

Intensive Interaction



What is Intensive Interaction?

A therapy approach that focuses on social communication and helps to develop the “Fundamentals of Communication” (the building blocks to communication and interaction). Intensive Interaction focuses on:

- How to be social and understand people
- How to take part in interaction with another person
- How to enjoy other people and be motivated to be with them

Who is it for?

Intensive interaction benefits people who show differences in social communication. These people may have a diagnosis of Autism and may appear to be socially remote, passive and/or dysregulated. It is an appropriate approach for developing the sociability and early communication skills of young people at the ‘Social Partner’ and ‘Language Partner’ communication stages (according to the SCERTS framework). Principles of the approach can also be used with ‘Conversational Partners’.

The Fundamentals of Communication:

Intensive Interaction provides people with positive experiences of being socially included and emotionally connected with others. It provides repeated opportunities for the young person to learn the fundamental skills needed when being social with other people. These ‘Fundamentals of Communication’ include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Enjoying being with another person | • Learning to regulate and control arousal level |
| • Developing the ability to attend to that person | • Using and understanding eye contact |
| • Concentration and attention span | • Using and understanding facial expressions |
| • Learning to do sequences of activity with a person | • Using and understanding other non-verbal communications |
| • Taking turns in exchanges of behaviour | • Using and understanding physical contact |
| • Sharing personal space | • Vocalising and using vocalisation meaningfully. |

Intensive Interaction Techniques:

The aim of Intensive Interaction is for the adult to create turn-taking sequences of extended, enjoyable shared attention with the other person. Intensive Interaction involves the following principles:

Quality one-to-one time – find time and a place for the quality interaction to take place.

Positioning - position yourself at the student's eye level.

Tune in – to the young person's body language, movements, gesture, facial expression and voice

Hold back – go slowly and hold back your behaviour to allow the person to take the lead in the interaction.



Respond – respond to what the young person did in a variety of ways such as joining in and imitating.
**Only join in with/imitate behaviours that you feel comfortable with and that are safe.*

Be available – be relaxed and show available body language, facial expression and a sense of presence.

Pause – wait and be unhurried to allow the activity to happen at a comfortable speed. This will allow the young person to think and process the activity.

Shared enjoyment – expect to enjoy yourself!

The only rule is that the interaction stops when the young person has had enough.

