

Can You Teach a Child to Keep Track of Time?

Kids with slow processing speed or inattention often lose track of time. For example, when it's time to do homework or get ready for bed, it's easy for them (and often their parents) to become engaged in another activity when they might be better completing the task at hand. Often this is accompanied by a complete lack of awareness of the time that has passed. Many of these children require assistance in learning how to be aware of the passage of time. In this edition of the LearningWorks for Kids processing speed and time management series, we suggest strategies that can help children keep track of time.

However, before we squash this tendency to get lost in time- and sometimes the people and conversations it includes, take a look at the bright side of it. There is something special about getting lost in an activity and losing track of time. Being

absorbed in what you are doing can reflect a sense of mindfulness and being present-oriented. Some kids may get lost in their play or simply daydream. This can lead to creativity, relaxation, and appreciation. Unfortunately, in today's often hectic world, many children have busy schedules and losing track of time can result in being unable to complete necessary tasks.

Here are a few suggestions to help a child to keep track of time:

Use a daily "to do" list that highlights special activities. Post a dry-erase board in your home that states "To Do" on the top, followed by the date. Develop a morning or evening-before routine of listing two to three priorities for the coming day.

Eventually, get your child to make the list.

Use tech to help with time management. Use apps on a phone or timers on microwave to enhance time awareness and time management. Encourage children to use these devices to give routine 10- or 15-minute reminders while they are working on a task or chore.

Make a competition out of time awareness and time management. Start a task together and then challenge your child to complete a task by the time it takes you to finish another task.

Let the consequences of poor time management be meaningful to children. If your child is late to school, let them stay after. If they don't leave time to do their homework, make sure there is a consequence.

If you'd like to learn about some additional tools and strategies to help with keeping track of time [check out apps that can help](#). Better yet, sign your child up for one of our [time management classes through LW4K LIVE](#).

