Manchester Local Care Organisation

Trafford Local Care Organisation

Attention and Listening

Stages of attention and listening development:

- **Fleeting attention (0-1yrs):**

⇒ Child is very distractible and moves quickly between activities

⇒ Child is likely to find it very difficult to listen and attend to an adult voice

- **Rigid attention (1-2yrs):**

⇒ Child can concentrate on an activity of their own choice for longer than before

⇒ Child will find it very difficult to attend to adult speech whilst doing an activity – they can seem like they are ignoring you

⇒ Child may find it difficult to focus on an adult-led activity less favoured by them

Single-channelled attention (2-3yrs):

⇒ Child is developing the ability to shift their attention to a different activity, but will initially need full support from an adult to stop what they are doing so they can look up and listen

⇒ Child would find it difficult to listen to an adult whilst playing as they can only process one source of information at a time (i.e. speech – auditory or play – visual)

Focussed attention (3-4yrs):

⇒ Child can shift their attention with more control without the need for adult support – i.e. they will look up at an adult when they are being spoken to

⇒ Child will still find it difficult to attend to and integrate 2 sources of information – this develops later and is often supported by attending school

A child may be having difficulties with attention and listening if:

⇒ They **flit** between activities of their own choosing quickly

⇒ They find it difficult to **respond to their name**

⇒ They do not **look up** at an adult or seem to ignore them when speaking

⇒ They find it difficult to st**ay engaged** within an activity; may not finish

⇒ They **struggle to shift their attention** between an adult and an activity

⇒ They have **difficulty following or remembering spoken instructions**

⇒ They find it difficult to **sit down with others** at circle/group time

⇒ They find it difficult to **move between activities**, e.g. play time to snack time

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