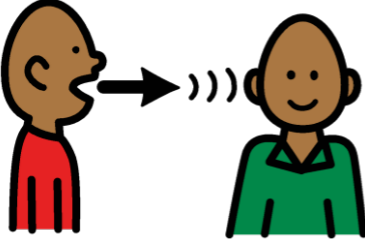
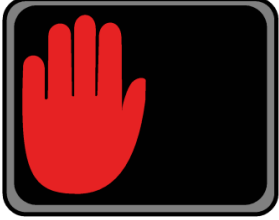
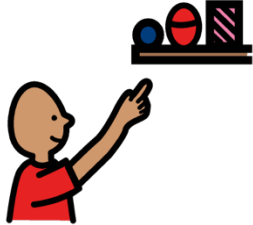
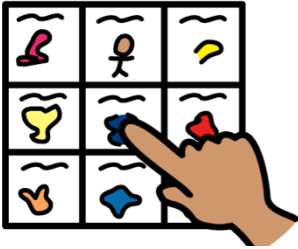



# A Family's Guide to Prompting

## What is a Prompt?

A prompt is any **additional** cue that is given to help someone respond correctly. Think back to a time when someone taught you a new skill. Did they point to something, demonstrate how to do it, give you verbal hints, or move your body to help you complete a step correctly? Then they gave you a prompt. Prompting is a part of **all** new learning!

## How to Prompt Your Child

Step	Example	
Give your child a <b><u>direction to follow</u></b> .	Say, "Go pick up your toys."	
<b><u>Wait</u></b> , and give your child an opportunity to respond independently.	Wait 5-10 seconds	
If the child responds correctly, provide <b><u>reinforcement</u></b> for a job well done.	Say, "Good job picking up your toys." and/or give access to a desired item.	
If the child responds incorrectly, or does not respond at all, repeat the directions and then immediately <b><u>provide a prompt</u></b> that will help them respond correctly. <b><u>Avoid saying "no"</u></b> . (Use the least intrusive prompt that will allow them to be successful. See the prompt hierarchy on page 2.)	Say, "Go pick up your toys." and point to the "clean up" symbol on their visual schedule.	
If the child responds correctly, provide reinforcement for a job well done. If the child responds incorrectly or does not respond, return to the step above and provide a <b><u>different prompt</u></b> .	Say, "Good job picking up your toys." and/or give access to a desired item.	

## What is Prompt Dependency and How Can We Avoid It?

Prompt dependency is when a child needs a prompt to complete a response **even though they have mastered the skill**. They wait for you to give them the prompt before they perform the skill.

Examples:

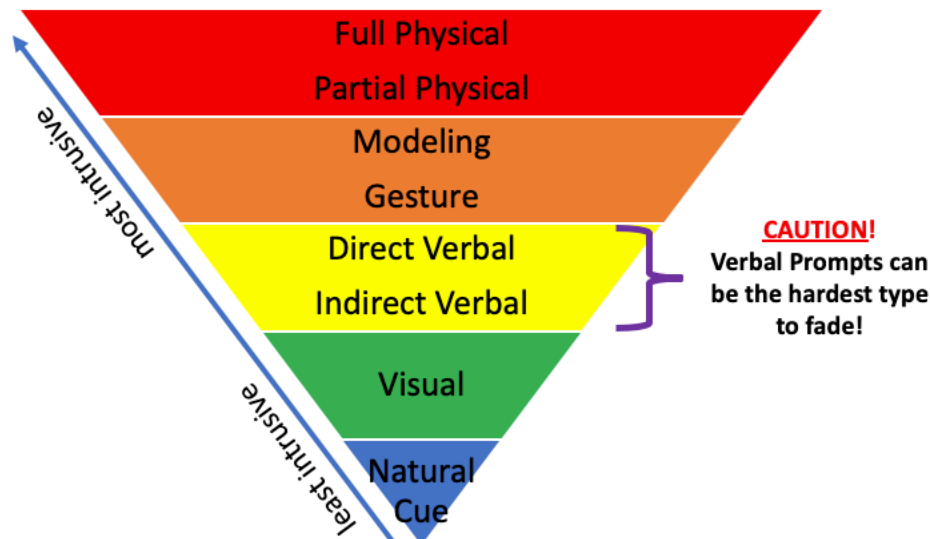
- Your child has demonstrated that they can put their coat on independently and they pick up their coat when it is time to leave, but they don't put it on until you say, "Put your coat on!"
- Your child has demonstrated that they can ask for a spoon and they look at their bowl of cereal and look at you, but they won't ask for a spoon until you say, "What do you need?"

Prompt dependency can be avoided by **fading, or removing, the prompt as soon as possible** when teaching a new skill. This is done by either changing the type of prompt to a less intrusive one or by changing the magnitude of the current prompt. If your child begins to make errors again, go back to the last prompt that resulted in success. Try to fade the prompt again, next time.

Directions Given	Decreasing Magnitude of Prompt	Changing Type of Prompt
"Go pick up your toys."	Physical Prompt: 1. guiding child all the way to a toy and helping them pick it up 2. guiding child part of the way to a toy 3. tapping shoulder to get them to start walking towards another toy	Follow a prompt hierarchy: 1. physical prompt 2. model how to do it 3. point to the toy on the ground

## Prompt Hierarchy

If a prompt is not successful in achieving the desired response from the child, then try a different prompt. Use the **least intrusive prompt as possible** that will allow the child to be successful. There is no concrete order to the hierarchy as some prompts are more successful for specific types of responses and each child is different. Generally, however, **physical prompts are the most intrusive** and **verbal prompts are the hardest to fade**.



**Prompt Fading = Building Independence**