

HANDY TIPS FOR ATTENTION AND LISTENING IN THE EARLY YEARS

The skills of attention and listening are crucial to communication. Children with attention and listening difficulties may struggle to follow instructions.

'Cueing' can be very helpful:

- ◆ Say their name.
- ◆ Touch their arm to focus them in.
- ◆ Make sure you have eye contact with the child before giving an instruction.
- ◆ Gently guide the child to look at you if necessary.



Developing attention and listening

- ◆ Everyday activities, like getting dressed, feeding or nappy changing are great for getting a child to look at you.
- ◆ Use lots of different sounds to interest a child (e.g. singing, noisy books, toys).
- ◆ Point out sounds in your environment (e.g. phone ringing, birds singing, cars).
- ◆ Use pictures and objects (e.g. pictures in books, puppets acting out stories).
- ◆ Use gestures, facial expressions and make your voice interesting.
- ◆ Sing nursery rhymes (those with actions like 'incy-wincy-spider' are especially good). Play games like 'pat-a-cake' and 'peek-a-boo'.
- ◆ Play games your child really enjoys.
- ◆ Look at pictures in books together and describe what is there. This is just as good as actually reading the story. 'Lift-the-flap' books can help to encourage concentration.