Useful websites:

https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/our-services/children-young-people-family-health-services-cypf/complex-needs-and-disability/childrens-speech-and-language-therapy/handouts/attention-and-listening/

https://oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/cit/resources/attention-listening/

https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy/childrens-speech-and-language-therapy/activities-to-support-children/early-language-development-attention-and-play/

Supportive resources & activities:

Adding puppets or cuddly toys to stories or nursery rhymes to add interest.
Cause and effect toys that contain, moving elements, buttons and sounds.
Consider the use of cause and effect toys that require longer periods of attention such as blowing up a balloon and letting it go or a balloon powered launch car or a marble run.
Sound bingo games
Guess that sound, sound walk.

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ATTENTION AND LISTENING SKILLS

A guide for parents

What are attention and listening skills?

Attention and listening skills refer to a person's ability to pay attention and focus upon an activity or person and furthermore listen to what is being said.

A Little More Information

Attention and Listening skills are the fundamental building blocks to successful communication skills.

Without the ability to maintain attention, a child will then find it difficult to understand spoken language, non verbal communication and therefore respond appropriately in social situations.

The ability to listen and attend for longer periods of time, allows children to gain understanding of more challenging vocabulary and build upon their communication skills successfully.

Ways to support at home

Simple strategies such as saying your child's name to gain their attention or getting down on their level before speaking to them can be really beneficial in supporting attention and listening. Consider exaggerating your facial expressions, changing your tone of voice during speech and adding gestures to create interest and hold a child's attention for longer.

Where possible ensure that communication occurs in a quiet room with fewer distractions. If using a toy to engage your child, ensure that there is just one in front of them so their attention is focused on the activity that you would like them to engage in.

Sometimes a quick rotation of toys or activities can increase engagement. Playing with toys that contain elements of cause and effect and accompanying these with the phrase "ready steady go!" can build excitement and anticipation. As these games become embedded, add a slight pause before you say "go" to stretch your child's attention span for a little longer.

How often?

A minimum of 3 times a week practising a new skill will help towards achieving a target.

However, if you are able to embed practise into every day routines your child's progress will sky rocket as they get the opportunity to over learn and practise the skill in many different contexts.