

## Following your child's lead

Children learn lots through play. When you follow your child's lead during play, you are taking their interests and expanding on them to teach new skills. Following your child's lead also:

- Helps to keep the play at the child's pace.
- Encourages the child to take charge and direct the activity.
- Helps the child to develop play skills, imagination, problem solving and self confidence.
- Lets your child know that you are interested in what they like.
- Helps to develop important pre-verbal language skills like joint attention and turn-taking.

You may also find that your child is able to maintain interest in the activity for a longer period of time.

### When you join in with your child's play....

#### Watch



- Watch your child play.
- Look at what your child does with the toys.
- Your child might not be using the toys in the way you expect. This is ok. They may be using the play to explore and learn in different ways.

#### Wait



- Don't be in a hurry to do things for your child. They may surprise you with what they are able to do.
- Wait until your child asks for help before you give it.
- Resist the temptation to tell your child what to do.
- Instead, copy what your child is doing.

#### Listen



- Accept your child's ideas and go with the flow.
- Listen to the sounds and words they are using in their play.
- Comment on, and talk about the play with your child.

**Most importantly, have fun!**

For more information from a local Speech and Language Therapist, visit:  
<http://www.lets-talk.scot.nhs.uk/ParentsFamilies>