

Help Your Teenager Understand Slow Processing Speed



Slow processing speed is often a mystery to parents and teachers who observe a capable teenager who can't seem to keep up with the pace of schoolwork. Until slow processing speed is assessed and explained, many adults view these kids as not trying hard enough or

being a poster child for poor time management skills. However, once slow processing speed is understood, the most important role for adults is to help these teenagers understand slow processing speed.

It's unfortunate that many children and teens with slow processing speed interpret their struggles to process information quickly as a sign of inadequacy and a lack of intelligence. While slow processing speed can affect how efficiently kids learn, many affected by the disorder simply need more time to use their other cognitive resources effectively. When these children understand that they are not alone – that there are other smart kids like them who just need extra time – they can begin to change how they feel about themselves and about school in general.

The first step to changing their self-esteem-and in turn their willingness to try strategies that will improve their processing speed- is to make them informed partners in this effort. One of the best ways to do this is through watching videos that offer the scientific basis for slow processing speed. Our team at LearningWorks for Kids has rounded up a list of videos we believe can help kids understand slow processing speed better and compensate for this difficulty. Here are some of our favorites with a description of talking

points for parents and teachers.

What is a Slow Processing Speed & How it Can Affect Students

An engaging video that sheds some light on how slow processing speed can be observed in students in a classroom. Great for adults, teens, and older children. Here are some talking points:

- Surprising & confusing to students (especially for smart children w/ high IQ)
- **Processing speed** → ability of the brain to take something in & to do something with it/process it/understands how it fits with everything else you know
- Some people good at hiding it; “I can make up that time later”
- Negative effects on exams which leads to lower grades on exams than homework because:
 - Misinterpreting information/exam questions
 - Miss steps
 - Make silly mistakes (particularly when you’re feeling pressured)
 - Getting flustered/panicky
- Steps to manage slow processing speed
 - Get tested & apply for extra time
 - In the classroom get notes from the teacher (so you don’t have to write notes & also process what’s coming in)
 - Time planning
 - Keep anxiety down with planning & anxiety reduction techniques
 - Use checking procedures at end of an exam

Bright Kids Who Can't Keep Up: Clay Center

A great video that follows three students affected by slow processing speed and explains how they get along in the classroom and the challenges they face. Great for children and teens to watch with their parents. Uses first person stories to explain slow processing speed. Here are some talking points:

- Important to understand different learning styles for each individual student
- Full intellectual potential is masked by slow processing speed
- Three important keys
 - **Acceptance** → knowing there is a problem!
 - **Accommodating**
 - **Advocating** → important for child AND parent