



Joint Attention

- Joint attention is shifting of eye gaze between an object and a communication partner for the purpose of requesting or shared enjoyment
- Emerges in infancy and develops into more complex forms of social sharing
- Joint attention includes alternating eye-gaze, and initiating and responding to gestures (pointing, showing)

Teaching Joint Attention:

Create opportunities to interact with the child in a way that makes the activity more reinforcing because you are involved (wind-up toys, peek-a-boo)

Use of child choice and rapport building make a significant difference in the frequency of joint attention.

The use of naturalistic, motivational procedures and activities helps to facilitate the attention and social communication development of joint

Work on joint attention with a highly preferred activity or with a highly preferred object or reinforcer.

Joint Attention Activities:

- **Time Delay- Stop and Pause (before giving item or starting swing again etc. so the child to look toward you!!**
- **Spot-Lighting- - Make an unexpected noise to gain child's visual attention**
- **Joint Line of Regard- -** Gain child's attention with a preferred object and then slowly move object to center encouraging child to shift eye-gaze and to look at you and the object.
- Face to Face Games (Peek-a-boo, bouncing on knee, tickling, to increase gaze shift)
- "Spotlighting"
- Mirror-play activities
- Communication temptations to increase vocalization and elicit point (hold desired item up, have reinforcing items out of reach, hide fascinating toys close by etc)
- Observe child's focus, bring objects to joint line of regard
- Turn-Taking Games
- Joint activities- shared interaction (wind-up toys/activation toys that need an adult to turn on.
- Showing (Look at the___, Where's Mommy?, Point to___, and Giving (Give me___)
- Teach imitation
- Gain child's attention with a preferred object and then slowly move object to center encouraging child to shift eye-gaze and to look at you and the object.
- Create opportunities to interact with the child that are better with you than without you. If the child likes bubbles use a bubble dispenser that she needs you to operate. After providing some bubbles pause for a few seconds and wait for the child to look in your direction and indicate they want you to make more bubbles.
- Play *What's in the Bag?* Put some motivating items in a brown paper sack. Teach the child to ask, "What's in the Bag?" and then label the item when you pull it out. Be sure to provide opportunities for the child to be the "Holder of the Bag" also.

