

# Learning Links' Tip Sheet

## Interaction with others



The following strategies may help support your child's interaction with other children.

- ∞ Increase the time your child spends playing with someone else. By observing your child carefully you will see times he or she is able to accept someone sitting next to him or her. This is the beginning of joint attention in an activity
- ∞ When you are sitting next to your child, you can help him or her to interact by copying their play and making some positive comments about what he or she is doing; for example, if your child is building a tower of blocks you might do the same. The aim here is to follow your child's lead and let him or her feel comfortable in this situation.
- ∞ When your child is comfortable with your presence you can join in the play by taking short turns in his or her game. Your aim is to increase your child's tolerance of an adult participating in play.
- ∞ The next step is for you to encourage other children to play alongside you and your child by sharing the focus of the play with both children. For example, if children are playing with trucks but remain separate from each other, the adult can copy the children's actions and comment on what is happening. Your aim is to draw another child into the play with the adult supporting these interactions.
- ∞ Increase your child's awareness of other children interacting by making specific and positive comments about children playing together; for example, "You and ..... are building road" or "I see some friends playing together, they are building a sandcastle".
- ∞ When your child is relaxed and interested, encourage games that require cooperation and interaction with another child. These can include the following:
  - ~ Row Your Boat. If the children are reluctant to hold hands, each child can hold the end of a piece of stretchy material such as lycra.
  - ~ Tug-o-war with a lycra band.
  - ~ Give a Friend a Ride. One child sits on the floor, holding one end of the lycra. The other child pulls him/her across the floor.



*The information in Learning Links' Tip Sheets is prepared by experienced early childhood professionals. Each child is unique and this material is not necessarily suitable for every child, parent or carer. We recommend you discuss this information with your child's therapist or education professional prior to using these tips.*