

## Information Sheet

# Sabotaging Play

Sabotaging a child's play can encourage a child's communication - however please remember that communication isn't all about words.

Think about social communication, which is non-verbal. This is, for example, use of eye contact, turn taking with non-verbal communication, pointing, gesturing and facial expressions.













To open up social communication, you would start by joining in the child's play. It is important that you **always** follow the child's lead, let them choose how to play, how and when to communicate (remember this could be verbal or non-verbal communication).

When moving onto sabotaging/interrupting a child's play, you are giving them the opportunity and/or need to give some kind of indication that they want something. This indication will depend on the child's stage of development (not their actual age).

### A few examples:

**Continuing a song/rhyme** - An adult would sing a short song with the same actions or movements each time, so that this is then the routine of the song. You would first sing the song all the way through a couple of times. After that you would pause at an inviting time within the song/rhyme and wait for verbal or non-verbal response - this may be turning towards you briefly, making a sound, pulling your arm or hand, anything that is indicating that they want you to continue with the song.



more 	look,see 	sing 	star 
stop,finish 	want 	tickle 	songs 
different 	help 	spider 	wow 

When the child is doing this regularly, you could then pause a little longer to encourage the child to give more interaction. You may also wish to ask, "more?" and see if you get a response. Moving on from this you could encourage the child to sign or say "more", or by modelling the use of a Communication Board.



**Sensory songs** - If the child likes sensory play and is happy for some physical contact, then the song could incorporate actions on the child's arm or back. For example: "Incy Wincy Spider" "Round and Round the Garden".



**Extending sounds** - Listen to the sounds the child makes and mirror/copy these sounds exactly. This may just be humming. By doing this it is like you are having a conversation with them. After doing this quite a few times, maybe change the sound a little every now and then and see if the child notices, gives a reaction or even copies you.



**Requesting** - Maybe put a favourite toy in a clear container with a lid, then move towards the child and wait to see if they move towards the container and/or try to open it and retrieve what's inside - the adult would then pause and wait for a response.

**Lining up Toys** - If the child spends time lining up toys, for example, cars, then you would copy this (preferably using a different set of resources). You would then hold on to some of the cars out of the child's sight. Then, at the relevant moment, when they are looking for more cars, you would subtly show them one of the cars by holding it out of their reach. The child will hopefully indicate that they want the car. Remember to start with this could be a positive or



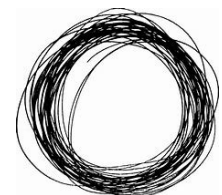
a negative reaction, depending on how frustrated the child is that they can't find what they are looking for. Hopefully over time they will realise that if they want something they can request it from an adult.



**Puzzles** - holding on to a puzzle piece or 2.



**Drawing circles** - this could be on paper, in the sand, on a chalk or white board, in some shaving foam etc. The adult would say, "round and round and round..." and pause for a response.



**Posting activities, shape sorter, building a tower...**

and many more...

