



## Prompting is...

---

... any help given to toddlers to assist them in learning and using a skill. A prompt is given just before or as the toddler tries to use a skill. Prompting allows a toddler to be successful. Prompting helps the toddler use the skill across many activities and routines. Prompts may be verbal, gestural, visual, physical, or a model. Least-to-most prompting is used to teach a single skill or a series of skills (called chained skills). It uses prompting levels (at least 3), starting with the least amount of help (independent level), and ending with the last level (the most amount of help) called the controlling prompt. Chained skills, which all have a physical part to them, are “chained” together in order to complete a more complex skill, such as washing hands, brushing teeth, or a play skill such as building train track. Graduated guidance is used to teach chained skills, typically using physical prompts. The prompt is changed for each step (i.e. hand-over-hand, at the wrist or elbow, lightly touching hand or arm) based on the toddler’s needs.

### EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE (EBP):

#### **Prompting**

This information guide was designed as a supplemental resource to help answer basic questions about this EBP and provide you tips for implementation.

For more information, visit:  
[www.asdtoddler.fpg.unc.edu](http://www.asdtoddler.fpg.unc.edu).

Updated 10/2014

## Why Use Prompting?

---

Young children with or at risk for ASD often have a hard time learning new skills by imitating. This may mean that the toddler has a hard time identifying and paying attention to important parts of a skill, activity or routine. Prompting is based on the idea of errorless learning or reducing the number of incorrect responses while learning a new skill.

## Where Can You Use Prompting?

---

Prompting can be used just about anywhere Prompting can be adapted for use in ongoing routines and activities in the home or in a community. *For example, prompting can be used to teach requesting foods or objects or to learn a play sequence or self-help routine.*

## Who Can Use Prompting?

---

Any parent, family member, childcare provider, early interventionist, or other team member can learn and effectively use prompting.

# Tips for Implementing Prompting

## Have you...?

- Selected and described the skill or steps you want your toddler to learn?
- Decided on the activity to teach the skill or routine in which to teach the steps?
- Identified how you will signal your toddler that it is time to use the skill or when to give the cue to start the steps?
- Identified the prompts or task direction and how or when to give them?
- Selected how long you will wait before you give a prompt or how you will gradually fade the prompt?
- Selected the reward to pair with the skill (praise, favorite toy, activity, food)?
- Identified the types of prompts to use (the least to the most)?
- Selected the reward (such as praise, favorite toy, or activity)?



Plan

## Did you...?

- Get your toddler's attention (give the signal) and give him/her the cue or task direction?
- Wait for the toddler to respond?  
Give a reward if their response was the correct skill?
- Interrupt an incorrect response and give the next level of prompt??
- Fade prompts as soon as possible?
- Keep track of how well your toddler is using the skill?



Implement

## Have you...?

It is important to keep track or write down how well the prompting is working by using a progress record or data sheet. This helps you know the progress your child is making in learning the skill. It also helps you make changes in how you are using prompting.

- What does your progress record tell you about how your child responds to each prompt given for each step?
- Does your child wait for your prompt before trying the skill?
- Does your child resist any of the prompts?
- Are there changes you want to make to improve your child learning the skill?



Monitor