

Attention and listening activities in the home

The following activities are designed to increase your child's ability to look, wait, take turns, listen and concentrate.

Waiting/anticipating

'Ready Steady Go!' games are any activities where your child has to wait until you say 'go!'

- Play 'peek-a-boo'
- Make a ramp by leaning a piece of card against a piece of furniture. Your child waits for 'ready, steady, go!' to let a car go down the ramp.
- Blow bubbles and get your child to wait for 'go!'
- Play musical bumps
- 'Jack – in – the – box' Crouch down on the floor with your child and both jump up when you clap your hands or bang the drum.
- Other toys you can use are pop up toys, marble runs, running races, musical instruments - any toys that are exciting and your child will be motivated to anticipate.



Doing things together

- Draw your child's attention to sounds in the environment when you are out and about - cars/busses/diggers/tractors, police cars/fire engines, birds, music, phones ringing, announcements etc.
- Sing Songs and do the actions:
Wheels on the bus
Incey wincey Spider
Heads, shoulders, knees & toes.
- Try leaving out a word from a song the child knows well.
Can they fill in the gap?
- Sing songs or put songs on the radio and beat the rhythm at the same time with your hands or an instrument.
- 'Copy me' – do an action for your child to copy.
- Reading is a good shared activity-build it into a bedtime routine.
- Bath time is a time when there are a limited number of toys and fewer distractions. Spend time together pouring, splashing and dropping things in etc.



Taking Turns

Use the words '**My** turn' and '**Your** turn' and prompt him to wait. Also see 'turn taking- Early Language advice sheet.'

- Build a tower, taking turns to add the bricks.
- Take turns putting in pieces of a puzzle or putting a piece on 'Mr Potato Head' etc.
- Take turns rolling a ball or car between you on the floor.
- Post things into a posting box taking turns.
- Fill a bucket with sand one spade full at a time in turns
- Kick a ball between you or at a goal taking turns.
- Set up skittles and take turns and knocking them down.
- Whatever you are doing with your child, you can take turns- stirring dinner etc.



Listening Games

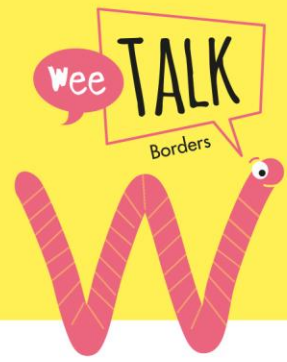
- Hide a toy that makes a noise around the house somewhere e.g. under a cushion, behind a curtain. Can you listen and find it?
- Play 'copy claps' where you clap a rhythm and your child copies it.
- Put some toys on a table and pretend they are in a shop and give them a short list of 'things to buy'.
- Lotto game - choose a picture and describe it, to see if your child can listen and tell you if he has the picture.
- Link an action sound to a sound e.g. a drum means jump, a shaker means sit down, a clap means sleep. Can you listen to the sounds and do the right thing?
- 'Listening for sound' - games - Play an instrument or bang an object/rustle some paper etc. Behind a screen and get your child to copy it when you move the screen.
- Play Simon Says



Looking

- Encourage your child to look at you before you say 'Go', in Ready Steady Go games. Praise him/her for doing 'good looking.'
- Get down to your child's eye level and look at them before pointing to something, giving an instruction, asking a question etc. Remind them to look at you as well before you speak.





Speech & language
therapy

When to play

- Find a time when you and your child are not too tired and try to get rid of other distractions e.g. turn the television off.
- Make your voice as **exciting** as you can, the more excited you are about playing the more exciting the game will seem.
- Brother, sisters and cousins can join in as long as they take their turn properly and understand that they are joining in with **your child's** game. It may be very distracting so try this once and see if it works. If it doesn't, don't include other children again.
- Make it **fun** and stop playing while it is still fun. This way your child will want to play again tomorrow.



For more information on the Speech and Language Therapy Service (including how to request support from us) please see: <http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/slt>

Check out our Wee Talk Borders Facebook page or you can call us on 01896 826710