

Social Communication and Interaction groups

Guide to planning extension activities:

Initially, participation in sessions can be increased by:

- extending the timing from 10 to 20 minutes (not in one go!);
- using fewer activities for a more sustained period of time; and
- by having one or two more children in the group.

Following on from this you may then wish to use more specific activities such as those outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list, and it is important to remember to use children's interests as well as observations to inform planning. Gradually introduce and rotate activities into your session dependent on children's needs and interests.

Activities and games to develop awareness of self and other people

- **Mr Potato Head** - put the body pieces in a bag.
- **Whole body jigsaw or floor puzzle** - look at each other to see what will be on the next piece.
- **Bag of dressing-up clothes** – 'What am I wearing?', 'Where does it go?', 'Who's wearing...?', 'Does it fit?', and so on.
- **Pass the glasses/hat/scarf/gloves** - pass a bag containing the items round the circle until leader says 'stop' and the child holding the bag takes out one item. Adults model questions such as 'What is it?', 'What's it for?', 'Where shall I put it?' and initially also model or support children to give the answers.
- **Whose shoe is this?** Put one of each child's shoe in a bag or box and take them out in turns. Ask 'Whose shoe is this?', 'Is it mine?', 'Is it yours?' and so on. Encourage the children to use each other's names, for example, 'It's Fred's.'
- **How does it feel?** Have a bag of items with different textures for children to feel using their hands, or experience the textures on different parts of their body. For example, to use different things to tickle legs, arms or tummies.
- **Hide the Honey** – one child is the bear and has to go to sleep in the middle of the circle. The adult gives the 'honey' to a child to keep behind their back, then calls 'Wake up Mr. Bear!' The bear then asks each child 'Have you got my honey?'

Action games/rhymes about the body

- **I can wriggle** my fingers, I can wriggle my toes, I can wriggle my shoulders, I can wriggle my nose. I shake all the wriggles away from me, now I'm as still as still can be. Ask 'Who's moving?'
- Clap your hands x 2 clap, clap, clap. Stamp your feet, touch your nose, rub your tummy, and so on
- **Washing song** – Wash your dirty face – see planning for sessions.

Loud and soft sound/voice games

- **Tambourine game** - start with this to remind children what loud/soft (quiet) is.
- **Grandmothers footsteps.**
- **Fetch the keys whilst teddy sleeps.**
- **Puppet time** - have an appealing shy puppet who only comes out when children have quiet voices or speak to it quietly.

Vocabulary development

- Use games that involve putting items in a bag or basket and pass it round to make sure the interactive element of the sessions is sustained.
- Use a wider variety of games/puzzles, small world and home corner resources to play the games above.
- Use treasure baskets which can be themed to develop specific vocabulary.

It is important to remember that these activities should also be part of your everyday provision for children and the skills learnt in the sessions can then be transferred into your continuous provision.

You may observe that a child is having difficulty taking part in small world play or is unsure how to play with the resources in this area. Developing these skills could then become a focus for the social communication and interaction group. After a few sessions, the next step would be to take the small world activity used in the sessions into the small world play area so the child can practice and rehearse the skills being developed.