

A guide about

attention and listening in children

Why is it important?

- For developing language.
- For learning.
- For joining in.
- For taking turns.

Remember:

- to praise your child
- to encourage them to look at you
- to check they are listening before you speak
- to show them how to look and listen
- to be patient
- to use natural gestures alongside talking
- it takes time to learn attention and listening skills.

How you can help

- Choose a favourite game or exciting activity, for example, bubbles, balloons, wind-up toys, action songs or rhymes, water play.
- To start with, play the game for a short time.
- Use the same words and visual cues (such as, gestures/signs/picture symbols) to introduce, continue and finish the activity.
- Encourage your child to participate by waiting at specific times during the activity for them to join in.
- Each day make the time spent playing together a little bit longer by extending the activity for one more turn.

Remember:

- to turn off the TV
- to try and find a space to play one to one with your child
- to make sure there are no other distractions in the room put other toys away and give your other children an activity to do in another room
- to focus on their success, however small.

What to do next

Choose some more games and:

- play each game for a longer time, adding in extra turns
- now try playing two short games
- build up the amount of time each game is played
- invite one other person to join your games.

Encourage your child to help with everyday activities like:

- sorting the washing
- putting away the shopping.



Remember:

- the aim is to increase the time, the range of activities and the number of people who join in
- to try to do a little every day
- to make it part of your daily routine
- to try to keep it fun.

Contact us

Please contact the Children's Therapies Department if you have any queries or concerns regarding the information in this leaflet.

Visit: www.kentcht.nhs.uk/thepod

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Do you have feedback about our health services?

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Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
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