



with [janeenherskovitz](#)

8 Tips for Presuming Competence

1. Your child's outsides probably don't match their insides. How someone walks, looks or talks does not tell you how they think and feel.
2. Support the child's communication style and use where they are to build upon greater skills.
3. Eye contact, or even facial proximity is not necessarily an indication of how well they are listening.
4. Speak as if your child understands you at the appropriate age level. Don't use "baby talk" when speaking to your child.
5. Never speak about your child in front of them, as if they are not present.
6. Get your child's permission before sharing information & include them as much as possible in the conversation, even if they cannot respond verbally.
7. Look for evidence of understanding and become familiar with your child's indication of understanding.
8. Always allow your child to "speak" for themselves, and do not speak for them unless the listener needs clarification and you have the child's permission to do so.