

Baby Sign Language Academy

Tips For Signing Success



- How many signs should you start with? A recommended guideline is to start with maybe two or three signs that have meaning to your baby and add signs as you become more accustomed to signing. However, it is also perfectly fine to use as many signs as you know. You know yourself and your baby best so teach signs at a rate that suits you both.
- Which signs should you start with? Any signs you like! The most common are milk, more and eat because they are easy to learn/remember and, being needs based signs, they are what very young babies fuss about most.
- Make sure you have your baby's full attention when introducing signs. Make eye contact and sign just below your baby's line of vision. For very young babies sign close to your face.
- Allow signing to happen naturally, keep it real and use signs in context.
- Help motivate your baby to sign by teaching her signs for objects that seem particularly appealing to her along with any needs based signs. To optimize signing success, teach your baby a combination of needs based or routine signs and motivating signs.
- Speak the words you are signing aloud as you sign them.
- Use signs as part of your daily routine. Once you have chosen your initial signs, use them every time it is appropriate, i.e. if MILK is one of your first words, sign MILK each time you give your baby milk. As you add new words, use them consistently and frequently.
- Model new signs before, during and directly after you show baby the item related to the word you are trying to teach. Make the sign a couple of times each time you use it, using slightly exaggerated movements.
- Use picture books, magazines, songs, nursery rhymes and play objects to introduce signs that your baby does not ordinarily come in contact with or see on regular basis.
- To help teach signs for intangible concepts like hurt/pain, sad, happy, etc. be an actress or actor and use appropriate facial expressions.
- Encourage baby's attempts at signing by giving him lots of hugs and positive attention. Avoid pressuring baby to sign.
- Enthusiastically acknowledge your baby's sign approximations while saying and correctly modeling the sign your baby is trying to do.
- Teach family members, caregivers and anyone else close to your baby some of the signs you are using. Encourage them to sign along with you so that your baby will be exposed to signs regardless of whose care she is in.
- Finally....Make Signing Fun...Have a great time with it and remember to enjoy this wondrous time signing with your beautiful baby!

