Pack Contents:

Included you find will ideas to help you communicate with your child while you play popular games. Each card has vocabulary words that you might use to play the game displayed. Use the core board and supplemental fringe board to model language and allow your child to participate in the games.

Introduction:

Games are a perfect way to get everyone joining in and having fun. When we are playing games together, there is lots happening: interaction, engagement, turn taking, laughter, communication and yes, LEARNING!!

While we are playing games, we should model communication using our child's AAC system or core word vocabulary. In every game, there are chances to use AAC for more than just requesting ("I want…"). We can also model language for rejecting things, giving information, commenting and for social interaction. But what words can we model? Here are some starting points for using core vocabulary words in common games.

Wait! What is core vocabulary?

Simply put, core vocabulary words are the ones that we use the most to communicate throughout our day. These are words like: go, play, watch, stop, want, eat, look, see, do, more, I, you, a, to, and, with, is, but, what, where, etc.

Learning to use 100 core vocabulary words in a variety of ways and situations greatly improves a child's ability to functionally communicate. Social interactions and game play is a perfect way to generalize these skills in a fun way.

Specific words, called fringe vocabulary, are used much less often. Some are only spoken a few times in a day, month, year or even in a lifetime. These are words like: blue, dog, table, ottoman, window, geometry, photosynthesis, caterpillar. When was the last time you said, "pythagorean theorem"? Unless you are a mathematician or math teacher, probably not since high school or college. Fringe vocabulary lends itself to specificity of language, but is not required to convey meaning or understanding for day to day communication.

Here is a sample conversation:

Mary- "What do you want to do?"
Sam- "I want to play a game."
Mary- "What do you want to play?"
Sam, "That one." (pointing to the one he wants).
There is only one fringe vocabulary word used in the entire conversation **"game"**. So, 19/20 or 95% of the words used in this conversation between friends are core vocabulary words.

Generic Core Words for Game Play:

Requesting and Rejecting:

- want, want that, want more, I want ____
- can I play? can we play? play again
- help, need help, I need help
- not, not that, no more
- stop, stop now, stop that, stop this, stop there

Getting/Giving Information and Commenting:

- do, I do, I do it, you do it (instead of my turn/your turn)
- go, you go, I go (instead of my turn/your turn)
- what? what next? what that?
- like, like it, I like it, you like it, not like, don't like, I don't like
- look, look at that
- give, give to you, give to me
- play, play now, play this, I play

Social Interaction:

- good/bad
- who? who turn? who next?
- silly/ funny/ fun/ boring
- what like? what do you like to play?
- win/lose
- no cheat

Conclusion:

Because games are so fun and motivating, it can be the best time to <u>model</u> core words. Take the time to explore the fringe vocabulary board for those specific words you might need. In the long-term, this is how your minimally verbal child or AAC user will learn how to use their core words and find their fringe words for communication, long after the game has finished.

Remember:

- <u>Model, model, model</u>, and wait for communication.
- Communicate at your child's language level. We do not usually speak in complete sentences with family and friends. Keep your language simple.
- If you are not having fun, neither is your child. This is a time for you to enjoy one another as a family.