



## Some ideas for Special Educational Needs in Early Years

### **Intensive Interaction**

Intensive Interaction (<https://www.intensiveinteraction.org/>) is a way of developing and teaching the most fundamental communication abilities – ‘The Fundamentals of Communication’ – such as understanding and using eye contact, facial expressions, and sounds/speech. It is based on enjoying being with each other and starting to understand how interactions/conversations work in a back and forth way.

Now is an ideal time to slow everything down and to just spend time enjoying being with each other.

Let your child take the lead, try to tune into them, notice what they seem to be interested in and what they might be thinking. Try not to make any demands of them.

Respond to them as if you’re having a conversation, with or without words – if they make a sound, ‘answer’ them and wait for them to make another sound, and so on.

Don’t worry if nothing seems to be happening, just enjoy being with them and noticing them feeling the same.

### **Other activities:**

#### **Sensory box**

Set up a box of sensory and calming objects for them to explore, and that can help when they’re finding things hard. You could include:

- pieces of material with different textures (e.g. a face flannel, a fabric sample, etc.)
- sponges
- brush
- comb
- shells
- pine cones



### **Ready, steady, go**

Play 'ready, steady, go' games, such as rolling a car down a ramp or blowing bubbles. Build up the anticipation by saying 'ready..... steady.....' slowly, and waiting for your child to look at you before saying 'go!'

### **Den**

Build a den, full of cushions, pillows, blankets, etc.

### **Visual Timetable**

If your child loves routines and finds change difficult, set up a visual timetable (take photographs so your child can easily identify things in your own home, or search online for 'free visual timetable pictures'). They may just need to see what order things are going to happen in.

### **Life skills**

Invite your child to help with jobs around the house, which can give them a sense of achievement – preparing a simple meal or snack together, baking, wiping or setting the table, etc., helping in the garden to water, plant and weed.

### **Motor skills**

To help develop physical motor skills with some familiar household items and resources:

- Make holes in pieces of cardboard from boxes so your child can practice their threading skills with string or ribbons.
- Make playdough at home: <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/playdough-recipe>
- Use chunky chalks (or some small stones will make marks on paving) outdoors on the ground to make marks or draw.