



LISTENING TO BABIES

HOW CAN WE LISTEN?

Giving babies a “voice” helps everyone caring for them to understand their uniqueness and both strengthens and needs.

Observation is the easiest way to listen to babies, following their interests and verbal and non-verbal cues to help you see the world through their eyes

Tuning in- watch for body language to understand how babies are feeling and responding to experiences

Informal/natural observation

Being aware and taking time to watch and tune into baby’s interests, likes and dislikes. Noticing their verbal and non-verbal communication and cues will tell you about the child’s thoughts and feelings; which can support their day to day care and interactions.

- *These observation can happen in the moment or over a longer period of time*
- *You may want to discuss with other who care for the baby to support continuity of care.*

Semi - structured

To have a specific focus or using a list observation props to recognise and record non-verbal cues and body language.

- *use a tally chart to monitor which toys the baby chooses or an area they choose to play in and how they respond. This will tell you about their likes and dislikes*
- *movement study- over a day or week, map where the baby chooses to play and who with recording the sounds and actions the baby makes and how you respond*

Observation Chart

Positive facial response (smile etc)

Negative facial response (frown etc)

Focused attention on activity

Focused attention on you (eye contact)

Closeness to you (head touching; physically coming towards you)

Exploring with senses (listening, touch, smell)

Movement to activity (body or head)

Movement away from activity (body or head)

Positive sound response (gurgle, giggle etc)

Negative sound response (cry, grunt etc)

Positive body movement (kicking legs, bouncing etc)

Negative body movements (kicking legs, unsettled)

Here is an example of the observation chart used at

[Blaenau-Gwent Flying Start](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUh0y8lwdRU)

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Structured approach

The New-born Behavioural Observations (NB0) system is a tool designed to help parents and practitioners share together the fascinating uniqueness of a baby, though observing their behaviour, which is their language. It provides baby's with a "voice"; giving the baby an opportunity to let the caregiver know who they are, what their preferences and vulnerabilities might be and which areas they may need support. Often used in the health sector and clinicians to support and enhance parent-infant relationship. Specific training needs to be undertaken to complete the observations.

To find out more <https://www.brazelton.co.uk/>

Please note: Caregivers know the child best; this is a guide - please adapt and use to support each individual child. For more information please visit www.childreninwales.org.uk



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