

Educational Psychology

Overview Guide

Attention Autism

Attention Autism is a learning approach developed by speech and language therapist Gina Davies to help children with autism develop attention and communication skills. The intervention uses activities and toys that are visually engaging to help children promote spontaneous communication and take part in an adult directed learning activity. This activity is normally done with a group of children, 4 to 5 times a week.

The aims of Attention Autism are:

- To engage attention and increase joint attention
- To help develop shared enjoyment in activities
- To help develop non-verbal and verbal communication
- Build vocabulary

Attention Autism is split into 4 stages. Each stage should only be introduced when the child or group of children are ready:

Stage 1: The bucket stage to focus attention. The first stage that involves filling a bucket with engaging toys to get the children's attention, which are presented by the adult. The adult makes simple comments about the toys. When the majority of the group are happy and engaged the leader can move on to stage 2.

Stage 2: Attention Builder. At this stage, the group are shown visually appealing and engaging activities. The aim is to sustain and build attention for a longer time.

Stage 3: Turn taking and shifting attention. The adult shows the children an engaging activity and each child is invited to have a turn one a time. For this stage watching this activity has to be as interesting as taking part.

Stage 4: Focus shift and re-engage attention. The adult leading the session will demonstrate an activity and then the child will have the same resources and should copy what was demonstrated. The aim is not for the child to do this accurately but for the child to feel confident in trying an activity.

For more information and videos on Attention Autism please see:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPPw7lj3k2Zhe19Fb3CO-ag>