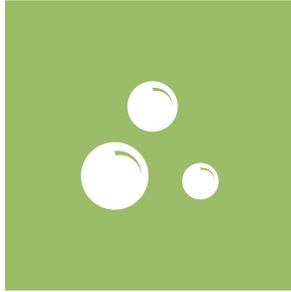




Comprehensive Therapy Center
Helping children walk, talk, learn and play



Therapeutic Play And Learn Groups

WATER

Speech-Language Supplement

By Erin Kinney-Fields, Speech-Language Pathologist

Balls, and activities with balls, can be great for language development! This week I have 2 different suggested activities and videos depending on your child's language skills and needs.

1. Ready, Set, Go Ball Game: for children building early language and communication skills.

- An important part of communication is being able to pay attention to the same thing (item, idea, etc.) as someone else -- sometimes called joint attention. It's hard to talk if you don't have something shared to talk about!
- An exciting item or activity can help to create a moment of shared enjoyment during which you can model language and support your child in using more words themselves (social communication).
- Verbal routines are a great way to build language skills as they provide simple, reliable, and repeatable phrases that children learning to communicate can use.

Balls are often a hit with the 5 and under crowd and the simple phrase "ready, set...go" can help with building skills of joint attention, social communication, and verbal routines.

- To play you will need a ball and an area to roll it back and forth.
- As you say, "ready, set..." you are looking to gain your child's attention. If they don't turn towards you, you may want to repeat it, touch their shoulder or hand, get louder, wave, or otherwise try to get their attention.
- Once you have their attention, complete the phrase with "go!" and roll the ball to them.
- Encourage them to roll it back to you.
- Repeat this several times as their interest allows. Some children will pick up on the routine quickly and begin using the phrase "ready, set, go" when it is their turn; others will need further modeling and encouragement.



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- Next, encourage sharing the verbal routine. Start with “ready, set...” and then pause for 3-5 seconds to see if they will fill in the word “go.” If they don’t, fill it in yourself and roll the ball to them! You can also point at them when you pause as another way to indicate that it is their turn to fill in the word. This exchange creates a simple structure where your child can show that they are ready for the ball, take part in a game, and learn to follow simple “conversational” rules like filling in pauses.
- Repeat as many times as they (and you) are willing! Be silly! Notice how a simple game and phrase builds vocabulary, phrases, shared attention, and enjoyment of shared time communicating!

2. Preposition Game: for children building language skills with longer phrases and sentences and understanding items in relation to each other.

Preschool-age children are often learning to describe where objects are. Prepositions of place are one way we can describe the location of objects. In this game, you can build social communication with turn-taking, expand vocabulary and grammar by adding prepositions they may not yet know to sentences and phrases, and have fun!

To play this game you will need:

- A ball (or 2)
- An item you can put something in (a cup or bowl work great), an item you can put something on (a book, a block, etc.), and other random items from around your house
- The printed out and cut up cat prepositions pictures below (or your own written/drawn version) and a container to put them in such as a hat, a shoe, or a bowl. You may want to review some of the prepositions first before the game starts or select only a few of them if you know some will be too hard for your child.
- Your imagination!

How to play:

- Pull one of the picture prepositions out of the container
- Place your ball in a way that “matches” the preposition you pulled out (if the cat in the picture is “in” the box, find a way to put your ball “in” one of your other items). Then describe where the ball is in a whole sentence -- “The ball is in the bowl.”
- Ask your child to check whether you did it correctly.
- Have them pull out a picture preposition and match it with placement of their ball. If they get it wrong, don’t get upset. Say something like, “oh, I would have done it like this!” and show them your version. Have them describe where the ball is. If they have lots of words, have



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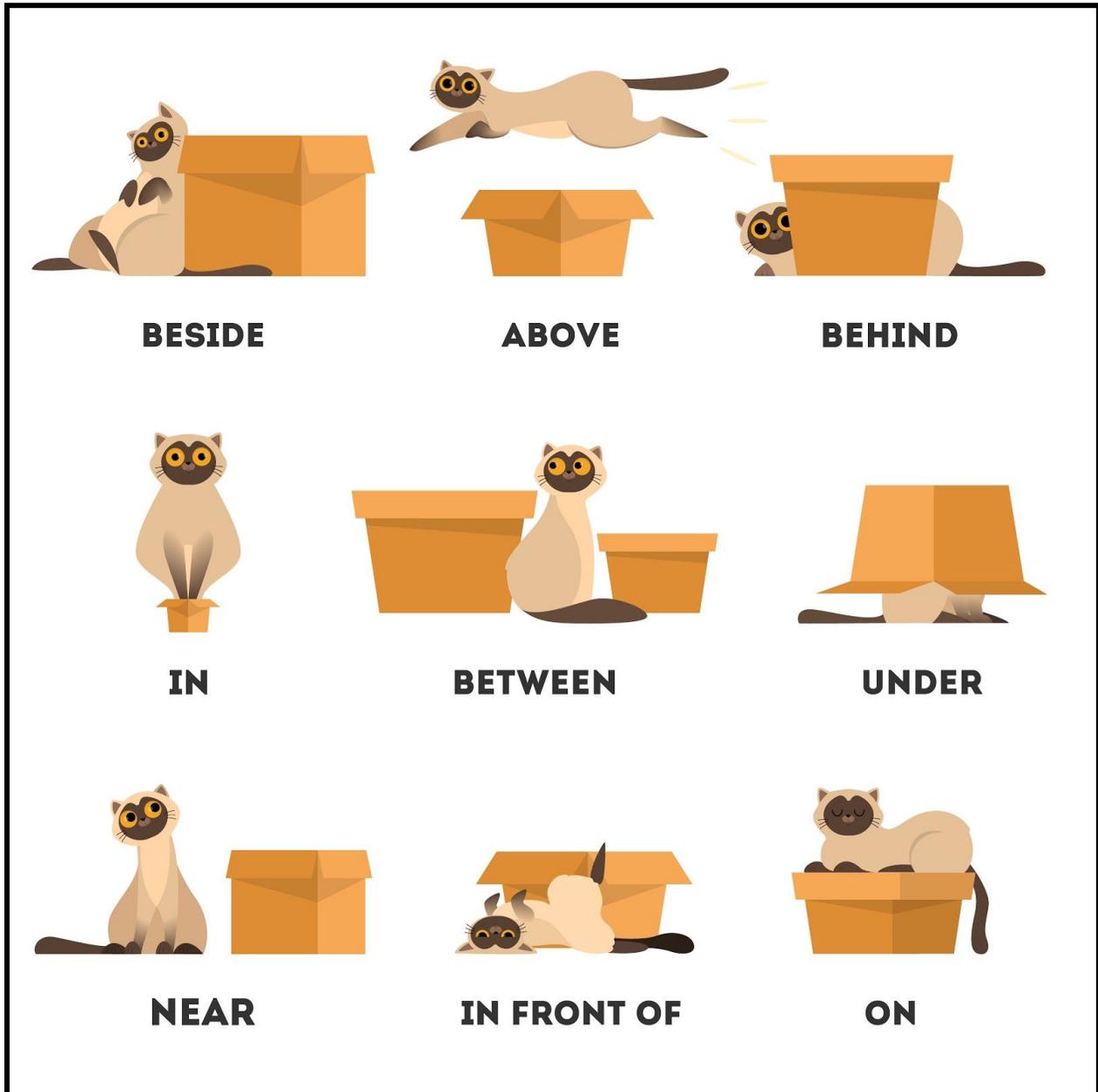


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them use a whole sentence like you do. If they have fewer words, have them answer your questions -- "where is the ball?" -- with a phrase -- "in the bowl."

- Sometimes when it's your turn, place your ball incorrectly. See if they can "catch" you.
- Be silly and have fun!



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