

## Pretend Play

Early pretend play does not last long, so act as a coach for both (or all) children who are playing. Give a few directions to keep them involved, eg, "I'd love a cup of tea", "I wonder if that baby needs her nappy changing", "Let's do some washing now". Stay at the edge of the playing when it is going well but be prepared to join in when it needs help.

It can work very well in pretend play for the adult to act as "coach". You can prompt a solitary child and his/her playmate in various ways, for example:

"Amy, see if Fred has more plates for washing".

(suggesting an action)

"Billy, ask Fred, "Can I have a plate too?"

(coaching a question)

"Amy, tell Fred, "Tea's ready"

(coaching a comment)

"Fred, can you ask Amy if she wants to wear a hat too?"

(coaching a playmate)



Speech and Language Therapy Service

## Advice for Encouraging Solitary Children to Interact Through Play



For more information, contact Speech and Language Therapy:  
Tel 01535 295652 or

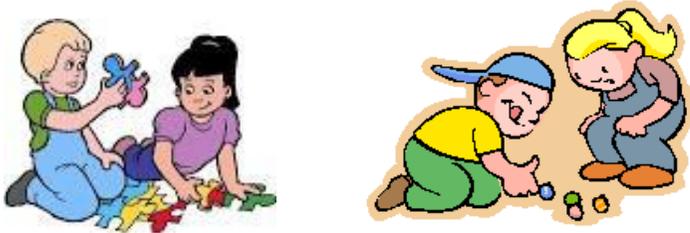
<http://www.airedale-trust.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy/>

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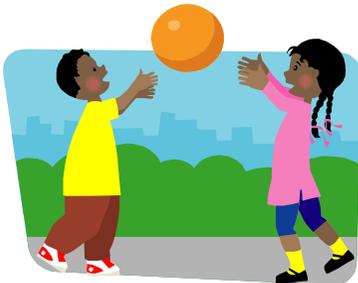
# Playing with other children

Adults have an important role as a "coach" to help children understand and learn successful ways to interact with others.

You may need to teach a child some phrases to help them to join in play with other children. Show them how to ask, "Can I play?" Family members can start to play with something the child likes, but without including the child, then they show them how to ask, "Can I play?"



Show your child how you can say, "I like your ball/doll/etc" and that this can result in the other person sharing that toy.



It may help for an adult to set up some play routines with one or two other children. Using a bike or rocker, for example, you can carry out a "Stop!" "Go!" routine, with the children having opportunities to tell you when to stop or go.



Try giving children jobs which they must do together to be successful, such as preparing something to eat. Explain who is going to do what as you go along (Amy take the bread out of the bag, mummy put it in the toaster, mummy take it out, Billy put butter on, Amy put jam on, both eat!).



Build a tower or castle and give a shared pile of identical bricks to the solitary child and another. They must take turns to put a brick on and make an identical tower or castle to yours.

