THE NATIONAL CENTER ON Quality Teaching and Learning

EARLY HEAD START National Resource Center™

TIPS FOR TEACHERS ENGAGING CHILDREN IN CONVERSATIONS

Birth to Five

TIPS FOR ENGAGING **OLDER INFANTS AND TODDLERS** IN CONVERSATIONS

Conversations aren't just for older children. Very young children and adults can have conversations too! Adults can help when they watch for cues and respond to children's facial expressions, gestures, vocalizations, and words.

SET THE STAGE:

- Is the child is calm, comfortable, and ready to interact?
- Get down on the child's level.
- Draw the child's attention.

START THE CONVERSATION:

- Observe. What is the child is doing? What is he interested in?
- Match the tone of your voice, your facial expressions, and your mood to the child's.
- Make a comment about what the child is interested in or is doing.
- Pay attention and respond to his cues.
- Ask a question. Older infants and toddlers can respond with a vocalization, facial expression, gesture, or body movement!
- Pause and give the child enough time to respond.
- When the child babbles, gestures, or speaks one or two words to communicate a thought (telegraphic speech), expand on what you think he's saying.
- Follow the child's lead in communicating back and forth.
- Watch for cues that the child is done. Stop and take a break.

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For more information, contact us at: **NCQTL@UW.EDU** or **877-731-0764**

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