



## Early Childhood Education and Care Positive Language for Individual Plans

When working with children we use multiple forms of language in our daily practice. We use language with children to engage and support their needs. We also use language to identify many key elements in a child's learning journey, such as, their skill level, progress, strengths and areas requiring additional support. Not only do we communicate with the child but with everyone around them. Our choice of words can have a huge impact on the way a child is viewed, valued and supported.

Regardless of the child's communication method, the child must be involved in the process and their voice must be heard.

It is essential that we use supportive and strength based language in both verbal and written forms, to ensure the child is well respected at all times.

### Tips for Supportive Language

**Word:** Defiant

**Why not try:**

Shows resistance...  
e.g. to adult direction.

**Words:** Non-compliant

**Why not try:**

Requires support to engage in...

**Word:** Aggressive

**Why not try:**

He/her is expressing they're frustration.

**Words:** Does it on purpose

**Why not try:**

His/her needs are not being met.  
We need to understand the why  
and what we can do to support.

**Words:** Everyone is scared of  
him/her

**Why not try:**

We are working on building  
positive relationships and working  
out the why behind what he or she  
is trying to communicate.

**Words:** No one wants to play with  
him/her

**Why not try:**

We are building on his/her  
play skills.

**Word:** Destructive

**Why not try:**

Requires supports to regulate his/  
her needs.

**Words:** Does not respond

**Why not try:**

We are building on his/her  
receptive communication skills.

**Words are powerful.  
Let's make sure we always use strength based language!**

Using supportive language in both written and verbal forms, aligns with the National Quality Standards Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice and Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children, and supports all five learning outcomes within the Early Years Learning Framework.