

Play skills and your young deaf child

Playing with your young child gives you lots of opportunity to develop and expand your child's vocabulary, understanding of language and knowledge of the world around them. Play can be incorporated into everyday routines such as bath time or meal times.

It is important to follow your child's lead and always make it fun. If your child loses interest in the activity, move on to another activity to keep your child stimulated and interested. You don't need to invest in expensive toys, children can derive pleasure from everyday objects – time and time again we see this when a child has been given an expensive toy but finds the most pleasure when playing with the box! When engaging in play activities with your young child it is important to consider the following:

- Is the environment acoustically friendly, that is, free from any background noise which will take away from your voice eg. television?
- Is your child's hearing equipment working properly?
- Ensure your child can see your face clearly and that eye contact can be established

The National Deaf Children Society's website have some useful resources such as their 'Playtime tips and ideas' resource which can be accessed [here](#). They have also produced a [leaflet](#) in conjunction with The British Toy & Hobby Association which gives tips and ideas to stimulate play with your young deaf child. The [Babycentre](#) website gives some suggestions of age appropriate play activities.

* The Education Authority Sensory Service is not responsible for the content of the resources linked on this page nor does it constitute endorsement

For further advice please contact the Sensory Service via phone: 028 25 661 258 or email: sensoryservice@eani.org.uk