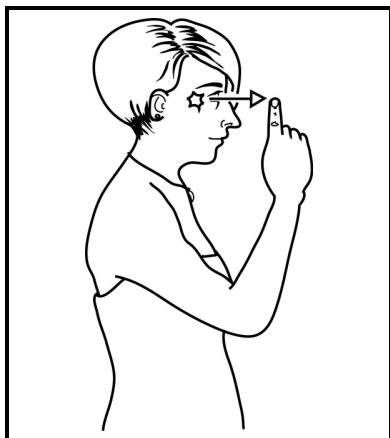




April: It's not just about talking

Signalong supports the National Year of Communication and is offering free sheets of signs each month, relevant to the monthly theme. It isn't easy to see and recognise what happens beneath the surface of children's communication. Being able to listen, pay attention, play and understand are the fundamental building blocks of communication. Adults play a crucial role in supporting these skills. If a child can't listen and understand, they'll struggle to talk.

LOOK



Working index (palm in, pointing up) moves from side of eye towards object.

Directional sign.

FACE



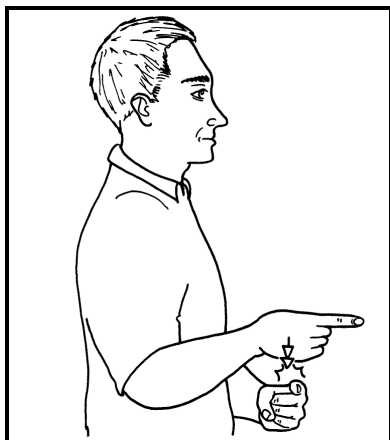
Working index hand (palm back, pointing up) touches forehead and moves down to touch chin.

LISTEN



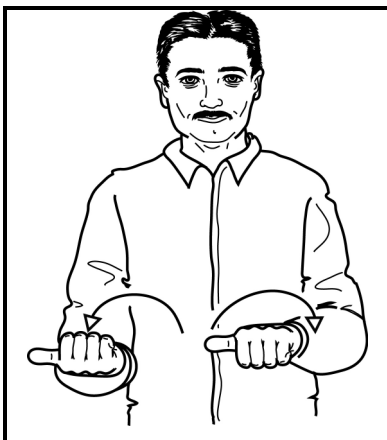
Working cupped hand (palm forward, pointing up) behind ear.

CHAT



Working hand with extended index (palm in, pointing forward) above supporting hand with extended index (palm back, pointing in); blade of working hand taps supporting hand twice.

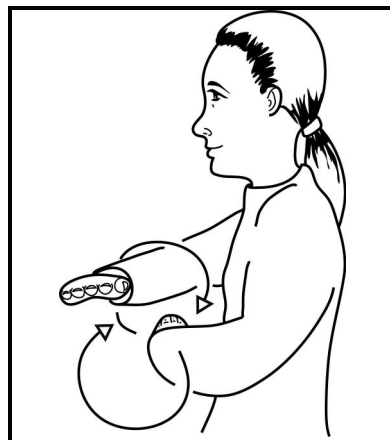
TAKE TURNS



Thumb hands (palms down, pointing forward) turn to palms up alternately.

Repeat as necessary in appropriate direction.

WAIT



Flat hands (palms down, pointing in) working hand above, make alternate slow backward circles.

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Communication skills for children and adults with
speech, language and communication needs

Signing resources / Visual communication resources / Training / Advice



BUILDING BLOCKS FOR COMMUNICATION

Communication is more than just words – it's building a relationship of mutual understanding. This can only take place if both partners are able to allow the other to express themselves, which means learning to take turns. Social play is an important element of this; adults also have a responsibility to listen and make an extra effort to understand children's attempts at communication and to give them time.

Signing can help by its active and stimulating nature, and for those whose first language is *not* sign language, having to remember the signs slows us down – giving more time for the communication process to be effective.

Signalong is made accessible by its approach to how the signs are formed, analysing them for handshape, orientation, placement and movement, supporting the descriptions with clear line drawings. This method enables parents and practitioners to produce accurate signs relevant to their situation, taken from the largest range in the UK of illustrated signs taken from British Sign Language.

The Signalong Group is a charity (no 1039788) which provides resources, training and free advice, and readily works with others in the field to promote communication skills for children and adults with speech, language and communication needs.

Hello, the 2011 national year of communication, is a campaign to increase understanding of how important it is for children and young people to develop good communication skills. In the 21st century, the ability to communicate - to say what you want to say and to understand what other people are saying - is fundamental. For more information about **Hello**, please go to www.hello.org.uk.

The campaign is being run by the Communication Trust, an umbrella charity which brings together voluntary sector organisations concerned with children's speech, language and communication needs. The purpose of the Trust is to raise awareness of the importance of speech, language and communication across the children's workforce and enable practitioners to access the best training and expertise to support all children's communication needs. Signalong has been part of the Communication Trust since 2007. For more information about the Trust, please go to www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk.