

Activities to Help Auditory Processing Skills

The following games and activities can be used to help improve your child's listening skills. Remember to keep the activities fun and to only spend a short amount of time on any specific activity (5-10 minutes maximum).

- **Listening Walk:** The purpose of the walk is to listen to sounds, particularly those they may not have been aware of previously. Before the walk you can suggest sounds to listen for or you can call the child's attention to sounds as you walk along. After the walk, see how many sounds your child can remember and encourage him/her to describe them.
- Practise listening to environmental sounds and guessing where the sounds are coming from and what is making them.
- With their eyes closed ask your child to identify different noises e.g. clock ticking, coins rattling, squeaky toys, paper rustling, kettle boiling etc.
- Have your child close their eyes and then move to different positions in the room. Call out to your child and see if they can guess from which direction your voice is coming from.
- Play listening games such as "Simon Says". Simon says can also be played with your child imitating your speech sounds, volume changes, changes in pitch and rhythm changes.
- Play games such as "Eye Spy" or see how many things they can see in the room that begin with a certain letter. Play matching games where the children have to match pictures of objects that have either the first or last sound the same.
- Encourage your child to focus his attention on particular sounds. For example, read a simple story with background noise created by a radio playing softly. Before beginning the story tell the child to listen for specific pieces of information in the story (e.g. the main characters name). Gradually increase the difficulty of the information the child is asked to listen for.
- Play games that encourage listening for differences between words. For example, ask your child to listen to a group of four words and tell you which ones rhyme or which ones begin or end with a different letter. For younger children, ask them to tell you if two words are the same or different, you can use word pairs such as by/pie, mat/pat, fish/wish. Older children can listen to short lists of consonant sounds that contain one or more repetition e.g. b, d, k, f, d. They tell you the sound that is repeated.



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- Clap in simple rhythmic sequence and then ask your child to imitate the sequence.
- Give your child a series of directions (e.g. two hops and one step) and ask them to follow your directions. You can gradually increase the length of the sequence as your child masters each stage.
- Read an unfamiliar story to your child. Afterwards ask questions about the sequence of events (e.g. what happened first, who went out to play etc). Continue to ask questions until the events in the story have been reviewed. Another strategy is to ask the child to predict likely events in the story.
- Present well-known stories, rhymes or songs with one or more parts omitted and the child must supply the missing information.

