


# Conwy & Denbighshire NHS Trust - Paediatric Occupational Therapy Programme

Programme For:

Provided on:

Area of Difficulty	Strategies For School To Try	Strategies For Home to Try
<p><b>Strategies to Assist With Attention and Concentration</b></p>  <p>Sometimes children have difficulties with processing, interpreting and responding appropriately to sensory information around them including (visual stimulus, sound, touch, smell and movement). This can cause them to over or under respond to stimulus and may be very frightening to individual. It is therefore helpful to identify ways to help them to organise and respond to information by looking at the surrounding environment and the way in which we interact with them so that they are able to develop and progress.</p> <p>Environmental adaptations and modification within the sensory environment of the classroom or home can help in managing and controlling attention and arousal levels in some children. These techniques are individual to each child and it is often a case of trialling some of them to see which work best.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you regulate your voice to ensure that it is calm and well paced.</li> <li>• Try to ensure consistency of noise level, as an increase in volume will tend to excite.</li> <li>• Make sure lighting is soft and consistent as bright fluorescent strip lighting or flashing lights will arouse.</li> <li>• Think about time frames. Try using an egg timer or stop watch to pace the child getting tasks completed in a nominated amount of time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep classroom furniture arranged in a clear and consistent manner. Try not to make changes too often.</li> <li>• Attempt to seat the child next to organised, productive classmates for modelling purposes.</li> <li>• Reduce the amount of distracting visual stimuli e.g. displays close to the child's desk.</li> <li>• Allow the child to keep only needed items on his desk.</li> <li>• Outline desk space by using coloured tape so the child doesn't 'spread out' during the day.</li> <li>• Allow for a predetermined area where the child can get up and move about briefly during seated work without disturbing classmates.</li> <li>• Announce transitions in advance of their occurrence using a quiet countdown approach with transition directions as appropriate.</li> <li>• Alternate activities requiring a high level of concentration with those that are more relaxed.</li> <li>• Modify tasks that involve significant inherent distractions. Have fewer items on the page or use a cardboard cut-out overlay to allow better focus on a single item at a time.</li> <li>• If playtime increases his arousal levels, get him to carry a rug sack with a few heavy items in it as this may help to give him the deep pressure required to calm him.</li> <li>• 5 minutes before lessons re-commence get him to wipe the board or put out the books as the 'heavy work' activities will help to calm him.</li> <li>• When focus and concentration is lost, get him with the rest of class if necessary to hug themselves tight and to then try to curl up in a tight ball this increased deep pressure often acts as a quick calming activity to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When he becomes highly aroused, get him to rhythmically bounce on a ball, rock on a rocking chair or in kneeling rock backwards and forwards. Make sure its rhythmical as if not you will increase his arousal levels.</li> <li>• Deep pressure tactile input through firm prolonged touch to the body especially around the shoulders, chest and hips – try the "hot dog" game by wrapping him in a blanket also big bear hugs.</li> <li>• Get him to play with resistive equipment such as play dough or clay as the increased effort will assist in the calming process.</li> <li>• Before having to carry out a task that requires considerable attention – get him to carry out a task requiring considerable input to muscles, tendons and joints such as wheel barrow walking, pulling and pushing furniture, carrying heavy items, tug of war with a towel, digging in the garden etc.</li> <li>• Often chewing and sucking on hard sweets will calm, also try crunchy foods such as hard vegetables. Blowing bubbles also along with sucking thick liquids (e.g. milkshake) through</li> </ul>

Your child should be supervised when carrying out any aspects of the programme above. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate in contact the service on 01745 443040.

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