

Oliver's Language

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I recorded these new words of Oliver's at Long Lake:

Peek-boo

Rain

Oh really (not really two words, but an imitation of Katie)

Hat

Rae Rae

B (for Brian)

(We called Rachel from the lake immediately, and Oliver repeated "Rae Rae" and "B" for her on the phone. Rae giggled with delight.)

Pépère

Boom (when he falls)

Hi (one of his earlier words)

Bye (one of his earlier words)

Ow

Dest (for yes)

Baby

Rock

Oliver has been blowing kisses for a long time. He's very dramatic about it, with a big gesture and big noise. He has a HUGE smile when he does it, as if he knows you'll be delighted by it.

As far as Oliver's sign language, he hasn't added any new signs, but I forgot to mention before that he signs "Help." This is still a big one. He can't put two vocal words together, but he often puts two signs together, especially "Please" and "Help." We spent a week with Oliver at Long Lake and I noticed Please and Help were his favorites. He'd sign "Please help" for something he could easily do by himself, like turning a crank or pressing a button on a toy. I think he was really expressing that he wanted a playmate.

He'll say "UH-oh" ten or more times in order to get you to fix something. He pushed down two lawn chairs at the cottage and tried this on Katie. She wouldn't give in, and left the chairs lying there. Oliver also loved to throw toys off the balcony. "UH-oh" would follow, repeated by "UH-oh," again and again. Oliver learned that thrown toys lie.

We were wondering if Oliver would lose his private language (Oliverish) when he started using more words. That hasn't happened. I copied down some of his words during about a half-hour of his babbling at the cottage. Turns out he has favorite words. Some of these favorites are consistently accompanied by a pointing finger. He clearly knows what these words mean.

Oliverish:

Weed-oh-wanna
Eye-noh-wanna
My-nah-moe
By-dah-boe
Dah-boh-don

Now imagine him chattering away for an hour or so, nonstop, as he goes about his work. You get full paragraphs. It sounds like bad Indian dialect in an old cowboy movie:

Bib-boh-say-doh-wah-doh-wanna
Ah-BAH-dah (This is the phrase that goes with pointing.)
Ah-dah-wah-dah
Doh-ray-doh-ray
Dee-doh-dee-doh-dee-doh (This is sung.)
Bib-boh-bib-boh
Rah-tah-bah-tah-doh-day-dah
Bite-dah
Ow-bah-dah
Did-doh-wanna
Wih-doh-maya

My friend Sandy Blum is a speech therapist and she told me that from birth on, sounds have meanings for babies. She said we should pay attention for repetitions of sounds in order to figure out what the baby means.

I have no idea what Oliver means with his Oliverish language, but it sure is fun and funny to listen to. I think he talks more than Anna OR Charlie, my two very talky kids.

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