



More Than Ears Learning to Listen

Listening involves more than just “hearing” what is said. It involves concentrating on the speaker, making sense of what is being said, and responding to the information given.

There are lots of ways to help your child be a good listener. One way is to be a good listener yourself. Here are some other suggestions:

- Look into your child’s eyes when you are speaking to her. This will help her to focus on what you are saying and show that you are paying attention to her.
- Use your voice as a teaching tool. Whispering often gets a child’s attention more quickly than raising your voice.

- Play listening games to help your child identify different kinds of sounds. For example, go for a walk and discuss what you hear: who or what is making the sound, how loud it is, or how pleasant it is.
- Teach your child to follow directions. At first, give one step directions, such as “Put your napkin in the trash can.” Add additional steps when your child is successful with short directions.
- Read to your child every day and talk about what you have read. Listening takes practice, and sharing stories with your child is a fun and nurturing way to improve her attention span and ability to understand what is said.
- Teach simple songs and nursery rhymes. As your child becomes familiar with them, pause, and let him fill in the missing words. This activity encourages your child to pay close attention.

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