



## Key Skills Summary



- why it matters....
- what you can do..
- Further reading...
- web resource.....



# 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 relationships 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 your child says to show you understand: "You're telling me the puzzle is hard. Let's work on it together."
- Avoid interrupting; let your child finish expressing their thoughts.

## Further Reading:

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk. By Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

## 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:

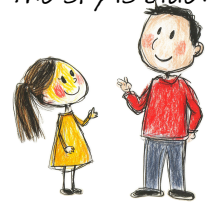
- Ask questions like, "What do you think will happen next?" or "Why do you think the sky is blue?"
- Encourage curiosity by exploring answers together.
- Avoid yes/no questions when possible, unless introducing a topic..

## Further Reading:

- Powerful Interactions: How to Connect with Children to Extend Their Learning" by Amy Laura Dombro, Judy Jablon, and Charlotte Stetson

## 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 rather than fearing them.
- 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 also throughout 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 your child practices patience: e.g. "Great job waiting!"

## Further Reading:

The Marshmallow Test: Understanding Self-control and How To Master It by Walter Mischel

## 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. e.g 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 your child point to how they're feeling.

## Further Reading:

- Help Your Child Develop Emotional Literacy: The Parents' Guide to Happy Children by RUTH RIDD

## 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 just a sound or gesture.
- Respond to your child's interests. For example, if they point at a bird, say, "Yes, it's a bird! What sorts of things can a bird do?"
- Make conversations fun during everyday activities like mealtime or playtime.

## Further Reading:

- There's No Such Thing As 'Naughty': The groundbreaking guide for parents with children aged 0-5 by Kate Silvertown



## 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 which are key skills for STEM learning.

### What you Can Do:

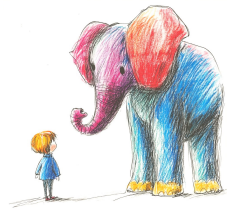
- Play games comparing objects: "Which tower is taller?" or "Who has more apples?"
- Use everyday opportunities to compare: "This bag is heavier than that one."
- Encourage sorting and matching activities.

### Further Reading:

- Thinking and Learning About Mathematics in the Early Years - By Linda Pound

### Web Resource

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



## Nurturing Independence

### Why It Matters:

- Nurturing independence helps to build confidence, self-reliance, and decision-making.
- Children are naturally eager to explore and do things on their own. Supporting this developmental milestone helps them develop a sense of responsibility and lays the groundwork for lifelong problem-solving abilities.

### What you Can Do:

- Give age-appropriate responsibilities and tasks so that your child sees themselves as capable.
- Offer choices but provide limited options, e.g., "Do you want the red or blue cup?" to foster decision-making.
- Encourage exploration which allows your child to experiment and fail in safe situations to learn from their experiences.

### Further Reading:

- 50 Fantastic Ideas for Promoting Independence by Alistair Bryce-Clegg

### Web Resource

<https://childmind.org/article/how-to-build-independence-in-preschoolers/>





# 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!