

Imitation



Imitations are the building blocks of learning. Here at Holly Ridge Center, imitation is embedded in everything we do. If you look around, you will see it's everywhere. From the moment we are born, we learn through our senses, sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste, and proprioception, and kinesthetic.

- Through using sight, little ones watch their surroundings and learn, and they will copy what others do.
- Through using their hearing, they listen and learn to imitate what they hear.
- Through using their body, they learn to imitate actions little and big.

Imitation is a developmental milestone used in learning throughout the lifespan, and it can be taught. Ways to encourage imitations is to imitate your child and have fun. Having fun and laughing is the first requirement!



Make a game and imitate their actions; this can be fun and silly. You can expand imitations to setting the stage by thinking about actions, sounds, words, or body language they love and laugh too. This interaction could be simple: making a silly face they love or tapping a yoga ball stored in the corner or making a sound that makes them belly laugh. Create moments like after bath time to make silly faces and make faces you have seen them make as those goes on for a few back-and-forth turn-taking, add in that silly face you know makes them laugh and see if they can make it and pause, giving them a chance to copy the facial expression. Give lots of tickles or laughs when they do.

If they do not imitate the action, go back to what you know they can do and have fun. You can encourage banging on the pots and pans in the kitchen or coloring with crayons making circles, dots, and lines; it can be done with silly sounds, like animal sounds. You can encourage at diaper changing time or with gross motor movements when you are outside, hopping, stomping like a dinosaur, and roaring in the grass or dancing to music and freezing. Make it your own, and remember, if you and your family are having fun, you are doing imitation precisely what you need to do to build imitation. We all learn best when we are having fun.

