

## **TRANSCRIPT: Makaton**

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**Debbie:** Makaton is made up of symbols and signs, which are always accompanied by speech. Makaton provides an extra, added part of communication. It's visual. Once you have said the words you want to say, they're gone, whereas a symbol is there as a physical thing, and the same with the sign.

**Hazel:** Makaton is a vital method of communication because some of our children have difficulty making themselves understood by verbal communication and Makaton just makes everything that much more accessible for them.

Social interaction is the major thing and Makaton is just fantastic for that.

Our children have got lots of good ideas and answers that they want to communicate and we are here to help them be as independent in their communication as possible.

Even the most basic Makaton signers will get a tremendous amount of fun and satisfaction out of being able to make themselves understood to somebody else. If they haven't got the verbal abilities to be able to do that, then Makaton means they can get their feeling and their desires and their needs across.

Certainly for their receptive language, when they're trying to understand the teacher, if the teacher can accompany her speech with Makaton signing it will greatly aid their understanding of what she's actually trying to teach them.

We feel that there should be no limitations on what our children can do and achieve and we want them to feel that they are active participants in everything, and Makaton helps towards that. For example, we don't want any child to feel excluded from that wonderful experience of singing so, for example, in our assemblies we always sign and sing all our songs so that all our signers can take part whatever their level of verbal communication, which is lovely to see.