

Living is Learning – Sounds All Around

There will be sounds inside and outside your home throughout the day. Listening and noticing are important as children develop their communication skills. Taking a moment in the day to pause and listen will help your child to learn and improve these skills.

You will need:

You and your child

5 minutes (at the most)

A place where you will hear sounds

1. Explain that you are going to play a listening game. That means you and your child have to be as still and quiet as possible, so you can hear the sounds around you.
2. Find a good place to be and sit very quietly. Shhh. Listen. Remember to only sit and listen for a few seconds, possibly a minute – that's a long time for a small child!
3. As you hear noises, acknowledge them yourself using facial expressions – surprise, a smile, a nod.
4. Stop listening. Together, can you name the sounds you heard? Perhaps the washing machine, a door opening and closing, someone else in your home speaking, a bird singing, cars on the road. How many sounds did you hear? Were they loud or quiet sounds?
5. You can repeat this activity on another day or at another time of day. Are the sounds the same as before, or different?

Earlier Learning Opportunities

Acknowledge sounds as you and your child play. Use facial expressions to show surprise, delight, understanding. Perhaps a toy makes a funny sound, or a door bangs in the wind. Use simple words to mirror sounds you and your child hear – for the toy you could say 'beep beep' or for the door 'bang!'.

Extension Ideas

If you have one, you could add a timer to this game, or use a clock. Show your child that you are both going to listen for 1 minute and the timer will buzz when to stop. Try to find sound words to describe the sounds you hear together – the washing machine whirs, the bird chirps, the car on the road outside goes brmmmm.