

## Mirroring Strategy

**What is it?** Mirroring is a strategy used to develop an awareness of others and aid communication. It allows the child to lead the interaction with no sense of task or objective. The process starts slowly with the adult imitating the child's actions and vocalisations and the child learning to tolerate sharing personal space with another person. In this way the child is under no pressure and the pauses are as important to acknowledge as the movements or vocalisations. The aim is that the child is able to rehearse:

- Engaging with another person
- Eye contact
- Turn taking
- Anticipation
- Non-verbal cues
- Watching
- Vocalising



**How do I do it?** Work with the child in a quiet area with a limited set of toys (it is best to have 2 of each toy) for a 5 to 10 minute play session. Mirror the child's actions and sounds in order to give them control of the interaction. If the child uses a toy then you have one the same and mirror their actions.

**What next?** As the weeks progress the adult can start to pause during mirroring to wait for eye contact/glance/gesture to give the child the opportunity to show they want more.

Once interactions are established the adult can change the action slightly when mirroring to see if the child notices. This may lead on to the child copying the adult's action. Also listen to see if the child can take turns making sounds with you.