**Developing a Trusting Relationship with the Child**

**What to Do**

* Always identify yourself when you interact with the child
* Choose a name sign or personal identifier and use it consistently to let the child know who you are
* Say “Hello” and “Good-bye” and expect the child to do the same
* Learn to have a conversation with a child in non-traditional ways
* Provide opportunities with a partner for turn-taking
* Expect, wait for, and acknowledge the child’s responses ([Actions Speak Louder than Words video](https://nationaldb.org/pages/show/mini-module-series-on-deaf-blindness) from minute 7:34-9:50)
* Identify the child’s likes and dislikes
* Allow the child to direct conversations about their topic (follow their agenda, not yours)
* Have frequent conversations with the child (may or may not use spoken language)
* Incorporate rhythm, music, fingerplays, and mime into daily routines and activities

**Things to Consider**

* Are you close enough so the child knows you are there?
* Is the child positioned in a manner that is both functional and comfortable?
* Are the cues you are using specific to and appropriate for the child?
* For a child who is nonverbal, have you explored using voice output devices?
* Does your pacing match that of the child?
* Are you engaging in an action the child likes rather than something you want the child to do?

<http://literacy.nationaldb.org/index.php/building-foundation/strategy-1/>