Improving Health and Wellbeing

Humber NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Pack for listening

This pack should only be used under the guidance of a Speech and Language Therapist

Original concepts by Speech and Language Therapists in Hull and East Yorkshire
Updated by Rona Gaffney 2015

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Name: *School:*		D.O.B:		
Overall aim(s)	*Where am I now?*	What will I achieve?	Outcome	Actual Outcome
To help the child improve their expressive and receptive language skills to their full potential	The child 's listening skills are not age appropriate	The child will be able to demonstrate an improved ability to listen to different sounds and words during structured therapy activities The child will be able to respond to their name 90% of the time during everyday activities.		
Therapy package: Targets will be reviewed as agreed with the speech and language therapist	Timescale: As agreed with the speech and language therapist	Factors contributing to outcome: Commitment from adults working with the child and regularity of practice.		

Please work through the following activities. If you have any questions or feel that the targets have been achieved, please contact the speech and language therapist

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Developing listening skills

- Speech and language is made up of a variety of complex sounds
- To understand these difficult sounds, children need to develop an awareness of the sounds around them
- They also need to be able to tell the difference between sounds and be able to attach meaning to different sounds
- Children who are finding speech and language difficult often need to improve their listening skills
- Attention and listening skills are very much related. If a child is not good at attending he/she will find listening difficult
- Listening and hearing are different skills. We can hear noises without listening, but listening means we are attending to the sounds around us.
- If you have any concerns about your child's hearing or listening, you should have his/her hearing checked.

Updated by Sian Friend 20/05/14

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Activities to develop listening skills

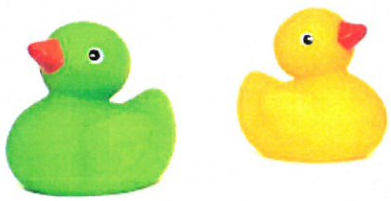
Listen to everyday sounds

Draw the child's attention away to everyday sounds and noises. Let the child see and touch the sound-maker and if possible, make the sound themselves. Sounds could include the doorbell, footsteps, water running in the sink, or toilet flushing.

Bath time

At bath time, show your child how to make various sounds and noises:

- You can splash your hands in the water or squeeze a wet sponge and let it dribble into the bath.
- Use bubble bath for your child to make lots of bubbles by swishing the water.
- Collect toys that can be dropped with a plink-plonk sound into the water.
- There are many cheap wind-up toys in various shapes and sizes that include boats, swimmers and frogs. Your child can wind them up and listen to the noises they make as they flap through the water.



Household tasks

During the day give your child the chance to join in and copy your chores, e.g. dusting, washing up and food preparation.

Updated by Sian Friend 20/05/14

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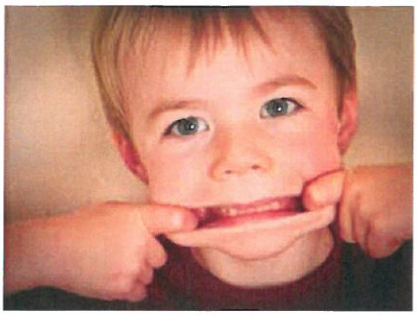
Copying faces or sounds

Make funny faces in the mirror and encourage your child to copy you. Copy faces he/she pulls. Make funny sounds and encourage him/her to copy.



Dolls and teddies

Play together and encourage copying by pretending to feed them, dress them and wash them.

Songs and rhymes

Choose action songs and rhymes and encourage your child to copy them.

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GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS - LISTENING.

Many children with speech problems have difficulty in listening to sounds -not because they have an actual hearing loss, but because they do not listen carefully to the sounds which they hear .There is a big difference between hearing a sound and listening to it.

An important part of a Speech and Language Therapist's work lies in helping a child to listen more accurately and to distinguish very small differences between sounds. It is very helpful if you can encourage your child to listen more accurately at home too.

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First of all, let us think about your family and home. Try asking yourselves these questions:

How noisy is our house? Think about all the things which make listening more difficult: a washing machine, a vacuum cleaner, television, radio, people talking, traffic outside possibly and so on.

Is there noise in our house all through the day or are there quiet times as well? Which part of the day is the noisiest -and the quietest? Is there any comer or room in the house where it is easier to listen or talk?

Next try listening deliberately to the sounds around you at home. You may be surprised at how many different types of sound you can hear. Here are just a few:

footsteps	clocks ticking or chiming	cars going past
slamming door	tap running	people talking
water running	birds singing	food cooking
lawn mower	cutlery rattling	hammering
power drill	milk bottle clinking	
somebody whistling	doorbell or knocking	

Which is the loudest sound you can hear? And how about the quietest? What is your favourite sound?

Now let us think about which sounds your child listens to at home. Which sounds make them jump? Which sounds make them laugh? Which sounds frighten them perhaps? Which sounds give them pleasure? How many sounds do they link with activities or people at home?

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car coming home at night
somebody opening a door
baby crying
biscuits or sweets being unwrapped
sounds made by pets
television jingles and music
kitchen sounds as meals are prepared

Which sounds does your child try to copy?

e.g. do they join in with simple songs or stories in children's radio and television? Do they try to imitate things which you say or special family expressions? Do they try to copy you when you make sounds for animals or toys?

SWITCH OFF BEFORE THEY DO!

It is very difficult for a child to listen to everyday sounds or to you talking if they have to "compete" against the noise of household machinery or television all the time. Try to switch off something during part of the day so that there is some period of quiet.

Listening for Sounds

While you are at home, begin by listening to different sorts of sounds yourself and then encourage your child to **listen with** you. At first, make sure that you can both see what is making the sound.

e.g.: Listen, Daddy's hammering outside.
Listen, that dog's barking at somebody.

See how many sounds you can both count up together, inside and outside your home. Try to draw attention to all kinds of **different** sounds and talk about them.

e.g.	some sounds can be very loud	road drill
		telephone
		door banging
		fire engine/ambulance sirens
		car tooting
		plates clattering
	other sounds are quieter	scissors cutting
		kettle boiling
		a drawer rattling
		doorbell

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and some sounds are very quiet	cat purring watch ticking bird singing match being struck wind blowing in the trees
other sounds have a low, deep pitch	toy drum walking in boots car starting
and some sounds have a high pitch	electric kettle whistling bird singing spoon tinkling in saucer

The next step is to encourage your child to identify sounds just by listening to them, i.e. without seeing them first. Start by listening out for familiar sounds which they already know well and sounds which they enjoy. Gradually bring in quieter sounds or sounds which are less familiar.

Don't forget that there are many other interesting sounds when you go shopping or on your holidays. Here are just a few:

trains going over railway crossings
building site machines (cranes, diggers etc) chips sizzling at a fish and chip shop milk shake machine in a café
ice cream vans
petrol going into a car at the garage
unfamiliar animals or birds at zoos, pet shops, safari parks etc seagulls

Sound Makers

As you play with your child, take advantage of toys which make interesting or funny sounds. Watch out for everyday situations where your child can enjoy a variety of sounds. Here are just a few ideas:

Enjoying the sounds of water at bath time -pouring, splashing, gurgling down the pipe etc.
Letting your child press a front door bell or knock.

Making sounds for familiar animals when you play together with farm or zoo toys or even better, taking then to see and hear real animals and having fun copying them.

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Making sounds for toys such as buses, police cars, cranes, ambulances, fire-engines, tractors, etc.

Making sounds with squeaky toys, dolls which "talk" and "cry" etc. Reading or telling stories which use animals or traffic sounds.

Making musical noises with a toy xylophone toy drum, bells etc.

Making sound-makers together -rubber bands stretched over a box to twang: old cartons filled with dried peas, buttons or sugar, to shake: a line of cups containing different amounts of water to tap for different "notes" etc.

Sound Scrapbook

If your child enjoys collecting pictures and sticking, a special, big scrapbook can be helpful. Look out for pictures of things which have special sounds - animals, insects, trains, cars, buses, tractors, planes etc. Talk about the different sounds which they make as you turn the pages.

Sound Games

Any games which help to improve listening can be used too.

e.g.: Hide and Seek - use your voice (quietly) to guide your child towards your hiding place or make a special noise (a drum or a bell or something simple like shaking a box of matches) to guide them. You can begin by using very loud sounds and gradually get quieter as he listens more carefully.

Musical Bumps -listening for when the (musical) sounds stops.

Simon Says type games -copying different numbers of claps or beats with a drum.

For older children who can cope with rule games, games where they have to follow special instructions ~ to them are useful.

If there is a tape-recorder in your family, some children enjoy listening to voices and music -again, good practice for better listening.

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Many of these suggestions can be included in your everyday activities once you remember to take advantage of situations. It can also be useful to set aside some spare time every day when you can play with your child, talk together, read, or look at a book together, listen to music, etc. preferably in a quiet part of the day and with no background noise to distract you.

The most important thing to bear in mind is that listening should be **ENJOYABLE** for all of you. **NEVER** make this into an exercise or a drill - **LISTENING SHOULD BE FUN!**

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