

Floortime® is to Challenge and Expand, and sometimes you do this simultaneously while following their lead.

Why we don't 'Wait' for a Child to Initiate:

Entice and Engage™

When correctly applying Floortime, it is imperative that we do not just wait until the child initiates with us. While some Floortime curriculums, other than The Greenspan Floortime Approach®, will make you believe that waiting for a child to initiate is one of our techniques, it is not. We cannot expect and wait for a child with social and communication difficulties to spontaneously decide to do something they don't know how to do, initiate a social exchange. Even if they have Initiated in the past, if they haven't developed this capacity to a certain level of proficiency, waiting can actually reinforce certain anti-social behaviors. While we certainly want children to spontaneously Initiate, waiting for a child who struggles with communication and with initiating social interactions to 'hopefully' initiate is a waste of time. While some children may initiate, especially those who already have developed certain social capacities, the role of the adult is not sit, wait, and hope, but instead to use techniques that entice a child to engage and interact with them.

Initiating communication or a social interaction is one of the capacities within Dr. Greenspan's 3rd Milestone of the Greenspan/DIR model. Within the 3rd Milestone of 2-Way Purposeful Communication/Interaction there are a few Capacities, including, Responding and Initiating. Seeing as these two capacities develop separately, it is important to understand the developmental progression most children move through when mastering this Milestone. Responding (reciprocity or closing a circle of interaction) within a social exchange is a developmental precursor to Initiating (opening a circle of communication).

When identifying traditional developmental patterns, Dr. Greenspan observed that in the first few weeks of life, children start mimicking their parents' facial gestures, like sticking out their tongue. In this situation, a child sticking out their tongue is a type of response. As children progress during the first few months of