

**Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.**

## Top tips: Sustained shared thinking

**Developing sustained shared thinking in your setting involves practitioners working together with children to naturally solve problems, clarify ideas, evaluate, and extend conversations. This approach fosters an environment rich in meaningful interactions, enhancing learning and development.**

Here are our top tips:

- Training and development:
  - Offer regular training sessions on techniques and strategies for sustained shared thinking
  - Provide access to books, articles, and other resources which will support your team
  - Use video recordings of staff interactions with children for training and reflection purposes
- Peer observation and reflective practice:
  - Pair less experienced staff with more experienced, confident mentors who can model effective interactions
  - Encourage your team to share ideas and discuss their experiences and strategies that worked or didn't work
  - Organise opportunities for staff to observe each other and provide feedback on their interactions with children
- Plan activities:
  - Ensure staff are trained to observe and follow children's interests, supporting conversations and activities to be child-led
  - Support flexible planning that can be adapted based on the children's responses and interests
  - Encourage staff to plan activities together, including activities that involve collaboration and problem-solving
- Model effective communication strategies:
  - Encourage and upskill your team to use open-ended questions to extend conversations and encourage deeper thinking
  - Emphasise the importance of active listening and responding thoughtfully to children's ideas
- Share success:
  - Encourage staff to share their success stories and effective strategies with the team
  - Regularly recognise and celebrate instances of effective sustained shared thinking in team meetings.



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### **NDNA products to support you with these tips**

- Online course – [Exemplary Practice with Three-to-Five-Year-Olds](#)

**And more resources at [www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna](http://www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna)**