

Brookfields School

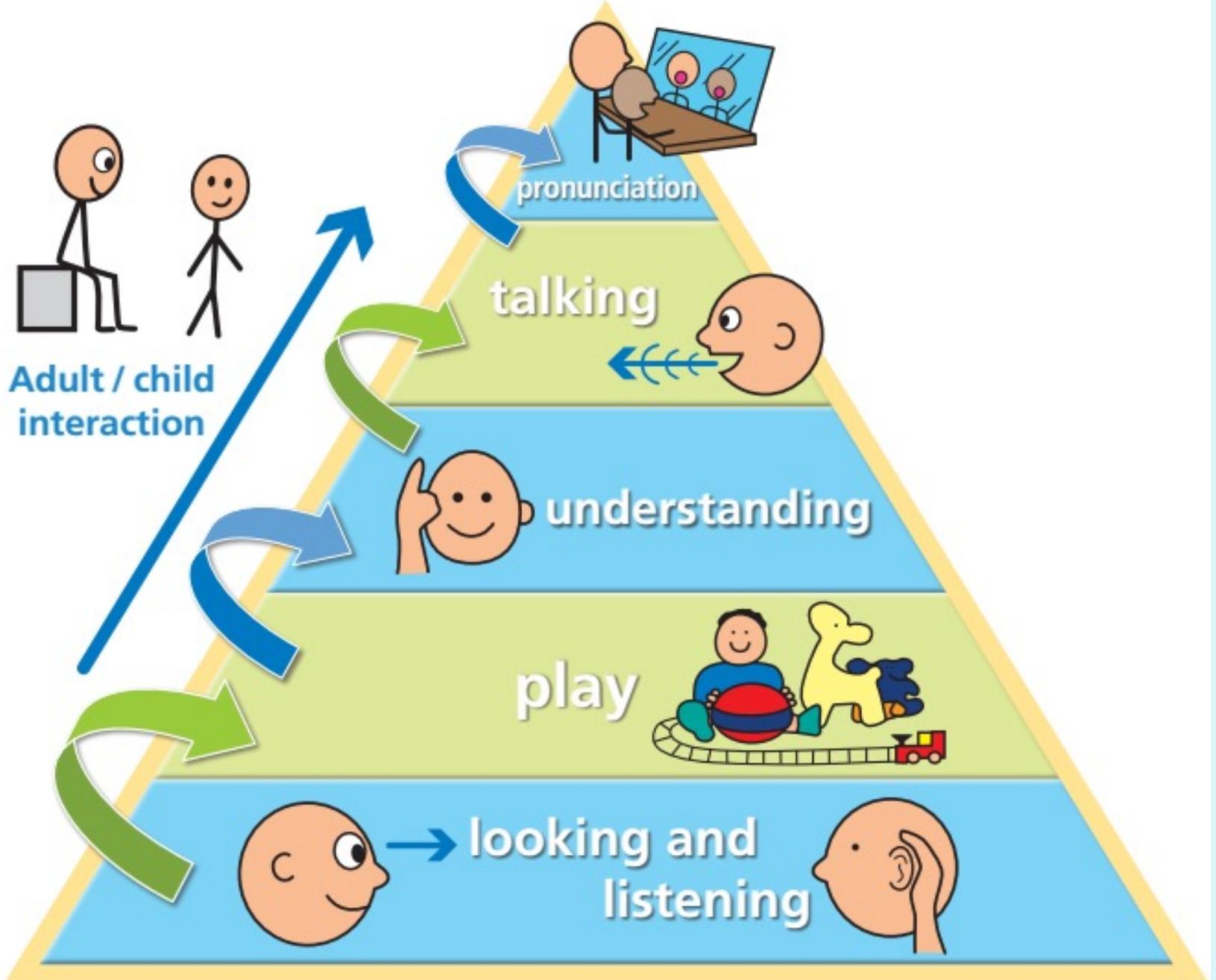


Enjoy, believe, achieve together



Attention Builders at Brookfields

Attention Autism



Attention Levels in typically developing children-Cooper, Moodley, Reynell 1997

Stage 1 . Fleeting attention.

Extreme distractibility. The child's attention is held momentarily by whatever is the dominant stimulus in the environment and is easily distracted by any new stimulus.

Stage 2. Rigid attention.

Attention inflexible. The child can concentrate for some time on a concrete task of their own choosing .The child has difficulty tolerating intervention or attempts to modify the task by an adult .

Stage 3. Single channelled attention.

Some flexibility is developing in that they can tolerate a well timed intervention or interruption more readily. The child can only cope with doing one thing at a time.

Attention Levels in typically developing children-Cooper, Moodley, Reynell 1997

Stage 4. Attention focus under voluntary control.

The child is beginning to control their own attention. Attention is still single channelled but it can be stopped /restarted under the child's control without adult support

Stage 5. Two channelled attention.

At this stage the child can do 2 things at once The child's attention span may be short but they can be taught in a group. The child is ready for whole class teaching.

Stage 6. Integrated attention.

Well established and sustained. The child can easily listen to information whilst doing something else at the same time even in a distracting environment. The child can cope in a group learning situation for long periods of time.

Gina Davis

<http://ginadavies.co.uk/about-gina/>

- Gina is a qualified Speech and Language Therapist who turned her passion for communication development into practical and joyful intervention strategies for parents and professionals dealing with autism.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=316&v=nFYnc4xcZ6k

Attention Autism

- **There are 4 stages to the 'Attention Autism' approach**
- **The bucket** - everyone attends to the same thing chosen by the adult
- **Attention builder** – pupils develop longer and sustained attention skills
- **Turn taking games** – pupils learn to shift their attention
- **Independent work** – pupils focus, sustain, shift attention, transition and then refocus.

Stage 1



Stage 1 – Teaching children to attend to a shared activity “the bucket”

- This is a good activity to start sessions with. It aims for the child to:
- Focus attention on adult led agenda
- Engage their attention with enthusiasm
- Relax and enjoy
- Anticipate shared good times
- **You will need:**
- A bucket (or box!) filled with 3 exciting objects. The children need to be motivated by the objects so don't put anything in that is broken or doesn't do very much e.g. a koosh ball. Bubbles are not the best to use either because they are so often used as rewards and motivators. Equally, don't use toys that are part of a child's obsession
- All children need to be sat on chairs in a semi-circle. Don't put a table between you and the children.

What to do:

- Sit in front of the children with your bucket. Make sure all the children can see you clearly.
- Sing a song (to add structure and eventually anticipation), e.g. “I’ve got something in my bucket, in my bucket, in my bucket. I’ve got something in my bucket, I wonder what it is”
- Open your bucket and take out an object and demonstrate what it does. You should be focused on your activity, so you don’t need to make eye contact with the children or talk to the children. Use simple spoken language/vocalizations to comment on what you are doing/can see and what is happening. Vary your tone of voice and add an element of anticipation through pauses. Do not offer the object to the children.
- When you have finished looking at the object. Put it back in the bucket and take out another object. Continue with this for a short time.



Stage 2

Stage 2 – Teaching children how to sustain their attention “the attention builder activity”

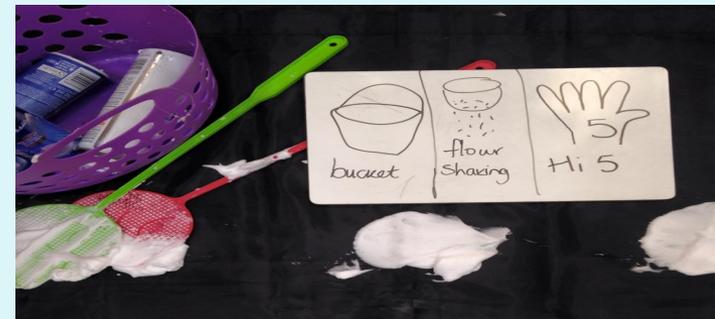
- Offer an activity that has a sequence, building to a final fantastic experience. It must be:
 - Highly appealing
 - The only thing available in the environment
 - Delivered on the adult agenda
 - Highly visual
- When you first start the activities, you may not want to use any spoken words so the children can just focus on the visual activity. Later, you could add words linked in with the topics and IEP targets that you are working on.

Stage 3

Stage 3 – Teaching the children how to shift attention to their own personal involvement and to their peer/adult “the interactive game”

- At this stage, the activity becomes an interactive game:
- The adult has a turn to demonstrate the task
- Then each child takes a turn at carrying out the activity

- Remember:
- Use the structure of attention building activities
- Use demonstration to be sure the child knows exactly what to do
- Support individual children to achieve failure proof learning opportunities
- The game needs to be highly desirable and great to watch
- Build in structured adult-led turn taking
- Have Fun!



Stage 4

Stage 4 – Teaching the children how to shift and refocus attention for an individual activity and then back to the group

- This involves:
 - Shown in a group on stools in semi-circle, leader in front of children.
 - Activity demonstrated, using key words to label objects and actions.
 - Children then transition to table-top.
 - Quick demonstration again, then give the children their own set (in tray).
 - Children do the activity themselves.
 - Share attention as one group again
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- Remember:
 - Use demonstration to ensure understanding of what is expected
 - Use activities that the children are spontaneously interested in
 - Ensure structured access to materials
 - Provide visual support to support transitions



Environment

- Distraction free / Clutter free
- No interruptions
- Semi-circle (not too close)
- Nothing in children's hands
- Placement of supporting adults
- Continually reassess



Lead adult

As a leader:

- Remember the bucket belongs to you and only you!
- Be the most interesting and amazing thing in the room
- Use simple relevant language
- Teach, don't test!
- Practise first
- Have fun!



Supporting adult

As a supporting adult:

- If you are in the room then you participate
- You do not leave your seat (it gives a message to children that they have permission to leave too!)
- You do not record anything during the group
- You don't ask questions or communicate with other staff members
- You model how to sit and look at the activities like they're the most exciting thing you have ever seen
- Aim to prevent a child from touching without speaking
- Model simple language 'say it as they would if they could'