



Joint attention

Some ideas of engaging activities for developing joint attention.



People games:

- Require the involvement of at least two people in order to be fun (for example, 'Peekaboo' or 'tag'). People Games make playing with a parent easier for, and they're a great way to have fun together and to help your child learn to communicate. Some examples of people games are '**peekaboo**', '**tickles**' or **swinging in a swing**.

Bubbles:

- Start by showing your child the bubble pot to see if they are interested in playing with them. If they show interest name it in an enticing voice "bubbles". They may respond to you non-verbally by looking or reaching or verbally by making a sound or saying the word.
- Blow some bubbles, wait to see how your child reacts. If he is motivated, he may move towards you to indicate he wants "more". Use the word "more" and blow more bubbles.
- After blowing the bubbles start popping them and saying "pop" and then wait for them to copy you. To give them more time to process the language you could catch one bubble on the wand and then as they pop the bubble model the word "pop". Once you have modelled "pop" several times, hold the bubble on the wand just out of their reach and wait to see if they will pop the bubble.
- When all the bubbles are popped, wait and give the child the opportunity to seek repetition.

Wind-up toys:

- Start the activity by showing the child the toy to see if they are interested in playing with it. If they show interest name what the object e.g. "rabbit".
- Wind the toy up saying "wind" as you do so, let the child watch and enjoy the toy. When it stops wait to see what your child does next. They might move away or if motivated may pass it to you to repeat, so you can say "more" or "again".



Spinners:

- Start the activity by showing the child the spinner to see if they are interested in playing with it. If they show interest say the name "spinner".
- Wind the spinner a little and say "wind", wait to see if they give any indication you need to wind "more". If no signal is given continue to wind the spinner.
- Once the spinner is ready to go then pause again to encourage the child to signal to you to push the button. They may signal this by smiling, squealing with excitement, looking, a gesture, a sound or a word.
- Once the spinner has finished, wait and give the child the opportunity to request it again. They may do this by looking at the object, handing it to you, putting your hand on the object or by making a sound or gesture for "more". If they use general vocabulary such as "more", then provide them with specific vocabulary to try to copy (i.e. "more spinner").

Shape sorter:

- Start the activity by showing the child the shape sorter to see if the child is interested in playing with it. If they show interest say the name of the item "shape sorter".
- Hold one of the shapes and wait (before handing it to the child) to encourage the child to reach for the shape, as they do you can label the shape or colour. If they don't indicate they want it you may need to demonstrate what to do "goes in". Then repeat the process offering another shape.
- Allow the child to put the shape into the shape sorter and model vocabulary such as "in" or "down". Then repeat the step above.
- Once all the shapes are in the shape sorter celebrate the achievement "all in/ all gone". The child may wish to repeat the game and may tip the pieces out to repeat the game again.

Car ramp:

- Start the activity by showing the child the car ramp to see if the child is interested in playing with it. If they show interest say the name of the item (i.e. "cars" or "car ramp").
- Hold one of the cars and wait to see if the child reaches to take it, as they do you can name it "car", before handing it to the child. If they don't reach for the car, you can put the car on the ramp and try "ready, steady, go!" to demonstrate how it works.
- Offer the child another car and repeat steps above. Use language to comment on how the car is moving "down/ fast/ stop".

Think about the toys/ games and activities your child is drawn to and enjoy and consider how you can be involved in a fun and engaging way. Activities need to be of interest to your child.

