Choices

Making choices is important to children because it helps them to develop their independence and practice communicating their needs. Choices increase vocabulary and opportunities to communicate.

- Choices of two items, for example, “orange or apple?” can be given throughout the day. Use toys, videos, food, drinks, clothes, etc.
- Say each choice and show the items at the same time, for example ‘red t-shirt or blue t-shirt?’ The child may reach for /point to/or ask for the one they want.
- Offer a choice even when you can guess what the answer will be. If the child points to the one that you know they don’t like or don’t want still give this item to encourage your child to learn how to make the right choice.
- Give the child the language once they have made a choice, for example "orange", at a single word level, or “I want orange” at a sentence level.
- In play set up activities for teddy and dolly. Ask for example, “Does teddy want dinner or a drink?”, “What shall dolly do now: sleep or jump?”, “Who wants the hat: teddy or dolly?”
- Have a special time with your child every day where the child can choose an activity/toy/book, and you follow their lead.
- A choice board made from velcro’d picture cards can be a useful way of encouraging a child to select and remember an activity and talk with you about the process of making the choice.