

PATIENT INFORMATION

Interaction Strategy: Take Equal Turns

Speech and Language Therapy Factsheet

I take equal turns with my child during play or communication.

How does the strategy help?

- It encourages balanced interaction between myself and my child as it stops me from taking over the play or talking too much.
- It helps my child to play and communicate at his own pace.
- It helps my child to learn to take turns in play and early conversations.

What should I do?

- Join in with my child's play – **copy or add to my child's** play action, and then **pause and wait** for her next action, and then copy or add to this action, and so on.
- **Pause and wait** for my child to attempt to communicate, and then respond immediately by copying or adding to his sounds or words, and then pause and wait for his next attempt to communicate, and then respond immediately, and so on.
- Help my child to know when it's her turn by **looking expectantly**; using a **visual cue** (e.g. object, gesture, Makaton sign, photo/picture); setting up a **routine** and **pausing** in the middle of it; and/or offering a **choice**.
- Match the length of my turn to the length of my child's turn.

Examples

- My child puts a brick on top of another brick, and then I put a brick on top of his brick, and then I pause and wait for him to add another brick, and then I add another brick, and so on.
- My child touches a bubble and says "pop." I respond immediately by saying "pop the bubble" as I pop a bubble. I help my child to know that it's her turn by pausing and looking at her expectantly. She pops a bubble and says "pop." I respond immediately by saying "pop the bubble" as I pop a bubble, and so on.
- I pause and wait expectantly for my child to 'fill in' the sound or word in a familiar song, and then immediately continue with my turn when he does.

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For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.
