Attention Autisim

Homework Tips Checklist for Parents

# A sign with a rainbow bucket Description automatically generatedOverview

Attention Autism is an intervention approach by Speech and Language Therapist Gina Davies which aims to work on the early fundamentals of language including awareness of others, attention, listening, shared attention, switching attention and turn-taking.

# Aims and outcomes

To develop natural and spontaneous communication skills in Autistic children and to support/achieve:

* engagement in attention;
* improvement joint attention;
* a develop shared enjoyment in group activities;
* an increase attention in adult-led activities;
* spontaneous interaction in a natural group setting;
* an increase in non-verbal and verbal communication through commentary;
* an increase in range and depth of vocabulary.

# Activities/structure

**Stage 1:**

**The Bucket to Focus Attention**

* The first of the Attention Autism stages involves filling a bucket with visually engaging toys that aim to help children learn how to focus their attention.. The adult leader will make simple comments about each toy to help introduce them to the children and expand their vocabulary. A ‘Bucket’ song maybe sang to help introduce the bucket and the 2-4 toys may come out of the bucket, but are placed back in the bucket after each turn. The aim is to engage the pupil for 3-4 minutes, but engaged attention may look different in an autistic child compared to those who are neurotypical. The Attention Autism approach does not require autistic children to look at the adult or sustain eye contact to demonstrate attention. Instead, attention may be indicated by other signals such as seeming alter, looking at the objects and appearing interested in the activity.

**Stage 2:**

**The Attention Builder**

* At this stage, the group are introduced to highly appealing and visually stimulating activities. This stage aims to build and sustain attention for a longer period of time. Activities may include ideas such as those below:
* Flour castles which can be built like sandcastles, using flour, a bowl and moulds.
* Erupting volcano activity -a classic science experiment.
* Fishbowl foam - fill a fishbowl with shaving foam and water, slowly drop different coloured food dye in and get children to describe the colours and speeds at which they see it fall.
* Glowing Balloons - blow balloons up and place a glow stick inside each balloon. Turn the lights off for a fun, glowing, visual activity.

**Stage 3:**

**The Interactive Game - Turn-Taking and Shifting Attention**

* The adult leader demonstrates a simple engaging activity and invites children up one at a time to have a turn. This may be the same activity from stage two or something new.
* In this stage, the aim is for children to learn to shift their attention from learning as one of a group to individual participation, and then to back to one of a group. For this stage to be successful and enjoyable for the child, it is important that the activity is just as interesting to watch as it is to take part in.
* **Umbrella** - put down a shower curtain or paddling pool, with a chair in the middle. Each child can sit in the chair, hold an open umbrella as you pour water over the top. You can also sing 'It's raining, it's pouring' or 'Rain rain go away'.
* **Paint water pistols** - fill various water pistols with coloured, watered down paint. Grab a large sheet of paper and squirt the paint on to the paper.
* **Stacking towers** - grab 8 paper cups and draw faces on them. Take turns to build a pyramid, knock it down and build again.
* **Paint balloon pop** - fill water balloons with paint and tie off. Place balloons on paper and take turns for the children to select a balloon, pop it and see the pain spurt everywhere.
* **Walk on the beach** - grab 5-6 trays and fill them with various natural materials (grass, pebbles, sand, twigs, leaves). Line them up and get each child to walk over the trays, and describe what they can feel as they go

**Stage 4:**

**Focus Shift and Re-engage Attention**

* In the final stage, the adult leading the session will model an activity and then each child, with the exact same equipment, should attempt to copy what had been demonstrated. They do not have to accurately what was modelled, the aim for this session is for the child to watch and then have a go themselves independently and with confidence. At the end of the session, they can then return to you and demonstrate what they have learned to do.
* Activities for this stage are more involved than previous stages. Some activities you could do are;
* **Lego patterns** - print off patterns of different coloured lego/duplo blocks. In boxes, provide those lego blocks and the patterns and demonstrate how the blocks can be built to match the pattern.
* **Make a rocket** - using toilet rolls, tissue paper, pipe cleaners, glue and string, create a rocket and demonstrate a '5,4,3,2,1...blast off!'
* **Rainbow fish** - demonstrate painting a paper plate blue, glueing on fins and a tail and then decorating with sequins and googly eyes. Give the children all the same equipment and let them decorate their own rainbow fish.
* **Birthday cake** - using play dough or plasticine, roll into a round ball. Poke candles into the top, decorate with sequins or glitter.

# Monitioring

Pupils work in a group which is adult lead.

Visuals should be used communicate ground rules and show structure to the session.

Staff should monitor engagement throughout the session e.g video and photos where appropriate

Record of engagement in relation different activities should be recorded to build up a sensory profile

Pupil progress and engagement to be reviewed on a termly basis.