



Attending: The First Step to Learning Readiness

Attending is the first prerequisite skill for learning readiness. In order to learn, you must be able to sit, listen, and respond when needed. Attending to a person or focusing on one task can be challenging for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

For early learners, it is important to first teach attending skills before targeting additional skills. Below is a list of examples of some attending skills. Ensuring a child possesses these skills will set them up for success for future learning.

Responds to Name	Responds to the instruction "come here"	Responds to the instruction "come here"
<ul style="list-style-type: none">When their name is called the learner can orient their body towards you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Approaches the speaker when asked to "come here"Responding to this instruction promotes attending by: alerting that an instruction is coming, increasing proximity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The ability to sit for at least two minutesShould be able to sit for a period long enough to receive instructionPrior to group instruction, learner should be able to sit without touching peers

Before providing instructions or teaching new skills it is important to ensure you have the learner's attention. Below are some tips to help facilitate attending:

Ensure the environment is clear of distractions	Provide clear and concise instructions	Gain attention before instructions	Capture motivation
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