



## Treatment Pathway

Four critical steps to thinking socially...

- 1) **Attention**
- 2) **Interpretation**
- 3) **Problem Solving**
- 4) **Response**

Let's use an example. Let's pretend you are attempting to teach your child to say/sign "open".

There is a closed box of cars in front of your child.

- 1) Attention: You and your child are sitting in front of the closed box. He is interested in the box of cars.
- 2) Interpretation: Your child looks at the box of cars and realizes the box is closed and he wants the cars that are inside.
- 3) Problem Solving: He is shaking the box. He is attempting to open the box. He uses all his might to open the box but without any success. He finally realizes he has a problem and he needs to find a solution. So, he looks up at you OR uses your hand to "open" the box"
- 4) Response: This is the final step. Until your child goes through the steps of joint attention, interpretation and problem solving, then you can prompt your child "open?" Or "help open?" "open box?" (physical and/or verbal prompting will fade out as your child progresses). If your child already verbalizes WAIT. Wait until he initiates an appropriate word.

Your child must go through these steps in this exact order. Imagine in this same scenario, you and your child are sitting in front of the box of cars. He is attending to the box of cars and you immediately prompt him, "say open." What steps did your child miss out? Does he know why he needs to sign/verbalize? If you skip *interpretation* and *problem solving* he/she will not necessarily know why he needs to say "open." He may become prompt dependent on someone telling him exactly what to say.

As a therapist, I tend to stay away from using phrases such as, "say I want xxxx" or "say xxx" to prompt a child. By telling him "say xxx" it gives your child the answer on a silver platter. We want your child to problem solve and come up with how to respond verbally and/or verbally to the social situation independently.