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**Listening: awareness of sounds**

**Your child first needs to be made aware of the differences between sounds and encouraged to enjoy listening to the different sounds that objects can make.**

* Collect together things that make different sounds, for example, rattles bells, chimes, spoon in a cup, wooden sticks, musical instruments, comb and paper, squeaky toys, water in bottles. Show your child how to make a noise with the different objects and encourage him to have a go.
* During the day, whenever you hear a noise, draw your child’s attention to it. Take him to see what made the noise and talk about it.
* Beat out a rhythm, listen to the radio, the record player, the piano, or any musical instrument which can be obtained. See if your child can copy the beat by joining in with you, and then see if he can copy the beat when you have finished. Encourage your child to walk, march, skip, run, dance, clap appropriately to the beat.
* Activity toys which also make noises, will encourage your child to be aware of sounds, for example, a pull along telephone.
* When looking at picture books with your child talk about the different sounds various objects make. You can make the noise of a car, cow, clock etc and encourage your child to join in.
* Cut out from catalogues pictures of objects that make different noises. Stick them in a book and talk about the different noises encouraging your child to join in.
* Listening: Location of Sounds
* Collect together toys which make different noises, e.g. rattles, squeaky toys, whistles etc. Squeak a toy behind your child’s back when he is not expecting it and see if he will turn to the sound. Vary this by squeaking the toy from various parts of the room when your child is not looking, and encourage your child to find where the sound came from.
* Hide a ticking clock or softly playing radio and encourage your child to find it by listening.
* Listening: Discrimination between Sounds
* Collect together two containers, a cardboard box and a metal tin, and some marbles. Show your child how to drop marbles into the tin and the box, pointing out the difference in noise as the marble hits the card or the metal. When you child has dropped a marble into one of the
* containers encourage him to show you which one it was by pointing to it. Make this game more difficult for your child by asking him to shut his eyes and listen carefully while you drop a marble into the box or tin. Ask your child to open his eyes and tell you where the marble is (make sure they cannot cheat by looking into the box).
* Collect together six identical plastic pots with lids. You may be able to use margarine tubs or yoghurt cartons with paper lids. Make two sets of shakers by filling each pair of containers with something that will make very different noises, e.g. fill two with rice, two with corks, two with screwed up paper. Muddle up the shakers. Encourage your child to find the matching pair by listening to the noise each makes. As your child gets better at this you can increase the number of pots used and fill them with things that make similar noises.
* Collect toys that make different noises. Put them into a large container so that when you make a noise with one of the toys ,your child is unable to see which one it was. Encourage your child to find the toy that made the sound.
* Collect four bottles and fill them with varying amounts of water. Tap them with a stick or pencil. See if your child can pick the highest note and then the lowest. Ask your child to close their eyes while you tap one of the bottles. See if they can find which bottle made the sound.