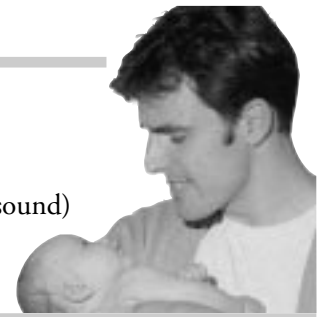
Emergent Literacy: **Learning to Listen**

PARENTPAGE

Learning to listen is an important skill for all babies and young children to learn. Listening involves more than just "hearing" what is said. It takes concentrating on who is talking, making sense of what is being said, and learning to respond to the information. The ability to listen is important for learning to read and for being successful in school. There are lots of ways to help your child learn to be a good listener. The most important way is to be a good listener yourself! Remember that eye contact is always critical for making sure you have your child's attention. Paying attention is crucial to listening.
Listed below are activities that will help your child learn to listen.



For Young Babies (0-6 months)

- Look into your baby's eyes as you talk
- Imitate the sounds your baby makes
- Sing songs (remember babies like your voice the best- no matter how you sound)
- Play different kinds of music
- Share books with your infant.

For 6 months – 12 months

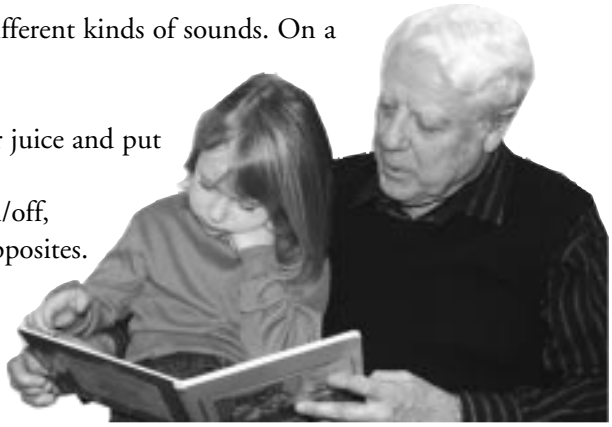
- Continue the previous activities.
- Give toys that make sounds.
- Notice and respond as your baby begins to recognize words for common items like "bottle," "cup," and "change diaper."
- Play anticipation games like "This Little Piggy", "Ride the Horsey", and "How big is baby? – Soooo Big!" Wait and watch to see if your baby begins to respond to the motions you make.
- Read books!

For 12 months – 24 months

- Continue the previous activities.
- Teach simple songs and nursery rhymes.
- Learn body parts, "Where's your nose?"
- Practice animal sounds, "What does the cow say?"
- Work on following one-step directions such as "bring me the ball," or "find your shoe."
- Read familiar stories, pause and see if your child can fill in a missing word.
- Ask your child to point to familiar pictures in books such as "show me the cat."

For 24 months – 36 months

- Continue the previous activities.
- Play listening games to help your child identify different kinds of sounds. On a walk say, "Listen, what do you hear?"
- Whisper to get your child's attention.
- Work on following two-step directions, "Get your juice and put it on the table."
- Practice learning the meaning of opposites like on/off, up/down, big/little, go/stop. Read books about opposites.
- Sing and recite nursery rhymes. Read books with rhyming words.
- Ask your child to predict what might happen next in a familiar book.



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