Activities to Help Attention and Listening

- “ready steady……go” games: E.g. get a car ramp and a car. The child must wait until you say “go” to roll the car down the ramp. This encourages the child to look, listen and wait. To step this up you could try changing the “go” to a different word. Tell the children they can only push the car down the ramp if they hear “go” e.g. “ready steady…banana”. Then shake your head and say “no, I didn’t say go so we can’t push the car”. This encourages the children to listen for specific words.

- **Which instrument is it?** Have a selection of musical instruments including a drum, shaker, bells etc and ask your child to shut their eyes. Then you choose one of the instruments to play and ask your child to guess which one. This encourages the child to listen to the sounds. You can also do this with animals and animal noises.

- **Musical statues.** Play music and when your press stop the child must stand still.

- **Action songs.** Take it in turns to choose an action and everyone copy and sing about it, e.g. ‘everybody clapping, clapping, clapping, everybody clapping, just like Mummy’

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Top Tips

Build anticipation by leaving a gap before you say ‘go’.

Other toys to use for ‘ready, steady, go’ games are bubbles, building a tower, letting go of a balloon, wind-up toys, rolling a ball etc

If your child finds it difficult to listen call their name to re-focus their attention.

Praise your child for ‘good listening’ during these games.
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- **Mystery Sound Game.** This game relies on the children listening to different sounds and identifying what they’ve heard therefore it is important that we pick sounds that are easy to start discriminating e.g. bunch of keys, musical instrument, a whistle.

- **Traffic light games.** Use a red and green card to show “go” and “stop”. Use the symbols to show your child when to stop and go different actions e.g. shaking instruments, jumping, stamping their feet etc.

- **Simon Says.** Ask your child to point to a body part, e.g. ‘Simon says touch your nose’. You can also play this with actions, e.g. ‘Simon says jump’.

- **Kim’s Game.** Place four or more items on the floor. Ask the child to look at those items and then close his eyes. Take away one/two/three items and once he/she opens his eyes he has to try to guess which items you have removed.

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**Top Tips**

- Reduce distractions e.g. other toys or switch off TV to help your child to concentrate

- Keep your play exciting by using your tone of voice and facial expression

- Get down to your child’s level

- Gain eye contact with your child before giving him/her an instruction