

# Helping your child to listen and concentrate

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## Activities linked to this

Activities to help listening and attention.

- Ready, steady, go-encouraging a longer wait for the 'go' signal.
- Bubbles - pause before you blow the bubbles to develop your child's attention.
- Find the object.
- Rolling balls to each other – sit or stand face to face rolling the ball back and forth.
- Coming to get you game pausing before you begin the chase.
- Find the sound - hide a noise toy somewhere and listen to where it might be. Try and find the sound.
- Listening when out and about e.g. for buses, sirens, planes, animals.
- Songs and rhymes.

## Why is it important?

Children will develop their attention and listening skills over time. The more aware they become of the world and their surroundings the more skillful they become at paying attention and listening.

## What does the research say?

These are the typical steps in the development of attention and listening skills.

- Up to 1 year - Children are very distractible and find it difficult to listen to what the adult says.
- Up to 2 years - Children can focus on one activity that they choose. Your child may not tune into the spoken language because they are concentrating on their activity.
- Up to 3 years – Your child will be beginning to people more consistently. They have to stop what they are doing so that they can listen to you.

Up to 4 years – Your child is beginning to look and listen more easily between you and what they are doing.

- 5 years onwards – Your child can listen to what you are saying and continue to play at the same time.
- Children will develop their skills at different times.

## Tips for you

- Keep spoken language simple when a child is in the early stages
- Give the child lots of time to look at you or what they are doing
- Try and reduce other distractions that might be going on e.g. turn off the TV and tidy away toys that are not being used
- Show your child what to do
- Use their name before you speak – this helps them to 'tune in'
- Try to be face to face and at their level
- Praise 'good waiting', 'good looking' and 'good listening'

