



Social Communication: Joint Attention 3b [JA3b]

Child points to nearby objects/events just to share interest in objects/events with another person

Purpose

- To teach your child to point to an object to get your attention and share the object with you. This will help your child participate in social interactions with others and to get others to follow his/her interests.

Description

This occurs when the child points to an object that is within reach while looking at another person in effort to share engagement with the person. Pointing to nearby objects just to share them shows the child is continuing to further his/her understanding of gestures used to establish joint attention or shared engagement.

- While on a nature walk, the child points to a leaf that s/he sees just to show another person
- The child points at decorations on the classroom door when s/he notices the new decorations

Activities

- *Story Time:* At the library or at home, while reading a book with your child, ask him/her to show you a specific part of the picture (“Where’s the dog?”). After your child points, comment on something interesting in the picture (“That dog has a long tongue”). Then let your child continue to look at the book for a little longer before you encourage him/her to show you another picture. Be sure to model pointing to pictures of interest in the book



yourself. Use animated expressions to draw your child’s attention to what you are pointing out (“Wow, look at that fox!”).

- *Playtime:* While playing, ask your child to point to an object nearby. For example, say, “Where is the orange block?” or “Where is the Thomas train?” Encourage your child to point to a variety of toys and comment on something interesting about each object pointed to. Model pointing to toys/objects of interest and making a comment about them. This can be a fun time to include siblings or friends!
- *Out and About:* When you and your child are out and about, ask your child about what he or she sees around him. If needed, respond with a point to model the pointing gesture to your child.

Strategies

- *Wait with anticipation* – make faces and gestures to show your child you are waiting for them to point to something
- *Accompany your communications with intonation, pointing, and non-verbal gestures* – model pointing to an object that you see your child looking at
- *Translate your child’s actions, feelings, and intentions into words* – label what your child is doing to encourage him/her to point to something to show you
- *Use follow-in directives* – using your child’s interests and/or items your child is playing with, direct your child to point out items to you and/or another person

Suggested Toys

- Books
- Blocks
- Board games
- Puzzles
- Transportation toys

Goal Mastery

An ASAP Goal is mastered if your child meets ALL of the following criteria:

- Shows the skill at least three times
- Shows the skill during different activities or in different settings such as during snack time, during playtime, or at the grocery store.
- Shows the skill with minimal help or support from an adult