

Joint Attention for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

What is Joint Attention?

When a caregiver pays attention to the same thing as the child. There is a shared understanding that they are both looking at the same thing.

Why we do it

It is used to help understand each other and share information more easily.

Things That Help Lead to Joint Attention

Gesturing



Promotes communication

Turn Taking



Fosters social communication skills

Eye Contact



Signals shared focus

Smiling



Communicates positive experiences

More ways to promote joint attention



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Ways to Create a Rich Linguistic Environment for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Self talk: Caregiver describes what they are doing

These strategies expand vocabulary and reinforce understanding

Parallel talk: Caregiver gives describes what a child is doing

Games to Encourage Joint Attention



Sing songs together. Use repetitive songs where the terms repeat and can be **MATCHED** with things in your environment to point out! You can also add clapping or dancing to show the beat.

Try singing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star but you have a plush star to squeeze while you sing!



Read books together. Make sure you are facing the child so they can see the book while also seeing and listening to you.

Repetitive books like *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* create connections between words and pictures.



Play I spy. You can point and label objects in your environment as well as describe **HOW** you use things.

I spy something BLUE! It is blue and helps you hear! That is right! YOUR HEARING AID!

Why is it important?

- Improves social skills and thinking ability
- The primary way children connect words or signs with objects and events.
- Boosts language growth

More Resources



Why joint attention is especially important for children who are Deaf



Book Reading Example



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