

## How do I get started?

- Start simple. Choose one or two signs to start.
- Use gestures in daily routines (e.g., mealtime, changing diapers).
- Use signs that reflect your child's life and interests.
- **Don't stop talking. Always say the word with the gesture or sign.**
- Repeat, Repeat, Repeat!



## Where do I go for more information?

- **Websites**  
[www.mybabycantalk.com](http://www.mybabycantalk.com)  
[www.signwithme.com](http://www.signwithme.com)
- **Books**  
Baby Signs board book series:  
[My First Baby Signs](#), [Baby Signs for Bedtime](#), [Baby Signs for Mealtime](#), [Baby Signs for Animals](#) by Linda Acredolo & Susan Goodwyn  
[Sign, Sing and Play! Fun Signing Activities for You and Your Baby](#) by Monta Briant  
[Sign Language for Babies & Toddlers](#) by Christopher Brown, John Clements & Anne-Marie Sonneveld
- Call your local **Health Centre** to speak with a speech-language pathologist.



Interior Health

## *Listen To Me Talk* Gestures & Signs



**Speech & Language  
Development**

## What are gestures?

Gestures are natural movements that may help you and your child communicate. Some examples of gestures are:

- Waving (*Hello, Bye-Bye*)
- Arms up (*Pick me up?*)
- Kissing or blowing kisses (*I love you*)
- Pointing to a desired toy (*I want that*)

Sign language is a more formal use of gestures. Baby signs are gestures. They don't have to be based on formal sign language.



## Why use gestures?

- Children can often gesture before they can talk. Using gestures will not stop your child from talking.
- Signing teaches the power of language. It may be used as a stepping stone to talking.
- Signing may provide more insight into your child's thoughts and give him more opportunities to make choices.

Some examples of baby signs are:

Word	Action
Milk	Open and close one or both fists (Think of milking a cow)
Eat	Bring hand to mouth and tap lips (Think of bringing food to mouth)
Drink	Bring a C-shaped hand to mouth in a short arc (Think of bringing cup to mouth)
More	Bring all finger tips together from both hands

## When is a good time to start?

- Just as you talk to your baby from birth, you can also use gestures from birth to help her become a good communicator.
- Your baby may start to use simple meaningful gestures as early as 8 months.
- It's never too late to start. Even older children enjoy gesturing when they talk. We still use gestures as adults.

