

Attention and Listening Skills

Description:

Your child has attention and listening difficulties. This means they;

- Appear to ignore you
- Cannot sit still
- Talk when they should be listening
- Cannot tell you what you have been talking about
- Do not appear to know what to do
- Can only concentrate on one thing
- Are easily distracted
- Do not settle with one toy, but flits from activity to activity.



How can I help at home?

1. Make sure you look at the child you are speaking to.
2. Ensure you have the child's attention BEFORE giving the instruction e.g. say the child's name first and wait for them to look.
3. Background noise, e.g. other people talking, television etc, is a distraction– try to reduce it where possible.
4. Use short simple sentences with a familiar vocabulary and avoid ambiguous language.
5. Introduce classroom rule such as Good Looking/Good Listening/Good Sitting/ Good Waiting.
6. Keep tasks and instructions short. When they remember and follow the rules—make sure you remember to praise them.
7. Set time limits for children to complete tasks (make these more than achievable to start with). Use a timer of some sort to help the children be visually aware of the progress of time e.g. sand timer.
8. Write down your instructions for your child to remember (or get them to do it), or if reading/writing is tricky use pictures/ visual support.
9. Offer forced choice answers, so instead of saying 'what do you want for dinner?' say 'would you like chips or sausages for dinner?'
10. Break long instructions into short steps.
11. Give instructions in time ordered sequences.
12. Slow down your delivery and use pauses. Allow time for slower responding pupils to process instructions/ questions.
13. Be prepared to repeat or rephrase messages.
14. Set the child manageable goals. Ensure previous task is completed before giving instructions for new one.
15. Gradually increase the length of time you expect the child to work for.