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Welcome To The Attention and Listening Workshop

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Aims of today's training

- What is attention, hearing & listening?
- How does attention & listening develop?
- Attention & listening & everyday life
- Does attention & listening matter?
- How to spot poor attention & listening
- **Universally** good strategies (Attention and Listening Environment & Active Listening)
- **Targeted** help = Good Listening Skills
- Attention and Listening Games

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Attention and Listening Part 1 Foundations

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What skills need to be in place for a child to communicate effectively

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What is Attention for Communication?

Ability to **concentrate** long enough to **take in information** **extract meaning**

Visual attention = **looking** Auditory attention = **listening**

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Attention, hearing, listening..?


Take in Register Process

Words
Phrases
Sentences

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Developing attention

Normal developmental order –Ages and Stages

Level 1: 0-1 year: **Fleeting attention** to a dominant stimulus
Level 2: 1-2 yrs: **Inflexible and rigid attention** when focusing on an activity of their choice
Level 3: 2-3 yrs: **Single-channelled attention**, becoming more flexible with adult direction
Level 4: 3-4 yrs: **Single-channelled attention** where the focus is more under child's own control
Level 5: 4-5 yrs: **Two-channelled attention** between auditory and visual stimuli for short periods
Level 6: 5-6 yrs: **Sustained attention** under the control of the child

Cooper Moodley and Reynell, 1978



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What do you see?: L1: 0-1 years

<p><u>Very distractible</u></p> <p>Only able to pay <u>fleeting attention</u></p> <p>New events will distract</p>	<p>The child is still developing readiness to attend to what an adult is saying</p>
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What do you see?: L2: 1-2 years

<p><u>Single channelled</u></p> <p>Will attend to own choice of activity</p>	<p>The child needs to ignore what is going on around them to concentrate</p>
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What do you see?: L3: 2-3 years

Still Single channelled

The child needs to stop & look at an adult to attend. Adult prompts help

Child attends to adult's choice of activity, but hard to maintain



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What do you see?: L4: 3-4 years

Starting to control their focus of attention

The child can now shift attention between a task and an adult



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What do you see?: L5: 4-5 years

2-channelled/ Integrated attention

The child can engage in an activity and listen to some one speaking at the same time

Attention span is still brief

Children are ready to be taught in a group



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What do you see?: L6: 5-6 years

Well controlled & sustained integrated attention

The child can now concentrate & listen to instructions without having to say them aloud



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Attention & listening: Everyday



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Does attention, hearing & listening matter?

'Educating children without basic communication skills is like building a house on the sand.'



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Poor, or inadequate attention..?
Understanding & Learning affected

Talking affected

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Spotting poor attention

Always on the go
Asking adults to repeat
Behaviour Difficulties
Language Difficulties
Frustration
Speech Difficulties
Tiredness
forgetting instructions

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Summary

- **Attention, hearing and listening** all mean slightly different things
- All these skills are **important foundations** for **language and learning** in general
- **Attention skills develop as a child grows**
- Children benefit from **adult support** to help them to attend
- **Attention difficulties can affect communication**
- We may see **other difficulties too**, such as frustration

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**Attention and Listening
Part 2
Strategies**

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Universally Good Strategies

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Listening Environment



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Listening Environment

- **Reduce noise and distractions** - turn off TV & Radio / use a quiet room where possible.
- Ensure a **comfortable, supported, safe space to sit and listen** if sitting is required.
- Plan **regular movement breaks**
- Use **visual supports**: objects, pictures, gestures, Makaton, Good Listening Skill prompt cards/fan (photos or drawings), First and Then board, sand/egg timers, start/finish boxes.

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Visual support (1)



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Visual support (2)

Now 	next 

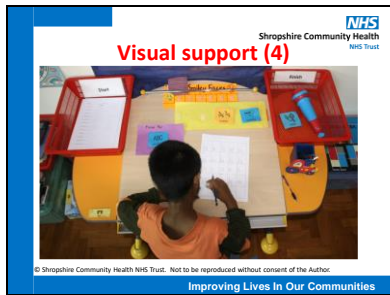
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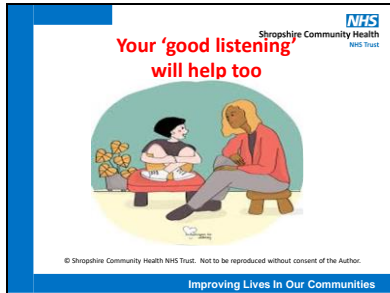
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To support good listening ... (1)

- **Reduce the number of questions** that you ask. This helps you to share the talking.
- **Pause to allow plenty of time** for your child to take in and think about what you have said.
- **Repeat what you say** to give your child another chance to take in your words.
- **Check understanding:** sometimes children may listen carefully, but still find it hard to understand the message.

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Chunk, Chill, Check

Chunk... give bite-sized information

Chill... wait 10 seconds

10

Check... information understood

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To support good listening... (2)

- **Get the child's full attention** before giving an instruction eg. "Jack look at me... get your shoes "
- **Use simple words and sentences** for the child's level of understanding
- Make **voice loud enough** and **speak clearly**
- **Use intonation** to make your **voice interesting** enough for the child to want to listen


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Building listening and attention



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Targeted Strategies



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Teach Good Listening Skills

- Looking at the person who is talking 
- Sitting *still* 
- Staying quiet 
NB: some children need to stop still or have something to 'fiddle' with to support their focus.
- Listening to **all** of the words 

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Active listening



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Active listening (1)

Supporting children to listen/attend to the speaker by

- Teaching the good listening skills
- Using/modelling good listening and interaction skills (e.g. intonation, eye-contact, volume)
- Having a good listening environment
- Playing listening activities/games



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Active listening (2)

Making children aware of LISTENING as a skill:

- Playing games to encourage good listening
- Encouraging children to ask when they are unsure and praise them for doing this
- Helping children to realise messages cannot always be understood

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Active listening (3)
Making children
PARTNERS in listening

Children can ask questions to check they have understood

- “pardon?”
- “Say it again please?”
- “What does that mean?”

They may need models, practice and praise to do this.

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Summary

There are many ways to support attention and listening

- **Universal/ Everyday strategies** are ones that we can all do at any time. They include reducing distractions
- **Targeted strategies** are ones that we might practice, such as the 4 ‘good listening’ skills
- **Active listening** takes work from both the person talking and the person listening. This can take time to practise.

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Attention and Listening
Training
Part 3
Games & Activities

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Commercial Resources

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Good Looking

Round and Round the Teddy Goes

- A child hides their eyes/ leaves the room.
- The other children pass a teddy around saying "Round and round teddy (give teddy a name if you like) goes, where he stops nobody knows"
- Whoever is holding the teddy when the rhyme stops, hides it behind their backs.
- All the other children put their hands behind their backs too.
- The child who has been hiding their eyes has 3x chances to guess where the teddy is.

<https://youtu.be/63272g8dY>

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Good sitting

Traffic light waiting

- Pull the pop up tent/ tunnel into the centre of the room.
- Choose a child to go through the tunnel.
- Stand next to the entrance with a stop/ go sign turned to 'stop'.
- The child cannot go through the tunnel until the 'stop' sign has turned to 'go'

<https://youtu.be/anY7DnXelPU>


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Staying Quiet Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust

(not talking if someone else is talking)



Sound location - boxes

- One child puts on a blindfold / goes out of the room
- A music source is hidden under one of the boxes
- The child takes off the blindfold and has to listen to find where the music is coming from. Remind others to stay quiet
- They must listen to all the boxes before turning one over

<https://youtu.be/vT79zz36LsA>

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Listening to all of the words Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust



Bubble burst

- The children sit in a circle
- Blow bubbles in the middle of the circle and then say the name of one of the children in the group.
- Only that child can get up and burst the bubbles.
- Everyone else has to stay on their seats

<https://youtu.be/-J5ef6f6FE>


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Attention & Listening Games (1) Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust

Stop/go - Another game for noisy toys - drum/shaker etc. The child has to listen to stop/go, to know when to make the noise



Ready, steady, Go! - bubbles/build a tower/marble run - The child has to wait until you say 'Go' before taking their turn



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Attention & Listening Games (2)

Sharing stories –wait for your child to tell you what they see/ think



Singing songs & nursery rhymes
- try leaving out a key line/word - can your child fill in the blank?



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Attention & Listening Games (3)

Listening walk

Shopping Game– Ask children to 'buy' 1 or 2 things from a selection of items (use toy/real food)



I spy - For younger children use describing clues eg: 'I spy with my little eye something with four legs that barks.'



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Attention and Listening Games (4)

Turn-taking games – e.g. pop up pirate, skittles, jenga, throwing or catching a ball/beanbag



Posting - Ask your child to post specific objects or pictures



Simon says



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When hands on learning is the key

- Not all children respond as well to just learning about 'good listening' strategies
- Their motivation to attend comes from within
- They learn by doing & having lots of fun


Gina Davies



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To sum up –

Can you answer these questions?


- Does attention and listening matter?
- Who is responsible for a child attending?
- What impacts on a child's ability to listen?
- What are the 4 good listening skills?
- Can attention & listening skills be improved?
- Do you need specialist equipment to support attention & listening, or be a specialist?



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Sources of Information

Books and Websites:

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- Attention and Listening in the Early Years, Sharon Garforth, 2009
- I can website e.g. <https://ican.org.uk/media/2162/i-can-stages-of-development-cropped-only.pdf>
- Communication trust website https://www.thecomcommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/3163/postcards_pre_school_final.pdf
- Afasic website <https://www.afasic.org.uk/about-talking/>
- ELALAN <https://www.elalan.co.uk/download/free-resources>
- Maggie Johnson – Active Listening <https://www.eed-uk.com/product-page/active-listening-for-active-learning>
- Gina Davies – Attention Autism <https://ginadavies.co.uk/>

Videos:


- <https://youtu.be/XenSthz2Yu4> - Building attention and listening
- Building attention skills in children: THE BUCKET! - YouTube - Attention Autism "The Bucket" demonstration




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The End

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