Signing to Support Children’s Language Development

**Why Sign?**

- Builds on natural ability to gesture
- Improves attention and listening
- Pressure for speech is removed
- Language is simplified and slowed down
- Aids comprehension and helps children express themselves
- It is a visual reinforcement to speech
- A bridge to developing spoken language.

**Who For?**

- All children
- Children with communication difficulties:
  - Delayed understanding
  - Delayed expression
  - Unclear speech
- Children who find it difficult to listen
- Children with English as an additional

**How to Sign:**

1. Gain child’s attention and make eye contact first.
2. Always accompany signs with clear speech and facial expression.
3. Sign ‘key words’ – words that are important for meaning. Keep simple and short.
4. Reward any attempt to communicate.
5. Signs need to be used by everyone in the setting with all children.
6. Keep signing, even if the child doesn’t readily copy.
7. Many children need hand over hand help to start signing.
8. Use signs that your child will be motivated by.
9. Signing skills are developed over time through

**TARGET SETTING:**

3 Signs I will use –

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</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Play</td>
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<td>* Raisin</td>
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<td>* Sandwich</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Sand</td>
<td>Sing</td>
<td>* Toast</td>
<td>Yoghurt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>Setting, i.e. nursery</td>
<td>Sit</td>
<td>Sleep/Tired/Bed</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In school</td>
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<td>* Stand up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Sock</td>
<td>Swim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Spoon</td>
<td>Wait / Stop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Swing</td>
<td>Walk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Teddy bear</td>
<td>Want</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Gone</td>
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<td>Wash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Toilet</td>
<td>Train</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Trousers/pants</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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* These signs have been added in keeping with local use in Oxfordshire 2009.
**General**

- **I/me**
  - Point to self.

- **You**
  - Point to person concerned.

- **Hello**
  - Wave once.

- **Goodbye**
  - Wave.

- **Good**
  - Closed hand with thumb up makes short movement forward.

- **Please**
  - Move hand down from mouth until palm up.

- **Thank you**
  - Move hand away from mouth, shorter movement.

- **Finish**
  - Closed hands spring open.

- **Same**
  - Index fingers tap together twice.

- **Different**
  - Index fingers move apart.
Hands clap together in circular movements.

Flat hand down middle of face.

Alternate clawed hands move up body sharply.

Shake hand/s in front of chest.

Draw hand across forehead.

Shake index finger side to side.

Move flat hand/s in circular movements.

Thumb and little finger extended move side to side.

Hands together pull apart.

Index and thumb show size.
Slightly bent hand slots between thumb and fingers of other hand.

Place back of hand onto back of other hand.

Flat hand moves under top hand.

Rub wrists together.

Fingers of bent hands open and close onto thumbs several times.

Place hand over fist.

Use TWO hands, facing in/down flip over.

Index and middle finger twist out from forehead.

General 3

In

On

Under

Dirty

Wet

More

Gone

Name
Common Objects

Bag
Mime holding bag.

Ball
Indicate shape of ball.

Bicycle
Closed hands ‘pedal’ in circles.

Book/story
Open two flat hands.

Brick
Fist over fist.

Bus
Mime holding big steering wheel.

Car
Mime holding steering wheel.

Chair
Closed hands move down.

Coat
Mime pulling coat over shoulders.

Computer
‘C’ hands circle.

Crayon/Pencil
Mime holding pencil and writing.

Cup/drink
Mime holding cup, bring to mouth.
Common Objects 2

**Doll**
Mime holding doll.

**Hat**
Mime putting hat on head.

**House**
Flat hands move down and out.

**Outside**
Bent hand moves forward.

**Plate**
Index finger makes circle over palm up hand.

**Puzzle**
Mime fitting puzzle together with thumbs.

**Sand**
Thumbs rub along fingertips as hands move up.

**School/Nursery**
Circle hand in front of mouth.

**Shoe**
Hand covers hand.

**Sock**
Index and thumb hold sock. Both hands for plural.

**Spoon**
Bring index and middle finger to mouth.

**Swing**
Closed hands move back and forth.

Teddy Bear

Telephone

Television

Toilet

Train

* * *

* *

Trousers/Pants

Water

Flat hands move short way down each leg. Palm down hand moves sideways in wavy motion.

Bath

Hands rub on chest and tummy.

Brush

Mime brushing hair.

Come

Index finger towards body.

Cook

Mime mixing in a bowl.

Cry

Index fingers move down face.

Cut

Mime cutting with fingers (for scissors).

Drink

Take hand to mouth as if holding cup.

Eat

Take bunched hand to mouth twice.

Give

Move TWO flat hands in direction of object given.

Go

Index finger moves in appropriate direction.
Actions 2

- **Jump**: Index and middle finger jump/bend from back of hand.
- **Kick**: Index finger moves forward.
- **Listen/Hear**: Hand to ear.
- **Look**: Open index and middle finger move forward from eye.
- **Love**: Hands crossed over chest.
- **Paint**: Move index and middle finger up and down.
- **Play**: Open hands move out and up in circles.
- **Run**: Mime running with arms.
- **Sing**: Index and middle finger circle up from mouth.
- **Sit**: Flat hands on top of each other move down.
Sleep/Tired/Bed
Hands together at side of head. Close eyes for sleep.

Stand Up
Scoop and raise flat hands.

Swim
Mime swimming.

Wait/Stop
Move flat hand forward.

Walk
Index and middle fingers mime walking.

Want
Flat hand brushes down and out from chest.

Wash
Mime appropriate washing action.
Fingers spring open from fist under chin.
Index finger and thumb open and close.
Open index and middle fingers move away from side of mouth.
Move elbows in and out.
Move hands away from head (holding horns).
Flat hands open and close.

Animals

Bird
Index finger and thumb open and close.

Cat
Open index and middle fingers move away from side of mouth.

Chicken
Move elbows in and out.

Cow
Move hands away from head (holding horns).

Crocodile
Flat hands open and close.

Dog
Index and middle fingers move down twice.

Duck
Index, middle finger and thumb open and close.

Elephant
Hand moves out from face (as trunk).

Fish
Flat hand wiggles across body.

Frog
Fingers spring open from fist under chin.
Animals 2

Horse
Index and middle fingers over index and middle fingers.

Lion
Hands over head then clawed hands in circular movements.

Monkey
Hands scratch under arms.

Mouse
Index and middle fingers run up hand.

Pig
Fist makes circular movement in front of nose.

Rabbit
Index and middle fingers bend at side of head.

Sheep
Little fingers circle from side of face.

Snake
Index and middle finger spring forward from mouth.
Food

- Apple: Mime biting apple.
- Banana: Mime peeling banana.
- Biscuit: Tap elbow twice.
- Bread: Saw across hand.
- Cake: Clawed hand on palm down hand.
- Carrot: Fist bends forward as if holding and biting carrot.
- Cheese: Bent hand on palm.
- Chocolate: 'C' hand circles on chin.
- Crisps: Mime the packet and taking crisps to mouth.
- Dinner: Index and middle fingers move alternatively to mouth.
- Grape: Mime picking grape.
- Ice-cream: Mime licking ice-cream.
Thumb comes down over lips to chin, fingers flutter.

Mime milking cow.

Hand makes squeezing action at side of mouth.

Index and middle finger twist at side of mouth.

Make small circles with index finger.

Place flat hands together.

Hand comes up as if out of toaster.

Finger spell 'Y' then dip index and middle finger into pot and take to mouth.

Tip hand with thumb extended to mouth, to drink.
People

Mother/Mummy

Father/Daddy

Baby

Boy

Girl

Children

Finger spell 'M' and tap twice.

Finger spell 'F' and tap twice.

Rock baby.

Brush index finger under chin.

Brush index finger twice on side of lips.

Flat hand indicates heads of children.

Grandmother

Grandfather

Man

Lady

Friend

Doctor

Finger spell 'G' and tap 'M' twice.

Finger spell 'G' and tap 'F' twice.

Draw fingers and thumb down and together.

Brush index finger along cheek to chin.

Hold own hand and shake.

Index and thumb hold wrist.
Alphabet

A B C D E F
G H I J K L

G H I J K L
Alphabet 2

M
N
O
P
Q
R
S
T
U
V
W
X
Y
Z