

This week's skill:

Asking for Help

Asking for help can prevent frustration for adults and children. For a number of reasons children can find it difficult to ask for help when they need it. Quiet or shy children, or children with speech difficulties, need encouragement and opportunities to practice asking.

Some active children can't slow down enough to ask or to wait for the process of question and answer. Young children often assert 'I'll do it by myself', even when the task is too difficult. Often children need prompting to slow down, to ask and to wait for help. Some children have trouble putting their needs and wants into question form. Children need practice in asking teachers, parents and other children for help.

What your child learnt this week

In this week's session, your child learnt:

- to identify *situations* for which asking for help is necessary, such as tying laces, getting dressed and solving problems;
- the *words* to use when asking for help, for example 'Please help me with...', 'Could you help me...?', 'I'm having trouble with...';
- to look at the person he or she is asking and to use a clear voice;
- to wait if the person he or she has asked is busy.



Children need to ask for help:

- when they can't do something or think they can't do it, or when they've tried and are frustrated;
- when they are having a dispute with another child that they cannot resolve;
- when they feel angry or sad and these feelings do not go away.

These everyday situations occur and can be dealt with as they arise. It is important to assess carefully what your child needs and why, and then help him or her formulate the appropriate request or question.



Children need to learn how to ask for help in many day-to-day situations.

Supporting this skill at home

- As parents, discuss how you would like your child to ask for help – do you require ‘excuse me’ or ‘please’? Praise any effort in asking for help. At this stage, manners may not be as important as a child’s ability to ask for help and his or her confidence to do so.
- Be aware of how you ask questions. Model the skills of asking politely and respectfully.
- Praise children for trying on their own and for asking for help appropriately.
‘Jane, that was great the way you asked me for help to put your shoes on. Well done.’
- ‘Andrew, I’m glad you asked me to help you when you felt angry.’
- Prompt your child if he or she is having trouble formulating requests or waiting for help.
‘Jack, it looks like you’re having trouble with that. How could you ask for some help?’
‘Laura, you need to wait until mummy is finished on the phone before you ask me to help you with your shoes.’
- Recognise and praise children for waiting for help.
‘Thank you Danny for waiting while I put the baby in his cot.’



Children need to learn how to ask for help to learn new skills.