

# Supporting Children with Limited Verbal Skills

*These strategies are helpful to all children but are particularly helpful for those with limited verbal skills.*

## Support communication

Provide an outlet for young children to express their wants and needs in these areas:

- Demonstrating feelings/emotions
- Requesting
- Rejecting/refusing

Providing an outlet for expression helps prevent challenging behavior.



## Build routines

Help children understand daily expectations and happenings. Routines provide predictability and a sense of security.

Knowing what to expect helps children make appropriate decisions.

## Offer visual supports

Children with limited verbal skills need other ways to communicate. Communication strategies include:

- Pictures
- Communication boards
- Communication devices
- Sign language

Alternate forms of communication allow children to express their ideas by pointing to images and using gestures.



## Provide schedules

Visual schedules help children make sense of their day. Post them in common spaces and use them to:

- Promote awareness of activities and routines
- Alert children to upcoming changes

Knowing what to expect reduces anxiety and allows children to prepare for upcoming events.

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Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



13 Children's Research Center  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
51 Gerty Dr. • Champaign, IL 61820-7469  
Telephone: 217-333-1386  
Toll-free: 877-275-3227  
E-mail: [iel@illinois.edu](mailto:iel@illinois.edu)  
<https://illinoisearlylearning.org>



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