

**Attention Autism**

**Bucket Time Ideas**

**Attention Autism** is an intervention model designed by Gina Davies, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. It aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually based and highly motivating activities. Gina's primary objective is that the sessions are fun and "*offer an irresistible invitation to learn!*"

### **Aims of Attention Autism**

1. To engage attention
2. To improve joint attention
3. To develop shared enjoyment in group activities
4. To increase attention in adult-led activities
5. To encourage spontaneous interaction in a natural group setting
6. To increase non-verbal and verbal communication
7. To build a wealth and depth of vocabulary
8. To have fun!

### **Stages of Attention Autism**

The Attention Autism programme progresses through a series of stages, building on each skill level. Each new stage is introduced when the group is ready to expand attention skills. Not all stages should be done if the child is not ready, start with stage 1 and gradually increase when the child is ready.

## **Stage 1: Attention Grabber**

Use bubbles to bring children to circle.

Divide a small whiteboard into three sections and draw the bucket ("First we're doing bucket") and the attention builder ("Then we're doing pizza kitchen"), then the turn taking phase ('Then it's time for star dust).

Sing 'What's in the bucket?' song and pull out 3 items one at a time from the bucket- visually exciting for the children. Play with and then put back in.

## **Stage 2: Attention builder:**

Same attention builder every day for a week. This is something that should hold the children's attention for a longer period of time. This part should be visually stimulating activities that are shown to the group by the adult leader, aiming to sustain attention for a longer period. The activities are fun, visually engaging and can often involve delightful mess!

**Glitter Tea cups** - Shaving foam cakes, spray food colour, pebble on top for cherry and SPLAT!

**Sand storm** - Have a bucket or container with coloured sand in and let it pour into a container.

**Foam Squish** - Have a large ziplock bag and spray in shaving foam. Then add different colour paint and mix them together between your hands.

**Space Splat** - Pour water into shot glasses and add some food colouring. Dip cotton wool into the water and throw them onto white paper!

**Growing flowers** - Place a flower pot down on its side and then get some green paint and squeeze it to make the flower stem grow! Then at the top place a fake flower or some tissue tied to make a flower!

**Stacking Cups** - Use the paper cups and stack them up counting out to 10 and then say 'ready steady GO' and knock them down!

**Bubble Sock** Have an bottle ready made with the end cut off, attach a j-cloth to the cut end with an elastic band then dip this part into soapy water and blow through the top of the bottle to make the bubbles come out!

**Tapioca tumble**- Slowly fill a long clear plastic tube with rice/any dried beans or

peas or lentils etc. Use a small plastic shot glass to fill it up. When full, slowly tip into large black tray from a height. Variations: putting things in tray e.g. xylophone, scrunpled parchment, drum, biscuit tins etc.

**Lemonade Fountain** - Large black tray. Open lemonade bottle and pour some food colouring inside-watch it swirl down. Pour in another colour and watch them mix. Put the lid back on firmly, shake well. Count 1..2...3...and open it- "Lemonade fountain!".

**Spring Showers** - Spread shower curtain on floor. Pour water into two clear bottles, add blue and green food colouring to each, and pour each one into watering can and water all over the shower curtain, ("It's RAINING!"). Leaves cut from tissue paper- throw them up in the air ("Spring Showers!")

**Singing in the Rain**- shower curtain on floor. Pour water in bottle, add blue food colouring, pour into watering can. Pour watering can of water over umbrella while singing "singing in the rain".

**Moving Blobs**- half fill a large (2l) clear bottle with water. Fill almost to the top with oil (use funnel). Let them separate. Add drops of food colouring and let them sink through the oil to mix with the water. Add pieces of Alka-Seltzer to start the coloured blobs moving through the oil.

**Wacky races** - Have 3 different coloured paints and three wind-up toys on some black paper. Put a blob of paint for each toy and let the toy go through the paint and see who goes the furthest!

**Make a face** Put ribbons down on the paper and make the shape of the face, throw feathers on to make some hair, rip and scrunch green/blue/brown paper for 2 eyes, scrunch red paper for the nose, put red ribbon for a mouth and make a happy face!

**Car splat** Squirt paint onto a large piece of paper and then roll the car through the paint and say 'brrrrr' or 'zoom'!

**Squirty butterfly** Add paint to a cup, add water and mix it. Put a syringe in each paint pot and suck up the paint in the air and say the colour. Squirt the paint slowly into a butterfly shape, switch colour and add some patten. Fold the paper in half and reveal the butterfly say 'Butterfly!!'

**Feather race** Lay out black material/paper. Make a start line out of glitter. Line up the feathers and say 'On your marks, get set, GO!' Blow the feathers through a straw to the finish line and celebrate!

### **Stage 3: Turn taking**

Same attention builder every day for a week. This is something that encourages the children to take turns, only choose 2 or 3 children to participate each time. The adult leader demonstrates a simple activity, often modelled with another adult in the group. Some children are then invited to have a turn but only if they are comfortable to do so.

**Pull along** - Have the body board on a string/rope and pull the children to 'This is the way we pull ..... pull..... pull....., this is the way we pull .... PULL PULL PULL'

**Foam Splat!** Spray shaving foam on black paper and pour some glitter on each pile and then get the children to splat.

**Welly Walk** - Have a tray of paint and the children can put on some wellies and stamp on white paper in them.

**Colour Flick** - Put some food colouring and water into some shot glasses on a shower curtain or white paper. Then invite the children to come up and flick the paint over!

**Egg Splat** Spray 3 piles of shaving foam onto a shower curtain and put yellow paint on top then drop the spoon from a height as you sing 'Izu is going to splat the egg, splat the egg, splat the egg, Izu is going to splat the egg, Splat, splat, splat!'

**Bouncy Balls!** Have a tray with white paper at the bottom of it. Then have 3 different colour paints. Dip a ball into the paint and let it drop into the tray. Watch it bounce and make a pattern!

**It's raining, it pouring!** Have the child sit underneath the umbrella in the middle and sing 'It's raining, It's pouring' and spray with water

**Bowling** Set out the bowling pins and have three balls, you do the first one and only knock one down. Then give two other children a turn and see who can knock them all down!

**It's a windy day!** Have the child come and sit in the middle on the chair and give them the ribbons. Sing 'It's a windy day, it's a windy day, don't get blown away, it's a windy day!' to the tune of Farmer's in his Den.

**Bubble Wrap** Sing We're hopping on the bubble wrap, the bubble wrap, the bubble wrap, We're hopping on the bubble wrap, pop pop pop! Each child can have a turn hopping on bubble wrap and hear it pop!

**Hi 5** Have 3 piles of shaving foam on black paper and give the child a fly swat then invite them to come up and hi 5 the pile of foam!

**Paw prints!** Cut out three laminated paw prints then lay one down as each child's turn and give them the flour and sieve to pour over the paw then pick it up and see the paw print!

**Snowy hand** Invite the child to put their hand on the black paper in front of you and put flour in a cup and shake from a good height. Sing 'It's snowing on your hand, snowing on your hand, snow, snow, snow, it's snowing on your hand'.

**Spinning queen** The child sits on a chair (throne) and place a crown on top of their head. Sing 'Happy Birthday to the Queen, Happy Birthday to the Queen .... Let's go for a spin. Then spin the child around on the chair.

**Fireworks** Unpack the ribbons and the adult is to model wafting the ribbons up and down saying 'whoosh whoosh, fizz fizz!' Then invite the child to come and have a go, make the noises for the child and get them to lift the ribbons up and down.



## **Stage 4: Shifting & Re-engaging Attention**

Stage 4 aims to develop the skill of engaging and shifting attention. The adult leader demonstrates a simple creative task, and then gives each child an individual kit to copy the task. The children take their kits to a table, complete the task independently, and then everyone returns to the group to show their completed tasks.

**Information from:**

**<http://best-practice.middletonautism.com/approaches-of-intervention/attention-autism/>**