



Integrated
Treatment Services
Client-centred Therapy



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Developmental Levels of
Attention and Listening
and Developing Skills
within the Classroom

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Theories on attention and listening

- Attention and listening are the foundation skills for successful speech, language and learning.
- Delayed attention and listening are common features of impairments such as SLI, ADHD, global developmental delay.
- Specific teaching of attention and listening is required by parents and teachers as we can't just expect children to develop through the 6 developmental levels without support.
- The [6 levels of attention](#) and listening development can be found on slide 4.

- [ICAN stages of speech development](#) - which references 0-6 years - attention and listening development alongside other language development skills.
- EYFS reference to attention and listening - be familiar with their guidelines.
- 22-36 months - single channelled attention span.
- 30-50 months: able to follow directions if not intently focused on own choice of activity. Listen to others 1:1 and in small groups when conversation interests them.

The 6 Levels of Attention & Listening Approach

1. **Fleeting attention** to a dominant stimulus where the child is highly distracted by other sounds and movements
2. **Inflexible and rigid attention** when focusing on an activity of their choice
3. **Single channelled attention that is becoming more flexible** as the child's attention can be transferred from the task when directed by an adult
4. **Single channelled attention where the focus can be directed** from the task to the adult under the child's own control
5. **Two channelled attention** between auditory and visual stimuli for short periods of time
6. **Sustained attention** under the control of the child

Cooper, Moodley and Reynell (1978) and Williams (1987)

Supporting attention and listening skills and direct teaching ideas

- Motivators:

Ask parents on a half termly basis to update a list of motivators for you regarding their child's interests;

Toys or games they really like, tv programmes, family members, places they visit in the community.

Ask students to update their list each half term.

Include as part of their communication passport.

Personalise teaching activities to these motivators when working on attention and listening skills.

- Multi modal - use visual communication resources to support increased attention and listening within the classroom

Now next boards

Labeling of the classroom

Visual timetables

Task breakdown boards

Examples of all of these can be [downloaded on our website](#) and further tutorials are available on how to develop using these strategies.

- Message taking - building up distance and content can be useful

- Use technology as a self help skill for memory aids - recordable cards (see our website for further ideas on these and working memory) - audio memos, voice recorders, writing down messages.
- Parents - give families ideas as to how to support attention and listening and memory skills. Accept they will use technology so develop a list of tv programmes and apps to develop these skills.
- So give them idea of everyday activities dressing, food choices and more traditional board game activities to work on attention and listening.

- Use symbolic sounds and [lotto boards](#) to start attention and listening work - before you work on any discrimination of speech sounds.
- 1:1, paired, group work - systematically build up the demands of attention and listening e.g. 1:1 first, then paired with just one child & one adult, then two children & one adult. Don't leap straight from 1:1 to a group of 5.
- Developing visual resources and encouraging students to take ownership by developing the resources with you - e.g. Good looking, good sitting, good taking turns, good listening.

Attention and Listening Resources to Teach in 1:1 or Small Group Activity

- Social Use of Language programme Sulp by Wendi Renaldi
- [Time to Talk](#) Ginger Bear
- Talk Boost ICAN
- Active listening for active learning by Maggie Johnson
- Language Land by Black Sheep Press
- Speaking, Listening and Understanding Catherine Delamain & Jill Spring
- Early listening skills Diana Williams

Stages of Speech and Language Development

	Listening & Understanding	Babbling & Talking	Social & Emotional Skills
Birth - 3 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizes parents' voices - Startled by loud sounds - Turns toward familiar sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes soft vocal sounds (coos, gurgles) - Cries when hungry or uncomfortable - Makes vowel sounds by 3-4 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gazes at faces - Makes extended eye contact - May copy facial expressions - Often calmed by familiar voice
3 - 6 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watches face when someone talks - May show excitement at sound of approaching voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces simple syllables (e.g., 'ba' or 'da') - Squeals, growls, makes raspberries sound - Vocalizes to get attention & when talked to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cries differently for different needs - Recognizes & responds to different emotions in others - Laughs during play
6 - 12 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizes name (stops and looks) - Understands frequently used words, phrases (e.g., 'all gone', 'give', 'stop') - Understands simple instructions supported by context and gestures - Notices different sounds (telephone, doorbell, clock) - Attends to music and singing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - True babbling emerges with repeated syllables (e.g., 'bu-bu-bu', 'da-da-da') - Uses speech sounds to communicate - Stops babbling when hears familiar voice - Around 12 months, begins to say single words (often 'mamma', 'dada', sibling's name or pet's name) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Takes turns in conversation - May try to imitate adult speech - Enjoys action rhymes and singing - Uses gestures to communicate (points, waves, offers object)

Stages of Speech and Language Development

12 - 15 Months



- Understands more words than says
- Understands familiar words at the end of a sentence (e.g., 'Get the ball')
- Understands simple instructions (e.g., 'kiss Mommy', 'give to Daddy')
- Enjoys sound-making toys
- Says around 10 words (may not be clear), but still babbles
- Makes sounds while pointing or reaching for desired object
- May show anxiety toward unfamiliar adults
- Likes watching adults (or older children) for short periods of time

15 - 18 Months



- Rapid increase in number of words understood
- Understands familiar words in middle of sentence ('See the doggie run?')
- Listens, responds to instructions (e.g., 'put on your shoes', 'throw the ball')
- Says 20 or more words (may not be clear)
- Imitates gestures and words
- Often uses babbling and words during play
- Varies pitch and loudness when 'talking'
- Simple pretend play emerges
- Plays alone, but likes to be near familiar adult

18 - 24 Months



- Understands 200-500 words
- Understands sentences based on word order ('Big Bird is tickling Cookie Monster' vs. 'Cookie Monster is tickling Big Bird')
- Child's name helps focus on requests, commands (e.g., 'John, sit down')
- Says up to 50 words
- Spoken vocabulary increases rapidly
- Begins to say 2 or 3 words together (e.g., 'Mommy sit', 'two big doggies')
- Frequently asks names for objects and people (towards 24 months)
- Uses sounds 'p', 'b', 'm' & 'w'
- Gets frustrated if not understood
- Follows adult gestures, body language, facial expressions
- Play based on own interests
- Pretend play develops (e.g., feeds doll, drives car)

Thank you for watching

If you would like to provide us with any feedback or request assistance with implementing any approaches or ideas within your settings or sessions do get in touch via our contact details on the next slide.

We can provide training or direct therapy support to therapists and teaching staff

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