

TATS Talks with Professionals

ABOUT PROMPTING



Prompting Hierarchy --- Supporting Children in the Development of Independence

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what are other
words for
prompting?



suggestion, inducement, prompt,
motivation, hint, reminder, cue,
encouragement, occasion, motive



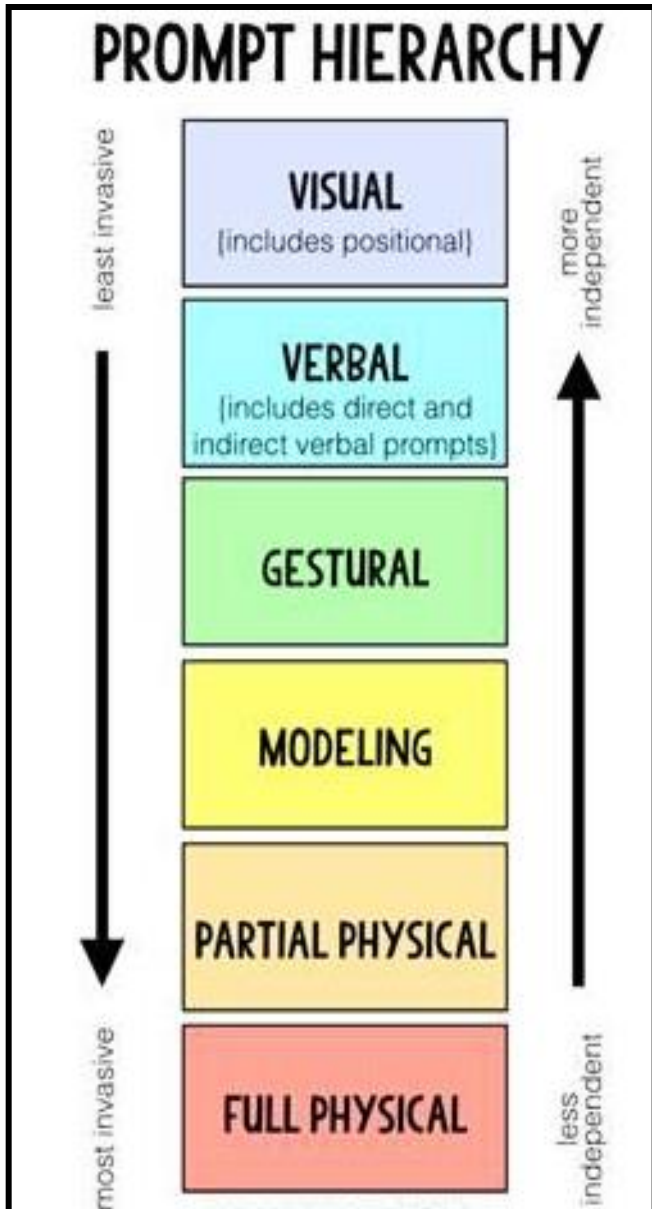
KEY POINTS

- The child must experience to learn.
- Following a prompting hierarchy allows children the opportunity to perform a desired behaviour without becoming prompt dependent.
- But don't forget that input is just as important as output!

Why is Prompt Hierarchy Important?

- ❖ Gives child the necessary time to process information and formulate a message or response
- ❖ Provides a structure for adults
- ❖ Can be customized for individual children
- ❖ Can be organized as least to most to avoid prompt dependency

What are Levels of Prompting?



- Least to most prompting starts with the least invasive prompts and moves down the list once you find a prompt that helps the child accomplish the task.
- Most to least prompting starts with more invasive prompts so that the child accomplishes the task correctly and then fades towards less restrictive prompts.
- The goal of a prompting program is for a child to respond to naturally occurring cues in the environment. The goal is independence.
- The more an adult needs to intervene by giving directions, using a physical motion, or using a physical touch the more “intrusive or invasive” the prompt is considered.
- More intrusive the adult prompts generally mean less independence for the child.

Examples of Prompts

What do you Think?

? Which type of prompt is hardest to fade?



? Which type of prompt is easiest to fade?

Visual Prompt

- A picture that gives a child information
- Objects or photos shown to a child
- Pausing and looking at a child expectantly
- The least intrusive prompt

Gestural Prompt

- Pointing toward a picture if you want the child to show you a choice
- Pointing toward yours or the child's mouth if you want him to say something

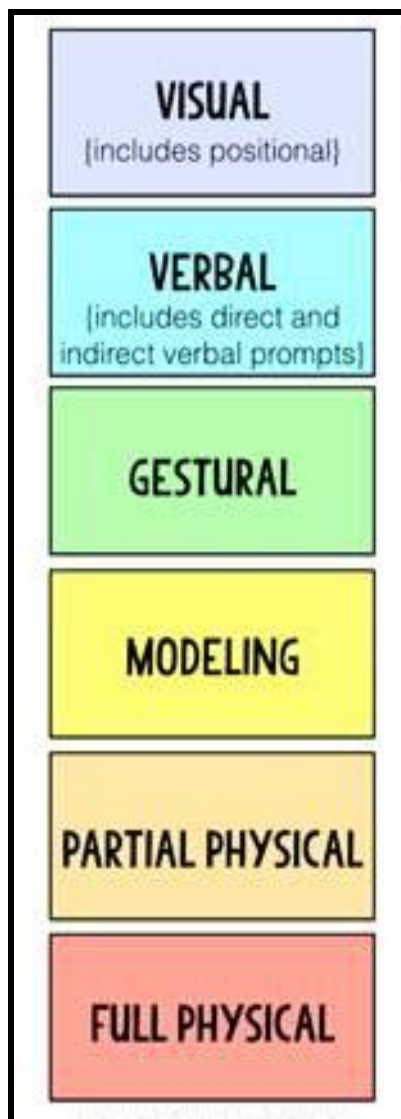
Verbal Prompt

- Telling the child what to say or what to do
- Saying directions again
- Asking an open ended question
- Saying a sentence with a blank at the end (cloze procedure)

Physical Prompt

- Touching a child's elbow to start movement toward a response
- Guiding a child's hand or assisting him/her in isolating a finger to point
- Often called "hand-over-hand"
- The most intrusive prompt

Prompts for Supporting Communication



Show a picture or object that interests the child.

Expectant Pause – Wait and use body language to let the child know that you are expecting a response.

Indirect – Use an open ended question, ex. *“What should we do next?”*

Direct – Use a specific prompt, ex. *“If you want the car to go, tell me go.”*

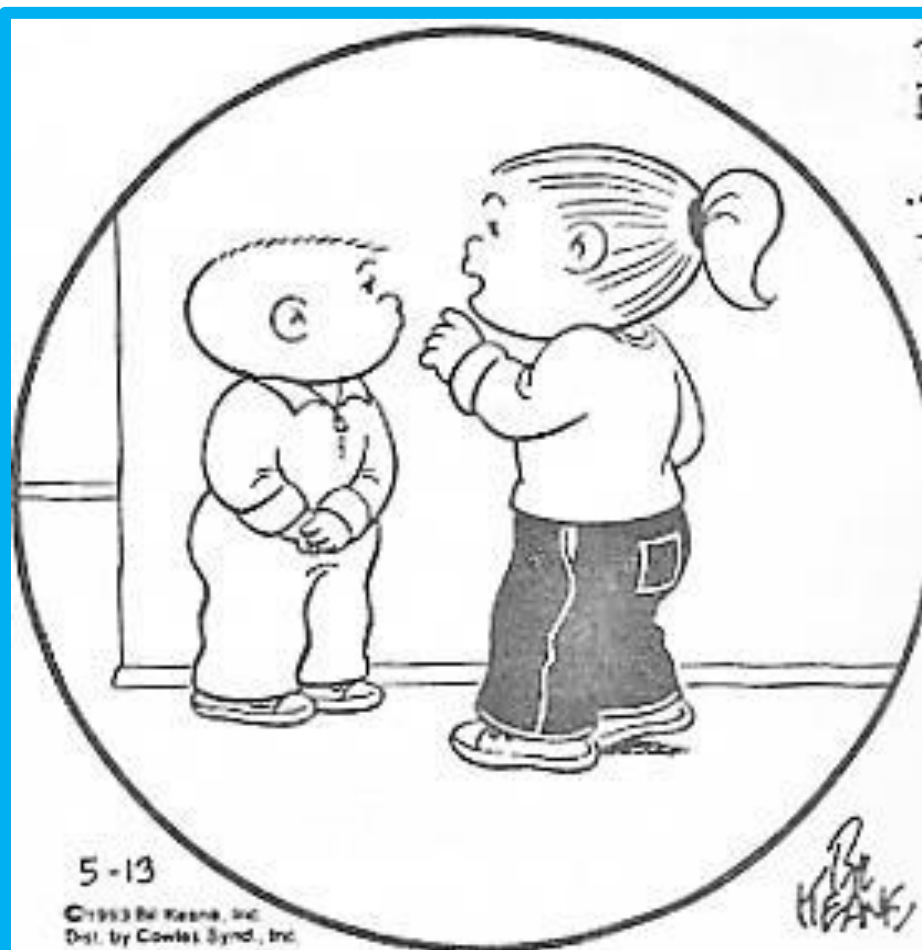
Partial – Give a part of the response, ex. *“Zoom, Zoom, we want the car to _____”*

Gesture Prompt – Point to the symbol on AAC device, word board, choice board, communication system. Tap your finger on the icon to get the child started.

Model Prompt – Model the word or phrase on the child’s device or model pointing to or handing you the associated photo or icon. Pause and wait for the child to imitate.

Partial Physical – Touch the child’s elbow to start to guide his/her hand toward responding

Full Physical - Consider “hand-over-hand” or “hand-under-hand” prompts to guide the child to respond with the word required



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“When somebody gives you something, you wait for them to say, ‘And what do you say?’ Then you say ‘Thank you.’”

What is “Prompt Dependence”?

What Causes It?

Prompt dependence occurs when a child needs (depends on) prompts in order to respond. In many cases a child is accidentally taught to wait for a certain prompt before responding.

Some reasons:

- **Over-use of verbal prompts by staff trying to be helpful by repeating verbally what the teacher has said**
- **Failure of staff to fade prompts when a child has mastered component parts of a task**
- **Hesitancy to remove or fade prompts in a desire to keep a child at a current level of success**
- **Under-use of visual prompts**
- **Hurrying through the prompt hierarchy without use of enough “wait time”**

How Can Prompt Dependency Be Avoided?

Some rules for Prompt Fading:

- Plan your fading procedures from the start of the interventions.
- Train all staff on prompting procedures for individual children.
- Fade prompts gradually but consistently.
- If a pattern of incorrect responding begins, return to the last prompt level.

Some key tips for using prompt fading:

- Allow wait time.
 - If you don't use enough wait time, you may be providing more prompts than needed.
 - Rushing through prompts takes away opportunities for children to respond.
- Take data.
 - Data is key to tracking progress.
 - Note the level of prompt you used and the results.
 - You should note that children are needing less intrusive prompts.
- Use high powered reinforcers.
 - Use items for which your children want to work.
 - Use items that are reinforcing, important, and interesting to them.

Prompt Hierarchy--Pausing Pause after every step

- Focus your attention on the student
(expect communication!)

A
N
D

- PAUSE



- After student responds, provide...
Descriptive Feedback

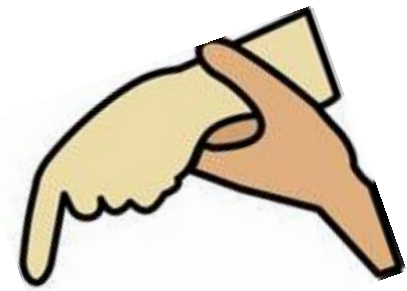
IMPORTANT STUFF!!

Wait time is vital to the success of any strategy, intervention, or prompting technique.

Provide motivation to say or indicate the word or concept.

Prompt and then **WAIT**.

Acknowledge and **reinforce** attempts to communicate.



Wait time is necessary to avoid prompt dependence and to give children time to process and form a response.



Helping too much or helping too soon can lead to prompt dependency and reduced opportunities to respond. Use physical prompts sparingly.



While you WAIT:

1. Stop talking
2. Lean forward
3. Look at the child
4. Give the child processing time

Example of Prompting Hierarchy

Target skill: Children indicate choices for center play.

Teacher question: Which center do you want to play in today?

VISUAL
(includes positional)

Centers should be within view of the child. Provide pictures/photos on a core board, choice board, AAC device. Place the board in view. Wait

VERBAL
(includes direct and indirect verbal prompts)

Ask and direct. Use one: “What is your choice?” “Do you want block center or play dough center?” “Show me your choice.” Wait

GESTURAL

Point to or gesture toward actual objects and center areas. Point toward the choice board. Give the verbal direction again. Wait

MODELING

Point to or take a visual or object while verbalizing “I will choose blocks.” Use of a peer model is a good strategy. Verbal model: Tell the child what to say or point to touch or operate the choice board or AAC device. Wait

PARTIAL PHYSICAL

Provide light support to direct the child’s hand to select a choice or to direct his/her hand to an individualized communication device.

FULL PHYSICAL

Source: TheAutismHelper.com

Example of a Four-Step Prompting Hierarchy

<p>1. STATE:</p>	<p>Make a very general statement about the situation.</p> <p>“I brought a big bag of stuff, but you don’t know “WHAT” is in it (modeling “WHAT” on communication board, symbol, or device while you say “WHAT”).”</p> <p>Keep eye contact and wait up to 10 seconds (more or less).</p>
<p>2. SUGGEST:</p>	<p>Be a little more direct, but still general.</p> <p>“You can ask me “WHAT” I brought today (modeling “WHAT” on communication board, symbol, or device while you say “WHAT”).” Watch and wait.</p>
<p>3. SAY:</p>	<p>Tell the person specifically what to say.</p> <p>“Say the word “WHAT” to find out “WHAT” I brought.” (modeling “WHAT” on communication board, symbol, or device while you say “WHAT”).” Watch and Wait.</p>
<p>4. ASSIST:</p>	<p>Physically assist the person.</p> <p>(“Let me help you say “WHAT” so you can see “WHAT” I brought.”)</p>

Tips for All Staff

Use prompts when your child:

- Is about to respond with an incorrect answer
- Responds with an incorrect answer
- Does not respond at all (after you have used wait time)

Vary your praise and rewards:

- Give some praise and a smaller reward for a correct response that is achieved with a prompt
- Give a huge amount of praise (use specific descriptions) and a greater reward for a response that is self-initiated and/or achieved without a prompt

Avoid saying “no” when a child makes an error in responding:

- Repeat the request and assist with a prompt
- Try using mechanical prompts (visuals) instead of human prompts (physical assistance).
Visual prompts are easier to fade and more likely to facilitate independence

Use “AAC Talk” all day:

- Use visuals, core board, devices throughout all activities of the day.
- Talk with children. Talk about what they are doing and what you are doing. Ask them questions and assist them in answering. Use prompts.

Resources



<http://www.rockybay.org.au/resources/aackit/>
Positive AACtion

<http://praacticalaac.org/video/video-of-the-week-when-helping-isnt-helping-prompt-awareness-in-aac-instruction/>

<http://theautismhelper.com/category/communication-2/>

<https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/kidtalk/resources-for-teachers/>