

Turn Taking

Many young children find it difficult to learn to wait, share and take turns. A child with a communication difficulty may find it particularly hard to accept the rules of turn-taking and sharing. These skills should be encouraged early on, to help develop an understanding of the rules of conversational turn-taking as well as promoting good standards of behaviour.

Strategies and activities to support taking turns

- **Rules of taking turns**

- To start with, work on turn-taking when you are alone with the child. It is much harder to learn to share with two or three other children.
- Make sure there are no distractions.
- Get the child's attention by sitting up close together and face to face
- To make sure that the child does take turns, be in control of the situation by keeping hold of the equipment/toys being used.
- Demonstrate the activity first so that the child understands what is required.
- Use the appropriate signed or spoken language for turn-taking, e.g. my turn/your turn/Katie's turn
- If the child is reluctant to take turns, let them have two turns for every one that you have.
- If the child is still unwilling to take turns, remove the toy altogether and come back to it later when they are more willing to co-operate.

- **Swapping Toys**

- Two different toys, e.g. a rattle and a squeaky toy
- Give the child one toy and let them play with it for a while. Then offer the child the second toy, but only give them the second toy when the first one is returned. This activity helps the child to learn how to give and take.

- **Give and Take Games**

- Throw balls and bean bags to each other
- Send wind up toys back and forth
- Roll cars towards each other
- Take turns to post a shape in the box
- Take turns to lift up the flap of books

- **Everyday Sharing**
 - Taking turns on the swing
 - Taking turns sharing with toys
 - Taking turns to water the garden with a small watering can
 - Taking turns to clap hands

- **Floor Play**
 - Building beakers or bricks – take turns to add another beaker or brick to the tower
 - Lift out puzzles – take turns taking pieces out/putting back in
 - Musical Instruments – take turns banging a drum or shaking, for example a sealed pot of rice
 - Skittles – take turns to roll the ball and knock down the skittles
 - Rolling a ball
 - Pushing a car down a ramp
 - Playing simple board games