

Attention, Concentration, and Inhibition Skills



Attention, Concentration, and Inhibition skills are often grouped together because of their strong overlap with one another. Attention and Concentration refer to the ability to focus on one or more items for a necessary duration of time in order to problem solve, plan, or draw conclusions. In order to be successful, it is best when attention and concentration can be used flexibly in different environments and across different needs. The success of this focus requires inhibition, or the conscious choice to ignore other stimuli (mental or environmental) that would detract from the attention and concentration being given to a particular task.

At school, children who struggle with these skills may present as fidgety, daydreaming, disorganized, hyperactive, overly talkative, anxious, unfocused, impulsive, or bored. It is difficult to keep them focused on the task at hand, their school work is likely below average, and it may be difficult to draw their attention to a particular activity. As a result, these children may also be disruptive in the classroom.

At home, parents may notice that their child forgets about assignments, leaves essential materials at school, needs to be told the same instructions several times, and has trouble letting energy out in a productive, organized way. Parents may also notice that compared to other children of the same age, their child is particularly impulsive and has trouble taking the time to make safe plans, or to choose a best option.

During a neuropsychological evaluation, a child's attention, concentration, and inhibition may be tested with measures that assess auditory attention, visual attention, impulse control, and comprehension of instructions. Some common assessments are the CPT-2, NEPSY-2, and the D-Kefs. In addition, many parent and teacher behavior rating forms, such as the Brown ADD Scales, the BASC-2, and the Connors-3 Scales are often used as well.

For More Information On Attention, Concentration, and Inhibition, Take A Look At The Following Links:

[Alternative Views on Attention issues](#): Examines how attention can play a role in a variety of daily activities.

Infographic on ADHD: Describes the various types of ADHD and basic strategies.

[Strategies to improve concentration](#): A list of 10 practical approaches to help with focus.

[LearningWorks For Kids](#): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of sustained attention, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

[Great Schools](#): This site offers specific tips on how to help a discouraged child.

[Kids in Power](#): This site provides five simple ways for parents to help children with their concentration skills; take a look!

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