

HAPPY



**(HATTERS)**

**Language Development**

Connection over Compliance

## **Play ideas to support connection and communication at home**

*(Child-led and GLP-friendly)*

A gentle note for parents

Play doesn't need to look structured to be meaningful.

For many children, especially autistic children, communication grows through shared play, curiosity, and connection, not through pressure or repetition.

These play ideas are about joining your child, following their lead, and enjoying time together.

There is no expectation for your child to talk or respond.

# Puzzle and matching play

Puzzles and matching activities are great for shared attention and calm engagement.

## How to play:

- Sit next to your child rather than opposite
- Let your child choose the puzzle or pieces
- Help only when needed
- Accept hand-leading as communication



## Tip:

Pause, wait, and observe, your presence matters more than instructions.

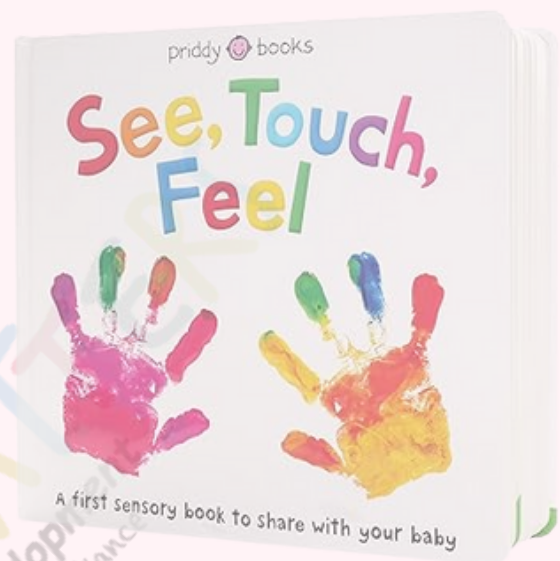


# Sensory Play

Sensory play can be very regulating and motivating.

## Ideas:

- Sensory books
- Textured toys
- Water play
- Playdough or slime



## How to engage:

- Copy what your child is doing
- Take turns exploring
- Let your child decide when to stop



# Pretend play (simple and repetitive)

Pretend play supports imagination, sequencing, and shared experiences.

## Ideas:

- Animal figures
- Cars and ramps
- Dolls or characters
- Play food



## How to play:

- Repeat the same action your child enjoys
- Keep play simple and predictable
- Avoid changing the play too quickly



# Cause-and-effect play

These activities help children understand that their actions have meaning.

## Ideas:

- Pop-up toys
- Push-button toys
- Wind-up toys
- Spinning or light-up toys



## How to play:

- Take turns pressing or activating
- Pause to allow anticipation
- Enjoy the moment together



# Books as play



Books don't have to be "read".

## How to share books:

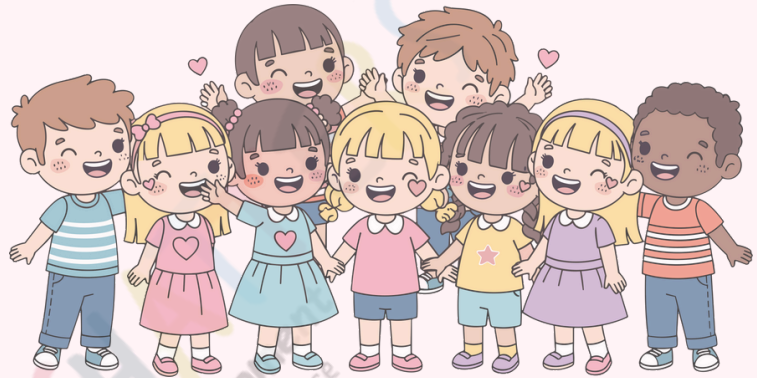
- Let your child turn pages
- Allow touching, pointing, or acting things out
- Stop when your child loses interest

It's okay not to finish the book.



# Most important things to remember

- Follow your child's lead
- Keep play relaxed and enjoyable
- No questions, no testing
- All communication counts (looks, sounds, actions, gestures)
- Stopping is okay



Play is not about doing it “right”, it’s about being together.

Small moments of shared play, repeated often, make a big difference over time.

If you’d like more personalised ideas based on your child's needs , we’re always happy to explore this together during parent consultations.