

Attention Deficit and Communication Skills

JoJo Tabares

Studies show that being an effective communicator is vital for our children's future. Effective communicators do better in school, have deeper relationships, have better marriages, are more successful, make more money, and are generally happier individuals than their less-articulate counterparts. However, much of the time ADD/ADHD children find it highly frustrating to communicate. They get agitated, leaving parents confused. These children's lack of focus makes it hard for them to tell us what is going on inside them. Very often, the more they try to tell us, the more frustrated they become. Concerned parents wildly guess, hoping to hit that needle in a haystack before little Johnny's emotional bomb explodes.

I remember when my son was very little and was just learning to speak. He would know the words, but at times he just couldn't use them. He would point and make a grunting sound instead. His mind was so overloaded with sensory input and his own thoughts jumbled all up like a whirlwind, that he simply could not verbalize his wants and needs. He would get so angry at us for not understanding what he was pointing to or why he was pointing to it. We would suggest words to him frantically praying that this concept was "it." If it took too long, he would get frustrated, and his emotions would just blow up. Many times he would hold his breath in sheer frustration while he stamped his feet and yelled. He was trying to tell us something important to him, and he just couldn't get it out.

When he was older, he was able to speak a little through his frustration as he tried to sort out all the things going through his mind. Unfortunately, it wouldn't come out the way he had intended, and we still didn't understand. The more words he used and the more time that went by, the more frustrated he would become. Whatever it was that was on his mind was important to him, but it had no outlet. He would use words or concepts incorrectly, not describe in enough detail what he meant, or jump from one topic to another without finishing one concept, making it difficult for us to follow his train of thought.

Once he was preschool-aged, we began working with him on his communication skills. Children with focus issues, not surprisingly, find it difficult to focus when their parents begin to correct their language. We found that using humor and hands-on activities that masked learning in a game was invaluable. Kids love games and the more he played, the more proficient a communicator he became. Christopher is now six years old and very articulate. He is much less frustrated over all. I noticed that he not only is more calm when he is trying to communicate something, but he is happier in general, because he is able to tell us and receive what he wants and needs!

Biographical Information

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JoJo Tabares holds a degree in speech communication, but it's her humorous approach to communication skills which has made her a highly sought-after Christian speaker and writer. Her articles appear on Crosswalk.com, [Dr. Laura.com](http://Dr.Laura.com), and in homeschool publications, such as Homeschool Enrichment Magazine and The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine, which also endorses her Say What You Mean curricula. JoJo is the owner of [Art of Eloquence.com](http://ArtofEloquence.com), the host of the weekly podcast, Grace Talk Soup, the creator of Foot in Mouth Man, and the host of the annual Say What You Mean Convention.com. For more information on JoJo or creative and fun communication curricula, visit www.ArtofEloquence.com.