

# Sharing.....

## Topic of the Month

As adults, we expect people to wait their turn. We might gladly lend our phone to a friend or even a stranger, but we want them to wait until we're done. The same should apply to children; let a child keep a toy until he/she is "all done," it's the process of turn-taking, it's sharing. The key is it's child-directed turn-taking, meaning the child takes the lead. Here's what it looks like in real life. Instead of saying "Five more minutes, then it's Johnny's turn", teach your child to say "You can have it when I'm done." This teaches positive assertiveness, it helps children stand up for themselves and helps them set boundaries for other children. What a terrific life skill! How many of us as adults have trouble saying "no?" When the first child finishes with the toy, remind him/her that Johnny's waiting for a turn.

What about the waiting child? Waiting is hard, especially for impulsive 2-5 year olds, but just like the other child learns the skill of assertiveness, the waiting child learns the excellent life skill of waiting! It's ok for the waiting child to feel frustrated, sad or angry at times. Our job as adults is to help label those feelings during and or after so the child can "hear" what you are saying, and understand

Don't be afraid of a few foot stomps or tears, learning to control behavior and express intense feelings appropriately is a really a long term childhood skill. Impulse control (waiting for a toy and not grabbing) is a vital part of brain development and gets stronger through practice. The more practice children get, the better they become at skills, and, sharing through turn-taking provides excellent practice.



### Words you can say

#### Positive assertiveness

- You can play with it he/she may use it when you're all done.
- Are you finished with your turn? Max says he's not done yet.
- Did you like it when he grabbed your truck? Tell him to stop!
- Say: "I'm not done. You can have it when I'm done."
- She can have a turn. When she's all done, you can have a turn.
- I see Bella still has the pony. She's still using it.
- You'll have to wait. I can't let you take it out of her hands she's not finished playing with it.

#### Waiting and awareness of others

- Oh, it's so hard to wait!
- You're so mad. You really want to play with the pony right now!
- You can be mad, but I can't let you take the toy.
- Will you tell Max when you're all done?
- I see you're not using the truck any more. Go find Ben. Remember, he's waiting for a turn.