

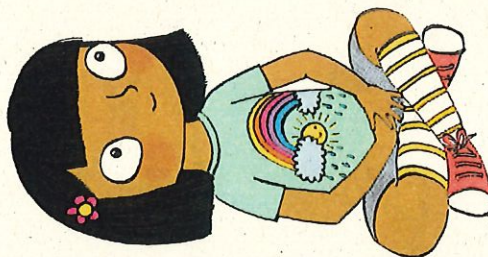
Illustration 11

Listening fan

Listening to all of the words



Sitting still



Staying quiet



Looking at the person who is talking







Attention and Listening

Activities to help

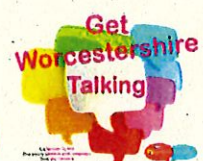
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	<p>Looking</p> <p>Encourage your child to look at you when you are talking to them, this will help them to use the non-verbal information you are providing, such as facial expression and gesture. This will let you know that they are listening to you.</p> <p>Try this:</p> <p>Copy cats - carry out an action for your child to copy, do they notice when you change your action or do they need you to remind them to keep looking?</p> <p>Singing "heads, shoulders, knees and toes" would be a good way of doing this.</p>
	<p>Listening:</p> <p>Children need to hear/focus on and think about all the words in order to understand what you have said.</p> <p>Try this:</p> <p>"Ready, steady...go" - use a ball or a toy car and make sure they wait for you to say "go" before you roll it. Model the activity first and then give your child a turn at waiting until they hear you say "go". Make it harder by pausing for longer before you say "go"</p> <p>A <i>Listening walk</i>, go for a walk and draw their attention to all of the sounds you can hear.</p>
	<p>Taking turns:</p> <p>Being able to take turns is an important skill for taking part in a conversation.</p> <p>Try this:</p> <p>Build a tower of bricks together, or complete a puzzle, encourage them to take it in turns to add the next brick or puzzle piece, saying "Molly's turn/ Billy's turn/mummy's turn"</p> <p>Increase the number of people in the activity so your child has to wait longer for their turn.</p>
	<p>Keeping your child engaged:</p> <p>Helping your child to continue an activity with you will develop their attention skills.</p> <p>Try this:</p> <p>Use a "feely bag" filled with toys and everyday objects. Encourage them to take an object out, then play with it and share it (avoid asking questions, make comments instead) for a few minutes, before finding the next thing.</p> <p>Singing action songs and rhymes is a great way of getting their attention.</p>

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Attention and Listening

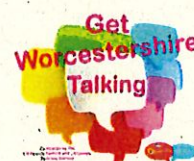


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	Reduce the background noise made by people talking, TV, iPads or any other technology as much as possible so your child has the best chance of hearing what you are saying.
	Play somewhere quiet without distractions. Try to avoid too many toys out at once, a choice of 2 things is often enough.
	Call your child's name and make sure they are looking at you before asking them to do something. You might need to tap them on the shoulder or hold their hands to make sure you have their full attention.
	Encourage your child to stop what they are doing before giving them an instruction
	Keep instructions short and simple. Tell your child what you want them to do rather than what you don't want them to do, e.g. "Walk", rather than "don't run"
	Get down to your child's level and make sure you have eye contact with them so you know they are listening.
	Always encourage your child to finish what they are doing but keep activities short and fun. Join in their play to help them do this
	Show your child how to take turns, eg "Mummy's turn...Billy's turn". Later introduce more people to play so that your child learns to wait longer for their turn.

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Appendix 8

Games for parents to try at home

Looking games to try at home

Silent treasure hunt

What you need:

- Some 'treasure' to hide

What to do:

- Send your child out of the room and while they are gone, hide a box with 'treasure' in it somewhere in the room.
- Ask your child to come back into the room and find the treasure.
- The people in the room cannot tell the child where the treasure is but they can help them find the treasure by looking at where it is hidden.

Pass the turn

What you need:

- A game or activity that you can take turns in

What to do:

- Choose a game or activity which your child enjoys, e.g. a puzzle, a car ramp, a marble run or another game.
- Explain that you are going to give the people in the room a turn, but you are NOT going to say their name. You are going to look at them and give them a little nod.
- Then pass the turn to people one at a time by looking at them and nodding.

Sitting still games to try at home

Musical spots

What you need:

- Music
- Paper to make sitting spots

What to do:

- Try this activity in a small group with other family members.
- Put sheets of paper out in a circle, one for each person playing.
- Everyone walks or dances around the sitting spots while the music is playing.
- When the music stops, they can sit down on a spot, trying to keep still.
- Count to three before the music starts again and give praise for good keeping still.
- Try to very gradually increase the amount of time they have to sit still.

Traffic light waiting

What you need:

- Toy cars
- Stop/go signs
- Toy cones (or another object to mark start and finish points)

What to do:

- Set out the cones at either end of the room.
- Encourage your child to choose a car and try to keep it still at the start cone.
- They need to wait for you to turn the sign to 'go' and they can then push the car as fast as they can to the finish cone.
- Try to gradually increase the amount of time they have to wait before they can start their car.

Listening to all of the words games to try at home

Listening for 'go'

What you need:

- A suitable toy such as cars and car ramp or a marble run

What to do:

- Encourage your child to hold the car or the marble and wait for you to say 'ready ... steady ... go!'.
• You may need to help your child to begin with by putting your hand over theirs and gently encouraging them to wait.
• Try to gradually increase the amount of time your child waits before you say 'go'.

Listening for name

What you need:

- Bubbles

What to do:

- This is a good game to play with other family members.
• Blow the bubbles and then say someone's name.
• Only the person whose name was called can burst the bubbles.
• Remind your child to keep listening as you might call their name again.

Staying quiet games to try at home

Musical traffic lights

What you need:

- An instrument such as bells or a shaker
- A stop/go sign

What to do:

- Encourage your child to play their instrument when they see the 'go' sign.
- When you turn the sign to 'stop', they must stop playing and try to keep their instrument quiet.
- You can then count to three before you turn the sign to 'go' again.
- Gradually try to count higher to see how long they can keep quiet.

Loud and quiet instruments

What you need:

- An instrument such as bells or a shaker
- Dino-loud and Mousie-quiet cue cards

What to do:

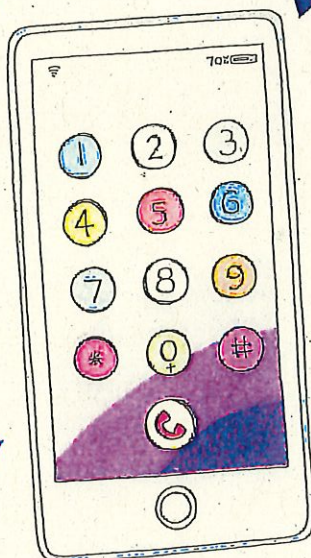
- Tell your child about Dino-loud (who likes loud noises) and Mousie-quiet (who likes everything to be quiet).
- Give your child an instrument.
- Put the Dino-loud and Mousie-quiet cue cards behind your back and bring one out to show your child.
- Encourage your child to play the instrument loudly when they see Dino-loud and then quietly when they see Mousie-quiet.

Knowing the challenges and benefits of technology will help you give your child the best opportunities to learn to listen and to interact.

Join in! You can help them learn much more effectively by joining in with what they play. Look for interactive games that you can both play and talk about what you are watching together.

Be a good model. Children learn best through imitation so make sure you show them what you want them to do. When they talk to you make sure you look up from your phone or laptop so they know you are listening.

Manage screen time. Treat technology as you would any other environment a child spends time in. Adults should be in charge of how long children spend looking at a screen.



No-screen bedrooms. Tired children find it hard to listen and learn. You can help get a better night's sleep by making bedrooms a no-screen zone and making the last hour before bed time a time for listening to stories and talking rather than watching a screen.

Be aware of background noise. Noise from the television, radio or electronic games can really get in the way. If you are not watching it or listening to devices then turning them off will help make it a better environment for children to learn to listen.

5 ways to help children look at the speaker

Call their name and wait for them to look towards you BEFORE talking

Model it yourself! Turn and look at them when they are telling you something 😊



Get down to their level – get on the floor to play or crouch down to talk

Give them specific praise for looking – “You are doing great looking at me – that will help you do your best listening”

Hold objects they are interested in near to your face