



Social Communication: Joint Attention 4b [JA4b]

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

Purpose

- To teach your child to point to objects that are out of reach to get your attention and share the object with you.
- To help your child interact with others and to get others to follow his/her interests.

Description

This occurs when the child points to an object that is out of reach, while looking at another person, in effort to share engagement or attention with the person about an object of interest. Pointing to more distant objects just to share them shows the child is furthering his/her understanding that pointing can reference objects that are out of reach, and that pointing can be used to draw attention to a specific item.

- Child points to show a peer a kite that someone is flying
- Child points to a gigantic bubble floating by to show her teacher
- Child points at a dog walking across the street to show her mom

Activities

- *Around the House:* Ask your child to point to objects at home. Say, “where is the vacuum?” or “where is the television?” Comment on something interesting about any object your child points to “I love that fluffy towel.”
- *Outside Time:* Ask your child to play “What do you see?” outside, making it a turn-taking game and encouraging your child to point to objects when it’s his or her turn. For example,



similar to the book, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*, you might say, “Mommy, mommy, what do you see?” and then point and reply to yourself, “I see a slide in front of me.” Next say, “Nathan, Nathan, what do you see?” and prompt your child as needed to respond (for example, by pointing and saying, “I see a swing in front of me” or “I see a dog looking at me”) until you establish this as a routine game.

- *Shopping*: Ask your child what he or she sees when you are at stores. This might be especially effective when preferred items/foods, or something silly is within sight.

Strategies

- *Translate your child’s actions, feelings, and intentions into words* – label what your child is doing to encourage him or her to point to something to show you
- *Accompany your communications with intonation, pointing, and non-verbal gestures* – model pointing to an object that you observe your child attending to. Make faces and gestures to show your child when you are waiting for them to point to something.
- *Reward your child* – give the child the object that they pointed to or have them participate in the event they pointed to. Exaggerate your response (“yes! It is a PINK ball!”).
- *Give your child a model* – show interesting objects to your child (as for Joint Attention Goal 4a) as you interact
- *Use follow-in directives* – using your child’s interests and/or items your child is playing with, direct your child to point out distant items to you and/or another person

Suggested Toys

- Paper plane
- Bubbles
- Kite
- Playground equipment

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