



Screen time gets active with the Teletubbies

Dr. Jacqueline Harding MA Cert ED is a leading expert on child development.

•• Through many years of research with young children, I have learnt that watching high quality TV with your child does not need not be a passive experience. Young brains are hard wired to look for new and original information which is presented in rich and stimulating ways. Television can be a great provider of this information and can even help them develop in surprising ways.

Teletubbies has been carefully researched and has at its heart a passion for love, nurture and humour and the creation of a 'conversation' where the slower pace allows time for the child to make their own responses. It's also great to know that the three prime areas within The Early Years Foundation Stage: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development are well supported by the choice of themes in the show. Parents can feel confident that their children are developing while they view.

The Teletubbies are humorous, social and loveable and have a unique ability to 'grow' with the developing child. As each child passes through the stages of development, they will take from the programme just what they need at particular times – how clever is that? So, the developing child can gain something valuable from the Teletubbies throughout the earliest years of life.

Young children just love watching TV shows that are made especially for them. But how can you tell if your child is really engaged with a show? The following article will provide you with clues to spot when your child is really stimulated and give you tips to strengthen their viewing experience. ••



TIP 1 **RESPOND** to the characters.
eg. Clap when they clap,
laugh with them!
Be a great role model!



TIP 2 Children enjoy telling grownups what they know. Watching TV together will provide them with opportunities to share their developing knowledge. Encourage your child to **TALK** about what they can see.

eg: Try asking your child questions, such as, 'What do you think Noo-noo is doing?' Or, 'I can see you were laughing when the Teletubbies were laughing – what do you think made them laugh?'
Open-ended questions like this tend to encourage children to explore and use new vocabulary.



TIP 4

Little ones rarely sit still for long. Encourage your child to copy the **MOVEMENTS** of the Teletubbies whilst they watch TV. This is a good way to keep screen time active!
eg: Encourage them to dance with the Teletubbies or spin around like the Tubby Custard Ride.

TIP 3 **SHOW DELIGHT** at every response your child makes to the moving images on TV.

TIP 5 Young children love to name and point out colours. Encourage your little one to tell you the **COLOUR** of their favourite Teletubby! As their confidence grows they will start to point out other colours in the show – such as the colours on the Tubby phone.



Here is a ready-made chart for measuring the effectiveness of any TV show your child watches. The more ticks in the 'Yes' boxes - the more likely the content is **ENGAGING** and **INVOLVES** your child in an **INTERACTIVE** manner.

RELEVANCE:
What was the theme? Could you see one?

PACING:
Did the images move at the right pace for your child?
(Not too quick)

INVOLVEMENT:
Did your child point at the screen?

HUMOUR:
Did it make your child smile or laugh at any point?

INTERACTION:
Did your child talk about it during or after the show?

COMMUNICATION:
Did your child make spontaneous comments during the show?

ENGAGEMENT:
Did your child watch constantly and only look away a few times?



Dr Harding's Tips for Playing & Learning with the Teletubbies

A leading expert on child development, Dr. Jacqueline Harding MA Cert ED has spent many years researching young children and their habits. Children's minds are great for absorbing new and original information which is presented in rich and stimulating ways. Engaging, appealing television is a great source for this.

Here are Dr Jacqueline Harding's Top Tips for using the Teletubbies to help support little ones in the three prime areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage: communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development.



Communication & Language

Children need to be able to express themselves effectively showing awareness of listeners' needs. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

☛ The Teletubbies has at its heart a passion for humour and the creation of a 'conversation' between the children watching and the programme. The pace of the show allows time for your child to make a response.

Teletubbies can help children communicate through the following ways. The regular repetition of words such as "again, again" can help children understand words and how they are used. The language used by the Teletubbies appeals to young children as they find it easy to repeat the words and add to their own vocabulary. The Teletubbies announce their intentions during the show. E.g Laa-Laa play with ball. This can help children to learn how to express themselves. ☛

What you can do at home:

TIP 1

The Teletubbies world is colourful! Try placing five toys of the same colour as one of the Teletubbies in a basket and asking your child if they would like to find other things of the same colour.

TIP 2

Each of the Teletubbies has their own favourite possessions: Po has her Scooter, Laa-Laa a Ball, Dipsy has his Hat and Tinky Winky has his bag. Why not ask your child to pretend to be like the Teletubbies and name their favourite things.



Physical Development

Children need to show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements.

•• The Teletubbies demonstrate and engage in a range of physical movements that correlate with this prime area. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively. Watching the Teletubbies results in a desire for physical action.••



What you can do at home:

TIP 1

Encourage your little one to try out some of the movements they have just seen their favourite characters demonstrate. They could go up and down like the Dup Dup or scoot along like Po!

TIP 2

Teletubby has their own signature move and loves to dance. Why not practise these with your child? It will get you moving too!

TIP 3

Noo-noo loves tidying up. Encourage your child to be like him and help to tidy toys away by providing several cardboard boxes for different categories of their toys. It's a great one for their social development too!





Social and Emotional Development

This prime area focuses on understanding the child's own and other children's feelings, their ability to play in a group and to understand and follow rules. Through understanding their feelings your child will also develop a sense of humour and find out what makes them laugh.

“ Social and emotional development are well supported by the choice of themes in the show and parents can feel confident that their child can make strides in their development while they view. ”



What you can do at home:

TIP 1

Teletubbies love each other very much and love to share big hugs. Ask your child to give big hugs to everyone in the family and all their toys!

TIP 2

Laughing out loud is good for children (and adults!). The Teletubbies are always laughing. Play peek-a-boo and create funny situations every day with your child and their friends!



TIP 3

The Voice Trumpets announce it is time for Tubby Bye Bye. "Bye Bye" is often amongst the first words children learn in a social context. Practise saying "Bye Bye" and "Hello" with your child with family and friends.

