Attention and Listening

Activities to help

Worcestershire Speech and Language
Early Years' Service

	Looking Encourage your child to look at you when you are talking to them, this will help them to use the non-verbal information you are providing, such as facial expression and gesture. This will let you know that they are listening to you. **Try this:** Copy cats - carry out an action for your child to copy, do they notice when you change your action or do they need you to remind them to keep looking? Singing "heads, shoulders, knees and toes" would be a good way of doing this.
	Listening: Children need to hear/focus on and think about all the words in order to understand what you have said. **Try this:** "*Ready, steady…go*" - use a ball or a toy car and make sure they wait for you to say "go" before you roll it. Model the activity first and then give your child a turn at waiting until they hear you say "go". Make it harder by pausing for longer before you say "go" *A Listening walk,* go for a walk and draw their attention to all of the sounds you can hear.
	Taking turns: Being able to take turns is an important skill for taking part in a conversation. **Try this:** Build a tower of bricks together, or complete a puzzle, encourage them to take it in turns to add the next brick or puzzle piece, saying "Molly's turn/ Billy's turn/mummy's turn" Increase the number of people in the activity so your child has to wait longer for their turn.
	Keeping your child engaged: Helping your child to continue an activity with you will develop their attention skills. **Try this:** Use a "feely bag" filled with toys and everyday objects. Encourage them to take an object out, then play with it and share it (avoid asking questions, make comments instead) for a few minutes, before finding the next thing. Singing action songs and rhymes is a great way of getting their attention.

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