



Notice While You Wait

Simple ways to notice the world around you.

Children notice the world in different ways at different ages. Try an idea that fits your child's age, development, interests, and the setting.

FOR INFANTS & TODDLERS

FOLLOW THEIR EYES

Notice where your child is looking. Pause before directing their attention somewhere else.

LISTEN TOGETHER

Pause when you hear an interesting sound. Name it simply: "I hear a dog!"

POINT & NAME

When your child points, looks, or gestures, put simple words to what they noticed.

WATCH WHAT MOVES

Notice cars, leaves, people walking, doors opening, birds, shadows, or other movement.

PAUSE & SEE

Give your child a little time to look around and see what captures their attention.

FOR PRESCHOOLERS & UP

I SPY

Take turns finding something of a particular color, shape, size, or other characteristic.

SOUND DETECTIVE

Listen quietly. How many different sounds can you hear? Where are they coming from?

FIND FIVE

Find five things that are red, round, moving, tiny, shiny, or another category you choose.

WHAT CHANGED?

Look around, close your eyes briefly, then look again. Did anything change?

UP, DOWN & ALL AROUND

Look somewhere you don't usually look. What's above you, near your feet, or far away?

FOLLOW THEIR ATTENTION

Instead of choosing what to look for, see what your child notices first and follow their lead.

CHILDREN'S ATTENTION CAN BE AN INVITATION TO CONNECT.

A look, point, sound, gesture, or question can begin a back-and-forth interaction.

Scan to watch: 5 Steps for Brain-Building Serve and Return

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University

