

Top Tips

Early Engaging play at home

Early Engaging play is based around the principle of developing social awareness and anticipatory skills through shared attention and developing the to and fro of an interaction. Early engaging play supports and compliments Intensive Interaction.

Initially children may focus solely on the resources you are using, over time work towards developing your child's social recognition and then towards them making a request for the activity to be repeated. This request could be through a look, gesture or vocalisation.

Begin by...

- Showing your child the activity and repeat a number of times. Make the activity fun, be dynamic!
- Use very limited language, using only key words e.g. "bubbles" "pop"
- Begin to build in brief pauses to develop anticipation of the activity being repeated and to encourage a social connection e.g. glance, gesture or action.

...extend

- Bring the resource up to your face to support your child's awareness of you within the activity.
- You can start to introduce the language around anticipation such as "Ready, Steady...go" "1,2,3...go" etc. Try to avoid using exactly the same language for all activities all of the time.

...extend

- Begin to add a prolonged pause before repeating the activity, working towards the child indicating more precisely that they would like the activity to be repeated.
- At this stage the child is becoming more aware of the presence of the adult within the activity and their attention is no longer solely on the resource.
- Within the activity joint attention, shared focus and shared pleasure become increasingly apparent.
- A request may be; a look to you rather than the pot of bubbles, a stamp of the foot, a nudge of a leg or a vocalisation. Some children may begin to say "Go" however ensure that this is directed towards you rather than 'into the air'.

Activities with resources –

Bubbles, Balloons (blow and release).

Click Clack track (look for the car to be passed to them/to be released at the top of the track)

Throwing a ball/bean bag up high.

Bouncing/rolling/patting a body ball

Hand/foot massage, using soft/firm resources as appropriate to the child's sensory preferences (sensory balls, loofahs, brushes, feathers, koosh balls, ribbons etc.)

If your child enjoys activities such as jigsaws, you could place the pieces into a tin/bag. Shake them to make the interaction fun and to draw their interest, offer the 'bag' for your child to take one. Repeat the activity, working towards the steps above.

At bathtime pour water from a height and repeat a number of times. Begin to leave pauses after you raise the container and before you pour.

"Ready, Steady....SPLASH" games, waiting for a 'look' before you begin splashing.

Activities without resources –

Action rhymes whilst the child is laying on the floor and using arms/legs to create actions e.g. the Wheels on the bus, wind a bobbin up, roly poly, Round a garden etc.

Hand/foot/body massage

Chase/crawl and tickle games

