**TOUCH CUES**

* A touch cue is an intentional touch made directly on the body of your child.
* A touch cue is consistent. It is the same touch on the same part on the body.
* A touch cue helps your child understand and anticipate what is about to happen. It may reduce startle or inappropriate behaviors.
* A touch cue is used to communicate your intention and can be used for a variety of purposes such as requests, provide information, praise, greetings.
* Touch cues can support your child’s communication and participation in familiar routines.

***Examples***

* Touching one side of the child’s mouth means "Get ready to eat."
* Rubbing the child’s right shoulder means "I like that."
* Touching the back of the child’s hand means, "Here I am."
* Touching the child’s hair means "I am going to brush your hair."
* Tapping your child’s bottom means “I’m going to lift your hips and change your diaper”.
* Gently pulling up on the child’s upper arms means “Get ready to stand up.”
* Touching your child on the left elbow means “This is the way I say ‘HI,’ so you know who I am.”

**Where do I begin?**

* Choose your intention that you wish to communicate. Example: “I am going to pick you up.”
* Choose a place on your child’s body that is ok with him/her. Your child may have parts of his/her body that does not like to be touched.
* Touch cues should be easy for your child to know the difference between the touch cue and routine physical contact. See examples.
* Give your child the touch cue, then pause and wait for him/her to show you his/her readiness or anticipation of the next step in the routine.
* Each person should have a unique touch cue for greeting your child.
* Share the touch cues with those in your child’s world. Consider writing them down and posting them on the refrigerator.
* Since a touch cue may be used throughout the years with your child, make sure that a touch cue is selected that will be appropriate even as they grower to be middle and high school and adult.
* Have fun!

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