



# parents are Teachers too

Let Project ECHO guide  
you to help your child  
relate to others,  
know about the world  
and become independent.



# INTRODUCTION

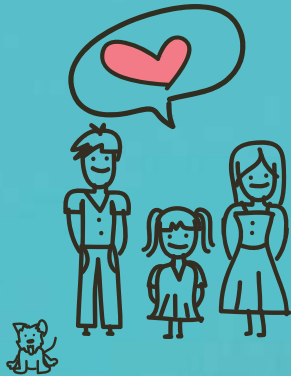
It may appear that teaching children is best left to schools, learning centres and hospitals. However, we must not forget that learning takes place at home too, through daily routines and activities.

As parents, you play an important role in teaching your children to:

- 1) Relate to others
- 2) Increase their understanding of the world
- 3) Foster independence

Mastering these aspects will help your children develop confidence in their daily routines. Your family will learn, grow and lead meaningful lives together.

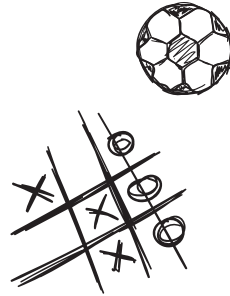
**Learning takes place anywhere!**



# PROJECT ECHO

Project Early Childhood Holistic Outcomes (ECHO) is pioneered by KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities and Lien Foundation, with the support of National University Hospital. The team developed a service framework designed for early childhood intervention service providers. Project ECHO developed an outcome measurement system to monitor functional child outcomes across a variety of typical daily routines and activities.

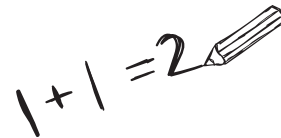
As part of Project ECHO, the team developed a parents' toolkit to encourage parental involvement. Parents can learn simple strategies to use with their children of varying developmental abilities. It facilitates a child's holistic development in social skills, learning and independence. For more information, visit [www.echoframework.sg](http://www.echoframework.sg).



## WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

Engage children using "WAH!"

Based on incidental teaching principles, parents can carry out these strategies during daily routines, with the help of the acronym "WAH!".





# what does "wAH!" stand for?

## W atch to connect

- Be fully present and attentive when you are with your child
- Observe what your child does or says
- Notice what interests or bores him or her

## A ct to expand on your child's actions

- Increase the range of your child's behaviour by:
  - Imitating what your child is doing
  - Commenting on what your child is doing
  - Asking questions
  - Showing other ways of doing the same activity
  - Trying different objects or materials to create new scenarios for your child to react to

In general, think about how to help your child:

- Relate better to others
- Learn something new or practice what he or she already knows
- Become more independent

## H igh five! (praise your child)

- Praise your child for his or her effort
- Comment positively about the result of your child's activity
- Help your child enjoy the reward of his or her actions (e.g., seeing his or her car roll down a ramp that he or she built)

Overall, the aim is to help your child feel more engaged (i.e., responsive) and willing to repeat the same activity in future.

"Some of the examples used in the next few pages may need to be changed to suit your child's current skills and level of development. Remember to use words and actions so that your child can understand you."





Using "WAH!" in everyday routines

## At the playground

Children learn best through play.  
Use the playground equipment creatively.  
Foster opportunities for your child to  
socialise with other children in a fun  
environment.



## At the tunnel

### watch

You see your child crawl into the tunnel.

### Act

Try pretending that you can't find your child and say:  
"Where are you? Where are you?"

### Hi-five!

"You are so brave! In the tunnel by yourself and not scared."

## At the slide

### watch

You see your child running to the slide.

### Act

Try saying:  
"Don't forget to check. Are there children at the bottom? Then you slide down."  
"Are you ready? Let's count! 3 - 2 - 1 - go!"  
"We let the little boy go first. Can you help him?"

### Hi-five!

"You were kind. You let your friend go first. I'm so proud of you!"



## At the see-saw

### watch

You see your child running towards the see-saw.

### Act

Try saying:  
"Do you want to sit here or there?"  
"Let's go... up, down, up, down!"  
"Try bouncing faster?"

### Hi-five!

"You got off the see-saw by yourself. I like that. Hi-five!"



## At the swing

### watch

You see your child trying to get on the swing.

### Act

Try saying:  
"Try and get on by yourself."  
"Show me how you hold on."  
"Look. Other children are waiting to play. Shall we let them play?"

### Hi-five!

"You went so high. You weren't afraid. You are so brave!"



Try this if it is easier:  
Pick up your child,  
swing him high and  
say "Weee!"





Using "WAH!" in everyday routines

## At the Foodcourt

Mealtime is a natural opportunity to teach your child social skills (e.g., queuing up, sharing food, etc.) and take big steps towards independence (e.g., self-feeding, letting you know what he or she wants to eat, etc.).



**watch** Observe which food stall catches your child's attention.

**Act** Try saying:  
"What would you like to eat?"  
"There are different noodles. Which do you want? White or yellow? Flat or round?"  
"How much do the noodles cost?"

**Hi-five!** "Thank you for helping to pay."





## watch

Observe how your child uses the cutlery.

## Act

Try saying:

"What do we use to eat our noodles?  
Fork, spoon or chopsticks?"

"Would you like some of my  
watermelon? You can use your  
hands or ...?"

"We have finished eating. Where  
should we return the tray?"

## Hi-five!

"You finished all your food.  
Mommy and Daddy didn't  
help you. Well done!"

Try this if it is easier:  
Give a thumbs up or  
smack your lips to  
indicate that the food  
tastes good.



**watch** Observe how your  
child is eating.

## Act

Try saying:

"Do you like the cauliflower or the carrot?"

"This orange juice tastes sweet. Want to try some?"

"Let's thank the auntie when she clears your plate."

**Hi-five!** "Wow, you finished the food all by yourself!"

Using "WAH!" in everyday routines

## In the Bathroom

Treat bathtime as playtime. Children learn most when they are having fun. Action songs are a good way to help your child learn about his or her body. Be prepared that your child is having so much fun that he or she does not want it to end. Be kind but firm. Counting down helps.



**watch** Observe and let your child remove his or her own clothes if possible.

**Act**

Try saying:

"The water heater is on. Tell me if the water is too hot or too cold."

"Here's some soap. You wash your armpit... your elbow... your knees..."

"Follow me. Splash, splash, splash!" (Splash the water about so that Rubber Ducky bobs about in the water.)

"Look! Bubbles! Let's burst them!"

**hi-five!** "You have so many ways of playing. We had so much fun!"

**watch** Observe what your child is able to do by himself or herself.

**Act** Try saying:  
"What goes on the toothbrush?"  
"Do you want to try squeezing the toothpaste?"  
Sing "This is the way we brush our teeth, brush our teeth..."

**Hi-five!** "Let me see your teeth. Very clean!"



Try this if it is easier:  
Show how hot the water is by exaggerating your facial expression while saying "Hot! Hot!" and fan your hands.





Using "WAH!" in everyday routines

## In the Bedroom

Bedtime is a time when your child feels relaxed and secure. It's a great time to bond and gently reinforce things you want him or her to remember. Allow your child to prepare the bed. Avoid taking phones and tablets into the bedroom.







**watch** Observe what your child likes to do at bedtime.

### Act

Try saying:

"Your pillow feels so soft."

"Put your head on the pillow."

"Hug your bolster."

"Is Teddy feeling sleepy?"

"Is Teddy cold? How can we keep Teddy warm?"

**Hi-five!** "I am glad to see you are ready to sleep. Goodnight!"

Try this if it is easier:  
Hum or sing a soothing song.



Using "WAH!" in everyday routines

## At the Bus Stop

Tap into your child's love for travel to teach numbers, independence and courtesy.



**watch** Observe whether your child wants to stand or sit while waiting for the bus.

**Act** Try saying:  
"Where is the bus coming from?"  
"Who do you think needs this seat more?  
That auntie? Why is that?"

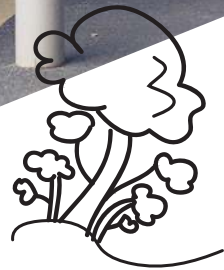
**Hi-five!** "So kind of you to give up your seat. Good job!"



**watch** You see that your child is looking at the bus stop.

**Act** Try saying:  
"What are those numbers?"  
"Which is our bus?"

**Hi-five!** "You have a good memory. You remember our bus number!"



**watch** Observe whether your child notices when the bus arrives.

**Act** Ask or say things like:  
"Let's queue up."  
"Hold my hand when you walk up the steps."  
"Tap your ezlink card here."  
"Where do you want to sit?"

**Hi-five!** "I liked how you walked up the steps carefully."





Using "WAH!" in everyday routines

## At the Supermarket

The supermarket is a fun place to learn about colours, size, weight, textures, and the origins of food. Do this only when you can spare the time. Don't rush and stress yourself and your child. When touching fresh produce, be prepared to buy the item as a courtesy to other shoppers.







**watch** You notice your child is trying to touch the oranges at the fruit section.

**Act** Try saying:  
"That's a big orange. Shall we smell it?"  
"Which one is round? The orange or the pear?"  
"Shall we buy one or three oranges?"

**Hi-five!** "Thank you for helping me put all 3 oranges into the plastic bag!"

**watch**  
Observe what catches your child's attention when queuing up.

**Act**  
Try saying:  
"I see you are looking at the little girl. Why is she crying?"  
"Wow, so many people. How many? Let's count."  
"Let's say hello to the cashier."

**Hi-five!**  
"Thank you for helping to hold the plastic bags. You're so strong!"

**watch**  
Ask your child to try and recall the brand of bread your family eats at home, and observe as he or she starts to search the shelves.

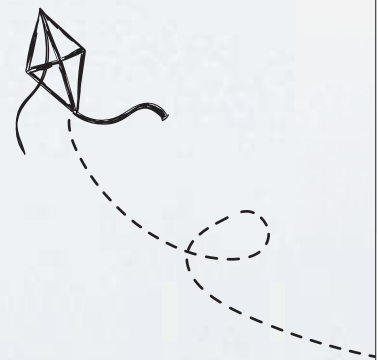
**Act** Try saying:  
"What colour are you looking for?"  
"Is this the one? Why not?"  
"Is that the one? Why did you choose that?"

**Hi-five!**  
"Well done! What do you want to eat the bread with?"



Try this if it is easier:  
Use a single word repeatedly such as "Look, look, look" while pointing.





## KK WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

[www.kkh.com.sg](http://www.kkh.com.sg)

KK Women's and Children's Hospital is Singapore's largest tertiary referral centre and a recognised leader in Obstetrics, Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Neonatology. Founded in 1858, the 830-bed academic medical institution leads in the patient-centric treatment of high risk conditions in women and children. More than 500 specialists adopt a multi-disciplinary and holistic approach to treatment, and harness compassion, medical innovations and technology to deliver the best medical care possible.



## THYE HUA KWAN MORAL CHARITIES

[www.thkmc.org.sg](http://www.thkmc.org.sg)

Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities is the social service charity arm of Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society. Since October 2011, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities was incorporated as a charity with Institutions of a Public Character (IPC) status to provide multiple social and welfare services to the community at large.

## LIEN FOUNDATION

[www.lienfoundation.org](http://www.lienfoundation.org)

The Lien Foundation is a Singapore philanthropic house noted for its model of radical philanthropy. It breaks new ground by investing in innovative solutions, convening strategic partnerships and catalysing action on social and environmental challenges. In the area of early childhood education, the Foundation aims to create a better playing field by strengthening capacity and opening up opportunities for disadvantaged preschoolers. The success of its community-based model of care where children with learning difficulties get to receive specialist help within mainstream preschools has inspired a scaled-up national version. The Foundation also set up *Kindle Garden*, Singapore's first inclusive preschool, in its push for inclusivity in education.



KK Women's and  
Children's Hospital  
SingHealth



太和观 THK



LIEN  
foundation