



## WHAT ARE ATTENTION AND LISTENING SKILLS?

Good attention is the ability to focus the eyes and/or ears on something specific for a certain length of time.

A child needs to listen to sounds around him, to speech sounds, to words and to sentences before he can learn to speak for himself. Without the ability to hear, a child will not be able to develop listening skills!

Various factors may affect a child's attention and listening skills:

*Hearing:* Children with a hearing loss or with fluctuating problems such as recurrent glue ear will find it very difficult to pay attention and may tune out. A child who is prone to colds, a runny nose, sore throats and chest infections is more likely to get glue ear.

*Emotional and physical well being:* A child will be unable to focus and maintain their attention if they are unwell or if they are worried or anxious.

*Environmental demands:* There may be too many stimuli competing for the child's attention, or possibly the language being used is too complex so the child switches off.

*Sensory processing:* Some children's sensory systems require very little stimulation. They may interpret otherwise harmless input as painful or very unpleasant. These children can react negatively to noise, touch, movement and visual input.

**Written for DisabledChild-India by Vijaya Sudra**

**Written on November 2012**

**To be updated on November 2013**