Encouraging children to listen with purpose around the home

Kitchen

Setting a cake/egg timer when cooking. Tell your child that when the timer goes off they can switch the cooker off and have the first chip etc.

Ask child to listen for the microwave timer. When it pings, they can get their dinner out. Wait for a response.

Call your child at meal times. Let waving and touching be *a last resort*. Use different intonation patterns, loudness, move nearer etc. eventually getting in the child's line of vision. If s/he doesn't come because s/he is engrossed in play, then s/he is acting like a hearing child!

Ask your child to help when s/he hears the washing machine stop. Ask her/him to pull the clothes out of the machine into the box.

Listen quietly and watch milk boiling together at first. Then, on a later occasion, ask the child to switch the hob off/shout when the milk starts to rise.

Listen to popcorn being made. Ask the child to tell an adult when the popping noise stops, or the pop corn will burn.

Hall

Ask adults who have a key to the front door, to ring the bell or knocker. Wait for the child to respond and help them identify the sound, if necessary, and let them see who is there.

Also, if your child can reach the bell/knocker, shut the door when they go into the garden to play, and tell them to ring/ knock, when they want to come in, therefore helping the child to realise that his/her use of sound has an affect on others.

Ask a close friend or relative to phone at a particular time for your child to practice picking up the phone, and saying "hello".

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If you have a noisy, sprung letterbox, ask your child to pick up the post when s/he hears it being delivered.
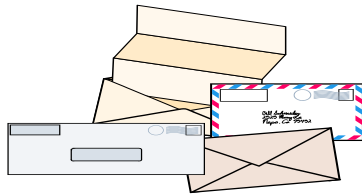
Lounge

Show the child and if possible allow the child to fiddle with the volume and the balance control on the stereo to alter the sound from the speakers).

Ask children to switch off the TV if it is not being watched. Otherwise it is just distracting background noise.

If a child is watching television or playing on a tablet, check the volume at an audible level for her/him but not too loud for other family members. If your child is older, speak to your key contact about using wireless accessories or direct input cables for your child to listen directly to gadgets.


Bedroom

On a school day, if your child is a deep sleeper, and you wake before them, switch his/her implant on and just put the coil on him/her, with an alarm clock near the pillow.
Watch for responses when the alarm goes, and explain the noise. (NB warn him/her the night before!!)

Tell your child you will knock before entering his/her bedroom and then remember to do so!

Bathroom

Get the child dry and put his/her implant back on, before pulling out the plug. Listen to the glugging sound together, putting the plug in to make it stop or putting toys/flannel in the plug hole to hear the different sounds.

Take the top off the cistern to let the child look in the toilet when it's flushing, to explain the water-filling sound and why it stops.
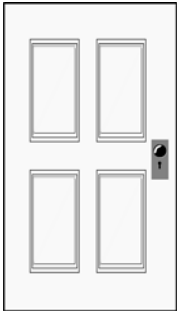
Encourage the child to knock on the bathroom door if you are in there, and wait for "come in" before entering. Knock and wait for "come in" when your child is in the bathroom, unless they are in the bath, (i.e. without access to sound!)

Garden

When the child hears the lawn mower stop in the next door neighbours' garden, s/he can have a drink, etc.

Other

Sounds can be very similar. Exploring sounds together through play e.g., explaining that various brushes sound similar,

- ➤ toothbrush
- ➤ nailbrush
- ➤ dustpan and brush
- ➤ garden broom
- ➤ clothes brushes etc.

Show that hearing people can not distinguish between some sounds, and cannot hear everything. This is often news to deaf children.

Listen and think about background noise reduction in your home. Eliminating as much background noise as possible is important because it helps children to focus better on what you are saying. Think about using washing machines/ dishwashers/ radios etc. when your child is not about, as much as possible.

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