

Talking Matters

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Helping your child to reach their potential



Goal: Listening Skills for Older Children

To develop the ability to listen and understand information

Listening skills affect a student's ability to learn, remember information and to cope in everyday situations.

The following strategies will help you to develop your student's listening skills.

1. Show your student how to be a good listener by being a good listener yourself. Student often copy the behaviour they see adults using. This means when he/she is telling you something which is important to him/her take the time to stop what you are doing, get down to his/her level, give good eye contact, pay attention and ask questions to encourage him/her to expand on what he/she is telling you. You may not always have time to do this, explain to your student why you cannot listen.
2. Consider the effect of surroundings on your student's ability to listen. For example: Is the television on? Is there a lot of background noise? Are other people talking? Are there other activities going on at the same time? Are there lots of distractions? It is important that he/she listens carefully to what you are saying. At first try going to a quiet non-distracting place where you can talk and he/she can listen effectively.
3. Encourage your student to look at you as he/she listens. This will help to focus his/her attention.
4. After giving your student an instruction, check that he/she understand what is required by asking him/her questions or asking him/her to tell you what you said.
6. Teach your student strategies for helping remember things, for example by repeating the instruction, by taking notes or drawing pictures to remind him/her what he/she has to do by taking an object with him/her which will remind him/her of what he/she has to do, or by singing or humming an instruction in his/her head to a favourite tune, which sometimes helps student to remember things.
7. Try to develop a routine for giving instructions which include "Stop what you are doing", "Look at me", "Listen". Give the instruction once only, check understanding and then do the action.
8. With all activities you do, adjust the level of instructions that your student must pay attention to according to his/her achievements. As he/she is able to manage short instructions, gradually make the instructions longer and more complex so as to continually challenge his/her ability to listen and remember.

