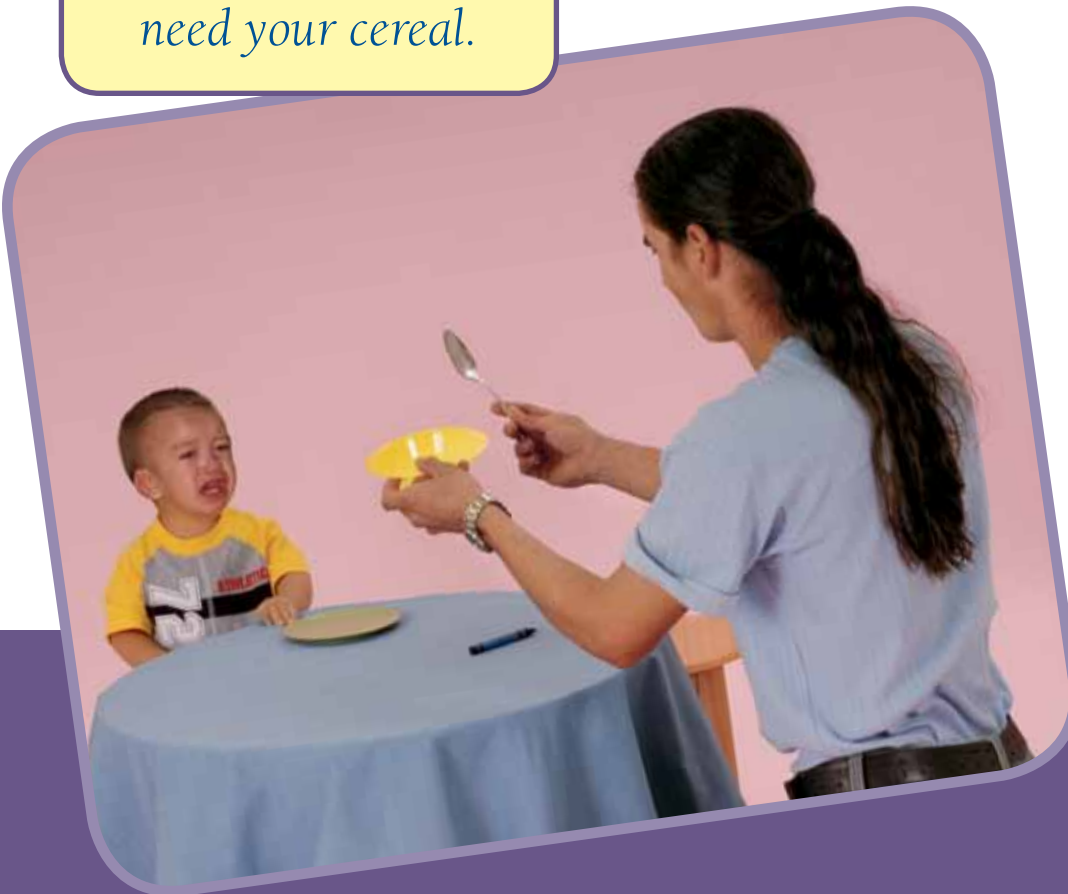


Expressing Needs

Talk to your child about what he needs.

Giving him words to express his needs gradually develops his ability to tell you what he needs and wants.

You're hungry. You need your cereal.





Why this is important

By giving your child the words to express his needs, you help him begin to understand that he needs certain things in certain situations. When you ask him about his needs, he has the opportunity to use gestures and simple words to express himself. The more words he can use to clearly express his needs, the more likely his needs will be met.

What you do

- Give your child words to describe his needs. Help your child talk about what he sees and experiences. Here are a few examples:

You need a spoon for your cereal. I'll get it for you.

You need a bath before bedtime. Can you find your rubber boat?

You need a warm coat to go out today. It's cold outside.

- Guess what his needs are by observing his gestures and body language. When he looks or points at an object, try to put his action into words to show him you are trying to understand. *Do you need the doll?* He will appreciate your effort to understand and help him.
- Notice when he begins to use simple words such as *cold* or *hungry* to let you know what he needs. Respond to him quickly to let him know you understand.

Ready to move on?

You can encourage your child to talk about his own needs by asking questions. *Do you have something to put your sand in? How can you reach that high shelf? Would you like me to hold you?*

Let's read together!

Big Dog & Little Dog
by Dav Pilkey