

Wow Box

What is it?

An activity using a collection of stimulating toys. It is used to promote attention, concentration and language skills. It may be used in a one-to-one session, or in a small group.

Benefits for the Child

The Wow Box will help your child to develop:

- Shared attention skills
- An ability to engage in play with a familiar adult
- Anticipate simple language attached to the play activities
- An increased eye gaze towards the adult
- An ability to take their turn in a playful engagement

When using the Wow Box at home, your child will benefit from quality time with you, by you validating their play choices and following their lead in the play.



Resources

- Use a special blanket to mark the space for the special play time. You can also use a small table and two chairs if your child focusses their attention better in supportive seating
- A small box, e.g. a shoe box (preferably attractively decorated). A bag or bucket can also be used
- A collection of motivating toys, that perhaps requires your help to operate them, including:
 - ✓ Visual toys – e.g. Glitter stick, light-up ball/stick, light chaser etc.
 - ✓ Tactile toys – e.g. Koosh ball, furry caterpillar etc.
 - ✓ Auditory (sound) toys – e.g. Whistle, mini-drum, harmonica, echo microphone etc.
 - ✓ Cause and effect toys – e.g. Wind-up toys, pop-up toys, jumping frog etc.
 - ✓ Any other toys that are likely to motivate your child

TORBAY COUNCIL

- Start small, initially with two toys in the box, gradually build these up as the child is able to sit/engage for longer.
- Think about having duplicate sets of toys for you and your child to play with at the same time.
- This will take the pressure off the child to give up a toy for you to model a play action.
- Duplicate toys will also enable you to follow the child's lead and validate their choice by it being your choice also.
- The child is more likely to watch your play actions whilst using the same toy and have the opportunity to copy



The Wow Box song

(which can be sung to the tune of 'Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush' like this)

What have we got in the box today? the box today? the box today?

What have we got in the box today? Let's Look and see!

How to do it

1. Gather your resources in a quiet area of your home (or other setting) where the child will not be distracted. Turn off television, radio or anything else which may interrupt your session.
2. Sit your child opposite you or some children beside you. You may need to show the box to him/her to encourage them to sit down.
3. Place the box between you and your child.
4. Sing the Wow Box song while tapping on the box.
5. On the words "look and see", open the box and allow the child to take out one toy. Then close the box.
6. Name the toy and demonstrate what it does using the duplicate toy. Use simple language, e.g. pull, twist, shake, etc. Use only single words rather than long phrases or sentences, and do not ask your child questions. Do not insist that your child names the toy.
7. While he/she is still showing attention, but you are noticing signs of waning attention, say "finished", or "bye bye" plus (name of toy), and put the toy back in the box.

8. Repeat steps 4 to 7 until all toys have been looked through or the child loses interest.

Points to remember:

- If the child has a particular interest in a toy (train, car, etc), leave this toy out or until last minute as it may distract their attention.
- If the child is distressed or not interested, they are learning nothing. Finish the session and try again another time.
- As the child learns the routine, encourage them to tap the box when you are singing the song.

