots of other gestures you could use! Make some up that you think would be useful.  
REMEMBER... you may have to use gestures a lot before your child copies you.

