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How to Teach Yes/No Questions to Kids



Is your child able to answer yes no questions?

Yes no questions are a common target for speech therapy sessions because once a child can answer yes no questions, you will be able to get more information to find out what they are trying to communicate to you. This can be incredibly helpful to reduce frustration caused when your child is trying to tell you something but can't be understood.

Here are some activities that can help you teach your child how to answer yes no questions. Make sure that your child is really good at each step before you move on to the next one. This make take some time to teach and practice but it will completely be worth your time!

Yes No Questions Step One: Do You Want It? (Yes)

Show your child something you know he likes, such as bubbles or a favorite snack. Then, ask your child, "Do you want ____?" (Fill in the blank). If your child shows you that he wants it (by reaching for it or repeating the word), model "yes" for your child to imitate. You can do this by having him say the word yes or by nodding his head up and down. As your child gets better at this, try just nodding your head to remind him instead of saying the word "yes" for him to imitate each time.

Yes No Questions Step Two: Do You Want It? (No)

Start with the above activity. When your child is consistently answering yes, try offering something that you know she would answer "no" to. For example, if you're playing with bubbles and your child is consistently answering "yes", now switch it up and offer something uninteresting, like a small scrap of paper: "Do you want paper?" Model "no" just like as described above with yes. Say "No, no paper" and switch back to the one you know she likes: "Do you want bubbles?"

The next step: Once you've practiced helping her say "no", try to get her to answer without your help. If she still says "yes", say "yes, yes paper" and hand her the uninteresting object. She will probably be confused because that wasn't really what she wanted. When she discards it or hands it back to you, say "oh! No, no paper" and switch back to offering the preferred object.

Yes No Questions Step Three: Asking More Questions- Basic Wants and Needs

Before moving on to this step, make sure your child can answer "Do you want ____" with either yes or no depending on if she actually wants it (make sure she's not just saying yes to everything). Once your child can do that, try using other questions about her basic wants and needs. You can ask questions like "Can I have...", "Do you need help?", "Are you ready?", etc.

Yes No Questions Step Four: Is This a ____?

Once your child can answer yes no questions about his/her basic wants and needs, try asking questions about what things are called. For this activity, show your child an object or a picture and say "Is this a ____?" Use the correct name for the item sometimes and say the wrong word others. Help your child answer either "yes" or "no".

Follow these basic steps and your child will be answering yes no questions in no time!