




Noah's Inclusion Services

LEARNING TO PLAY INDEPENDENTLY

Some children show attention demanding behaviours. They disrupt phone calls or conversations with other people because they want to monopolise you and your time. These children need to learn how to share you and your time with the rest of the family, to amuse themselves and to play independently without interrupting.

What?	How?	
Age of child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait till your child is old enough to amuse him or herself before starting independent play training. • Really young children need to have a parent/carer around so they cannot play by themselves for more than a few minutes. 	
Shaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your child plays quietly, independently, or just sits quietly while you do something else, he or she is rewarded by time playing with you. • Then there is another period of independent play, and so on. • The goal is for the child to be able to play independently without needing you to play too. For some children <i>Shaping</i> may be needed with independent play initially being for a shorter interval. • Gradually increase length of independent play sessions. When your child can play independently for 8-10 minutes, this should cover most home situations. 	
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a quiet time when other things are not happening, and you can concentrate on your child's behaviour. The pre-dinner evening rush is not a good time for this. <p>You can tell your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"When I have finished[doing this] I will play with you."</i> • <i>"That's good playing by yourself."</i> • <i>"It's a big help letting me get this done."</i> etc. 	
Praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your child know you're not deliberately ignoring them for uncooperative behaviour, by praising independent, quiet play. • Remember to encourage your child's other desirable behaviours by praising and encouraging cooperative behaviour. 	