

# How to improve your child's listening environment

## ACTION POINTS

### The room

- Sound bounces off hard surfaces. This is called reverberation.
- More reverberation makes it a lot harder for your child to hear.
- Soft furnishings absorb the sound and stop it bouncing around the room.

**ACTION:** Have rugs / carpets, cushions, curtains, material wall hangings, etc., in your room to absorb the sound.

**ACTION:** Identify good listening rooms. Where do you eat your meals or have your after school conversations? Pick the best room. The kitchen is likely to be the worst room acoustically in your house.

### Background noise

- Any background noise will have a negative effect upon your child's listening.

**ACTION:** Check that mechanical items are quiet. Close the door to rooms where machines are on, e.g. air conditioning units, dishwasher, washing machine, buzzing lights.

- Use machines at night / evening / day time during school when they will not interfere with your child's listening.

**ACTION:** Turn off noise creators when they are not being used, e.g. television, radio.

**ACTION:** Move to another room if another family member must have the television on and you are having a conversation with your child.

**ACTION:** Try and be between 1 and 2 meters away from your child when talking together, depending upon their listening skills and the others involved in the activity.

### Unnecessary noise

Stop. Look. Listen.

Ask: Where is noise coming from?

Ask: How can I stop it?

- Other people – some families get used to shouting to others between rooms or up the stairs.

**ACTION:** Try and establish an expectation that all adults and children will not shout to other people in another room but will walk to the room and speak to the person there.

### Scraping chairs on a hard floor

**ACTION:** Put felt pads on the bottom of chair legs at home. School can buy chair leg muffs which look like cut tennis balls for the bottom of each leg.

### Traffic noise

**ACTION:** Shut the window when your child wants to interact with you.

- Other rooms – there is often a lot going on in other rooms.

**ACTION:** Make it your habit to shut doors between rooms so that incidental noise or conversations cannot be heard.

**ACTION:** Face your child – don't walk away when talking to them. Don't give instructions as you are walking out the door!

- In the car – this is a great time to talk but it can be noisy.

**ACTION:** Sit your child in the front next to you.

- Have an extra rear view mirror so that your child can see your face from the back.
- Wear a radio aid in the car on long journeys.
- No music or radio on in the car.





## The Yes / No of My Child's Listening Environment

Make them YES!

### My power of praise checklist

Are machines (e.g. washing machine, dishwasher) being used when my child is not around (e.g. at night time, during the school day)?

Is the television or radio turned off when not being used?

Can we move to another room or turn off the TV to have a longer conversation?

Do we keep the doors to each room shut?

Do we shut windows if it is noisy outside?

Do we move to talk to someone in the room they are in?

Are we between 1 to 2 meters apart when talking together?

Do we sit together in the car or have a mirror to aid lip reading?

Yes

No

	Yes	No
Are machines (e.g. washing machine, dishwasher) being used when my child is not around (e.g. at night time, during the school day)?		
Is the television or radio turned off when not being used?		
Can we move to another room or turn off the TV to have a longer conversation?		
Do we keep the doors to each room shut?		
Do we shut windows if it is noisy outside?		
Do we move to talk to someone in the room they are in?		
Are we between 1 to 2 meters apart when talking together?		
Do we sit together in the car or have a mirror to aid lip reading?		

something to do

### CHECKLIST

How to improve my child's listening environment.

### USEFUL RESOURCE

Useful Resource:

*Cochlear Implants for Deaf Children: Progressing through the Primary Stage* (2009) Published by The Ear Foundation [www.earfoundation.org.uk](http://www.earfoundation.org.uk)

p65 How Acoustically Friendly is your Classroom?


p66 Improving Classroom Acoustics

Useful link with free downloads: The National Deaf Children's Society

[www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)

Search: Deaf friendly teaching

Search: Deaf friendly schools pack

 NOTE: Checklist is also available in the Resources Section item# 1B.

# > LISTEN – 1B



ACTIVITY: The YES / No of My Child's Listening Environment – Make them YES!

## My power of praise checklist

Are machines (e.g. washing machine, dishwasher) being used when my child is not around (e.g. at night time, during the school day)

Is the television, or radio, is turned off when not being used?

Can we move to another room, or turn off the TV to have a longer conversation?

Do we keep the doors to each room shut?

Do we shut windows if it is noisy outside?

Do we move to talk to someone in the room they are in?

Are we between 1 to 2 meters apart when talking together?

Do we sit together in the car or have a mirror to aid lip reading?

Yes

No



## ACTIVITY: Repeating

We all use repetition in order to help us remember things, e.g. entering numbers on a calculator, dialing a telephone number. The information is stored while we are repeating it, but as soon as we stop or are distracted, it begins to be forgotten and fades from our short term memory.

We know the number of digits children usually remember as they get older. (Rudland J 2004)

### AGE IN YEARS

5 years 6 months old	4 digits	(e.g. 6-3-8-1)
6 years old	5 digits	(e.g. 9-1-5-8-3)
8 years 6 months old	6 digits	(e.g. 2-5-8-1-8-9)
11-12 years old	6-7 digits	(e.g. 9-2-5-8-1-8-3)

When practicing, always start and finish at a level your child can do. Move up 1 digit at a time e.g. start at 3 digits, if successful move onto 4; work on this then back to 3 digits at the end. Once 4 digits are followed, start here and move onto 5 then back to 4 at the end. Take it in turns; as an adult we will hit a stage when we struggle, children love this! Ask your child to repeat out loud so that you can hear how and where difficulties occur and what the pattern might be. Only once the child has established the skill do you move onto repeating quietly or in your head. Generally it's thought that short practices twice a day are beneficial, but this would only be with quick repetition tasks.

### COMMON DIFFICULTIES YOUR CHILD MIGHT EXPERIENCE

Children don't learn from repeated testing. If they are having difficulty, think of ways to bridge between the levels. Here are some suggestions.

#### 1. Your child can repeat 3-digits or words but not 4

Patterns of numbers and words are easier to remember.

Start by using random 3-digit sequences as these are well established.

Use sequences to bridge up to 4 items.

1. *Alternating Pattern* e.g. 2525, 6363
2. *Paired Pattern* e.g. 6688, 9922
3. *3 +1* e.g. 8882, 7775

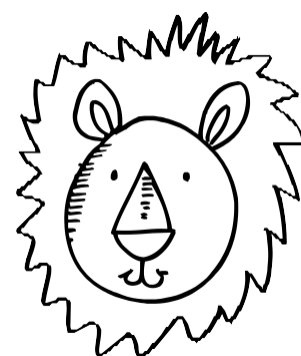
#### 2. Your child forgets the last digit in the sequence or omits the digit

Is your child starting to repeat in their head before you have finished the sequence? Cue your child in to continue to listen and then cue them in that you have finished. If this continues, move back down a level to 1 less digit and reinforce this for a while.

#### 3. Your child is beginning to be inconsistent in their recall

Are they still using the strategy, or as they get more confident do they sometimes try to do it on their own? Remind them that it's a good strategy for life and is used by adults.

Once the memory strategy has been learned it tends to generalize into everyday life at home and school quite spontaneously, but it can take a little while. Let others know what your child is focusing upon so that they can remind them.



### ACTIVITY: Number Bingo

One dice for each digit being called dependent upon your child's memory level.

Roll the dice. Read out the digits. Caller writes down what they said. Child crosses off which ones they have.

Roll a few times, then say you are adding another dice! Can they bridge up to one more number? Continue to play for a set time or a set number of rolls of the dice.

The child with the most numbers crossed off is the winner.

NOTE: Bingo cards available in the Resources Section item# 1E.



# > LISTEN – 1E



## ACTIVITY: Number Bingo

6	1	4	3	4	2
3	6	5	5	1	4
2	1	5	3	3	6
1	1	4	6	5	5
3	3	5	1	2	6
5	5	2	1	4	6

5	2	3	6	3	1
4	5	5	3	6	2
6	3	4	5	2	2
1	4	5	2	3	1
4	6	1	2	6	5
4	6	3	1	1	3

6	1	4	3	4	2
3	6	5	5	1	4
2	1	5	3	3	6
1	1	4	6	5	5
3	3	5	1	2	6
5	5	2	1	4	6

5	2	3	6	3	1
4	5	5	3	6	2
6	3	4	5	2	2
1	4	5	2	3	1
4	6	1	2	6	5
4	6	3	1	1	3

6	1	4	3	4	2
3	6	5	5	1	4
2	1	5	3	3	6
1	1	4	6	5	5
3	3	5	1	2	6
5	5	2	1	4	6

5	2	3	6	3	1
4	5	5	3	6	2
6	3	4	5	2	2
1	4	5	2	3	1
4	6	1	2	6	5
4	6	3	1	1	3

