

## Practicing Active Listening

### Why It Matters:

- When parents truly listen, children feel valued and understood, which builds their confidence and communication skills.
- Active listening also strengthens your relationship and teaches children how to listen to others.

### What You Can Do:

- Get on your child's level and make eye contact.
- Repeat back what they say to show you understand: "You're telling me the puzzle is hard. Let's work on it together."
- Avoid interrupting; let them finish their thoughts.

### Further Reading:

- Nichols (1995), "The Lost Art of Listening"

### Web Resource

<https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/activities/articles/talking-and-listening-practical-ideas-parents>



## Using Open Questioning

### Why It Matters:

- Asking open-ended questions encourages your child to think critically and express themselves.
- It builds problem-solving skills and supports language development.

### What You Can Do:

- Ask questions like, "What do you think will happen next?" or "Why do you think the sky is blue?"
- Encourage curiosity by exploring answers together.
- Avoid yes/no questions when possible.

### Further Reading:

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### Web Resource

<https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/activities/articles/talking-and-listening-practical-ideas-parents>



## Nurturing a Growth Mindset

### Why It Matters:

- Teaching children that abilities can grow with effort helps them embrace challenges and learn from mistakes.
- A growth mindset builds resilience and a love of learning.

### What You Can Do:

- Praise effort, not just results: "You worked so hard on this drawing!"
- Talk about mistakes as learning opportunities: "What can we try next time?"
- Share stories about people who succeeded through perseverance.

### Further Reading:

- Dweck (2006), "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success"

### Web Resource

<https://slumberkins.com/blogs/slumberkins-blog/growth-mindset-activities-for-kids>



## Practicing Delayed Gratification

### Why It Matters:

- Learning to wait and manage impulses helps children develop self-control, a key skill for success in school and life.
- Studies show that children who practice delayed gratification tend to perform better academically and socially.

### What You Can Do:

- Play waiting games like "Red Light, Green Light" or "Simon Says."
- Encourage small "waits" in daily life, like waiting a minute for a snack.
- Praise their effort when they practice patience: "Great job waiting!"

### Further Reading:

- Mischel et al. (1989), "The Marshmallow Test and Long-Term Self-Control"

### Web Resource

<https://parentingscience.com/teaching-self-control>



## Developing Emotional Literacy

### Why It Matters:

- Teaching children to identify and express emotions helps them manage feelings and build strong relationships.
- Emotional literacy is linked to better mental health and academic success.

### What You Can Do:

- Name emotions when your child is upset: "I see you're feeling sad. Do you want a hug?"
- Read books about feelings and talk about the characters' emotions.
- Use a feelings chart or mood meter to help them point to how they're feeling.

### Further Reading:

- Denham et al. (2003), "Emotional Competence in Young Children"

### Web Resource

<https://positivepsychology.com/emotional-development-activities>



## Ensuring Turn-Taking in Conversations

### Why It Matters:

- Back-and-forth conversations help build your child's brain for language and communication.
- Children who experience regular turn-taking interactions develop better vocabulary, sentence structure, and social skills.

### What You Can Do:

- Pause and wait for your child's response, even if it's a sound or gesture.
- Respond to their interests. For example, if they point at a bird, say, "Yes, it's a bird! What does a bird say?"
- Make conversations fun during everyday activities like mealtime or playtime.

### Further Reading:

- Romeo et al. (2018), "Language Exposure Relates to Structural Neural Connectivity in Childhood"



## Using Comparative Language

### Why It Matters:

- Using words like bigger, smaller, more, and less helps children understand math and logic concepts.
- Comparative language supports problem-solving and spatial reasoning, key skills for STEM learning.

### What You Can Do:

- Play games comparing objects: "Which tower is taller?" or "Who has more apples?"
- Use everyday opportunities to compare: "This bag is heavier than that one."
- Encourage sorting and matching activities.

### Further Reading:

- Mix et al. (2005), "Number Words and Number Concepts"

### Web Resource

<https://www.ncetm.org.uk/features/exploring-comparison-in-early-years>



## Further Resources

### Books for adults

- "The Whole-Brain Child" by Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson
- "How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk" by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

### Books suggestions for children:

- "The Listening Walk" by Paul Showers
- "Listen, Listen" by Phillis Gershator and Alison Jay
- "The Big Question" by Amy Jill Levine
- "What If...?" by Samantha Berger
- "Waiting" by Kevin Henkes
- "Tidy" by Emily Gravett
- "The Most Magnificent Thing" by Ashley Spires
- "Giraffes Can't Dance" by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees
- "More, Fewer, Less" by Tana Hoban & "Big and Small, Up and Down" by Tana Hoban
- "The Feelings Book" by Todd Parr
- "The Colour Monster: A Pop-up Book of Feelings" by Anna Llenas



### Websites:

- [Zero to Three](#) – Resources on early development
- [Harvard Center on the Developing Child](#) – Research summaries and parenting tips

By focusing on these simple strategies, you can give your child the best start in life. Every conversation, game, and moment of listening helps them grow into a confident, curious and capable learner. These skills are all at the heart of the Good Start Great Start programme. Enjoy the journey learning together!