

Face to face

Speaking
and
Listening

Learning objectives

- To develop and practise listening skills
- To give attention to what others say and respond appropriately in conversation.

What to do

- During informal or formal play, try to position yourself so that children can look directly into your eyes. This is one of the simplest but most important things you can do to encourage communication. The child can then watch how your mouth forms words and watch your eyes to see what you are looking at or what feelings you are betraying.
- It is important always to talk 'with' children, not 'at' them. Let the children lead the conversation whenever possible, even when you are tempted to 'fill in' for them. If they are struggling to find the right words, prompt gently and give positive feedback as soon as they pick up the vocabulary.

Extensions/variations

- Come down to the children's level whenever they need to speak or listen to you.
- adjust your position so that a child can see your face while sitting on your lap to talk or read stories.
- Sit with children, on the floor and at small tables, and make sure that your face is on a level with theirs while making conversation.

Links to home

- Try to use these strategies in front of parents. Explain how important they are whenever you have an opportunity.

Topic

Any topic

Resources

- No special requirements

