



Tabletop Identiplay can facilitate key elements which are difficult for young children with ASD:

- ◆ shared focus
- ◆ imitation
- ◆ parallel play
- ◆ play dialogue
- ◆ narrative structure
- ◆ flexibility

Acknowledgements:

Dr Caroline Smith (Tabletop Identiplay)

Birth to Five Service

Tabletop Identiplay



Why use Tabletop Identiplay?

Tabletop Identiplay is an approach to developing play in children with autistic spectrum disorders/significant social communication difficulties.

This approach provides:

Visually clear structure: clear information to the child about what toys are theirs to play with, in what space and initially, in what way.

A narrative structure: giving the play activity a reason, a framework and an end to the play act.

You will need:

A table divided in two using coloured tape, showing a clear area for the child's toys and a clear area for the adult's toys.

Two chairs set out face to face on either side of the table.

Two identical sets of toys.

A typed play script showing the layout of the toys on the table and what the adult will say and do with the toys.



What to do:

- ◆ The adult sets out the two sets of toys on the table
- ◆ The adult models the simple playscript, watching and waiting for the child's engagement
- ◆ If the child does not engage, the adult may:
- ◆ Put the toys away, saying 'play finished' and repeat the process on subsequent days
- OR
- ◆ briefly prompt the child
- ◆ Plan to undertake short identiplay sessions regularly/daily

How the play can develop:

- ◆ as the child relaxes within the structure/familiarity, the child may create or add in elements of his/her own play sequence.
- ◆ at these times, the adult joins the child's play, initiating his/her actions and sounds, sensitively adding to the play, but reverting to mirroring or repeating the play sequence when additions are unwelcome to the child.
- ◆ adult making planned extensions in the play script to develop the play.
- ◆ introducing play scripts and toys for other areas of play.

