

Attachment Games

Games to Reduce Stress and Build Trust

Game 1 - Whisper Across The Room

Adult stands across the room from child. Both agree to take care of each other during their play. Adult explains that they will whisper some simple instructions which the child follows. Simple things like: please touch your toes, please turn around once, please scratch your head, etc. Then swap over and the child whispers instructions to the adult. Child has to really focus and listen – and so does the adult!

Variation 1: move further apart!!

Variation 2: add a distraction like playing music which encourages even more focus.

Game 2 - Mirroring

Adult stands roughly 2 metres apart from the child. Both agree to take care of each other during their play. The adult explains that they are going to begin doing some slow movements and the child's aim is to copy everything that the adult does. Put some relaxing music on if you would like to. After a few minutes, let the child have a turn at leading the movements and try your best to copy them as they move.

Variation 1: mirror using clapping or musical instruments.

Create rhythms and try to copy them back exactly as you heard them.

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Silent models

The parent explains to the child, that using newspaper (with the staples removed) and masking tape, they are going to create a model. Explain to the child that they can choose what they create, it might be 2D or 3D, it might be a picture or an object, it might be made up. Explain that you are going to try to play in silence, that you are going to let the child lead, and you will try to work out what they are creating. Let them know that you will try to help and if you get it wrong, they can shake their head to let you know and that you will keep watching and wondering. Play relaxing music in the background if you would like to

Partner Walks

The adult stands with hands out in front of them, palms facing up. Both agree to take care of each other in the play. Explain to the child that they are going to safely lead you around the room by tapping your hands, one tap equals one step. If they tap both of your hands it means step forwards, if they tap only your left hand you turn to the left, if they tap only your right hand, you turn to the right. Play for a few minutes and then swap over. Play relaxing music in the background if you would like to.

Variation: if you feel safe to, have a go with your eyes closed!!!

Variation 2: follow the sound (this can be voices or musical instruments).

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Game 3 - Break the Code

Adult and child sit next to each and agree to take care of each other during the game. Adult asks for permission to touch the child's hands. Adult explains that they are secret agents sending messages to each other. Adult and child turn away from each other a little and child offers adult back of hand. Adult taps a pattern of gentle taps on the back of the child's hand and the child tries to remember it and then tap it back on the adult's hand. Swap over.

Variation 1: write letters on the back of the hand - even spell something.

Variation 2: draw shapes on each other's backs and guess.

Game 4 - Point to my Call

Adult and child sit together and agree to take care of each other during play. Adult explains that if it's OK, the child will look down or cover their eyes (be sensitive). Adult is going to move to a different part of the room and make a call. Agree with the child what the call is going to be, it can be a word or a sound. (IMPORTANT: wherever possible allow the child to decide the call). Child will point to the area of the room that they can hear the call coming from. Adult then moves and calls again. Make sure that the child can succeed at the level needed.

Variation 1: adult moves further away even into different rooms around the house - play with care.

Variation 2: adult calls and instead of pointing the child has to find the adult.