

# Impactful Interactions

## What are interactions?

Interactions are back and forth communication exchanges that help build relationships. Communication can be verbal (e.g., conversations, questions) or non-verbal (e.g., facial expressions, body language). Many interactions take place during the day, ranging from quick exchanges to longer, more intentional communications.



## Why are interactions important?

- Help children develop trust and emotional security
- Promote positive social-emotional behavior
- Extend vocabulary and communication skills
- Promote higher level thinking and reasoning



## Open-Ended Questions

When talking with children, asking questions is an important part of interactions. Open-ended questions should be asked over questions that can be answered with simple one-word answers. Open-ended questions usually start with “How,” “Why,” “Tell me about,” “What do you think,” or “I wonder.” These questions lead to deeper conversation and more meaningful interactions. Open-ended questions require children to think, so be patient and give the child plenty of time to answer.

## Tips for Meaningful Interactions

- Use a calm, pleasant voice
- Use positive, age-appropriate language
- Get on the child's eye level
- Be mindful of your facial expression and body language
- Seek out opportunities to have conversations with individual children
- Tune-in to what the child is doing
- Talk about the child's play without taking over
- Introduce new words and ideas
- Ask open-ended questions