

Parent Strategy #6

1, 2, 3 (Does my child understand?)

Often families believe, in the beginning, that once their child gets a hearing aid or cochlear implant, they will magically begin to understand everything. We know this is not true. But it's easy to assume that a child understands what we are saying because their eyes help brains understand what we are doing. While understanding what we are doing does much to help children grow cognitively, unless they can demonstrate that they know what we say, language goals will not be reached.

There is a big difference between saying ``put on your coat` while handing a child their coat and saying to a child ``put on your coat` when the coat is nowhere in sight. When we hand a child their coat and they put it on, we only know that the child remembers that putting on your coat is what follows having it handed to you. When we say ``put on your coat` without any clues and the child heads for the coat hook, we know they understand the language.

The **1, 2, 3** strategy is designed to help you know when your child truly understands the language.

1 Say ``**get your shoes.**` (the shoes are in the room but you do not look at them, point to them or offer them)

Wait for your child to make a response. If they do nothing...

2 Say ``**Get your shoes.**` Then look at the shoes.

Wait for your child to make a response. If they do nothing...

3 Say ``**get your shoes.**` Then look and point to the shoes.

Help the child get their shoes and repeat over time until your child gets their shoes with you only using 1, with no looks or pointing.