

Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Building Attention & Focus at Home

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If your child seems to be on the go all day, drifts off in the middle of a task, or forgets what you just asked, you are not alone — and it does not mean you are doing anything wrong. Attention is a skill that grows slowly, and for some children it grows more slowly than others. The good news is that the everyday moments at home are exactly where this skill is built.

This gentle program gives you small, doable steps to try each week. It is here to support your child, not to label them. It does not replace a proper assessment, and if you have real concerns it is always worth speaking to a professional — but there is a great deal you can start doing today.

♥ Who this program is for

- ✓ Children who find it hard to sit still or stay with one activity
- ✓ Little ones who seem to “switch off” halfway through a task
- ✓ Children who are easily pulled away by every sound or movement
- ✓ Families who want calm, practical routines rather than pressure
- ✓ Parents worried their child rushes and struggles to finish things

⚡ Important — when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program, not a diagnosis or a substitute for an assessment. Please speak to a professional promptly if:

Impulsive behaviour that puts your child in real danger, such as running into roads or climbing dangerously

Serious difficulty focusing and settling in BOTH home and school or nursery, not just one place

Your child seems genuinely distressed, unhappy or overwhelmed by their own restlessness

A loss of skills your child used to have, or focus that is getting clearly worse over time

The difficulties are making learning, friendships or family life very hard

☆ **Your step-by-step roadmap**

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are a gentle order, not a race. Repeat any stage as long as it helps.

Week 1 – One thing at a time

Reduce distractions so focus has a chance.

Pick one quiet corner for focused play, with the television off and clutter cleared away.

Offer just one toy or activity at a time, rather than a full basket at once.

Sit close and give your full attention too — children focus better when we do.

⚡ **Try this:** Fewer choices means more focus. A tidy space calms a busy little mind.

Week 2 – Short and finished

Build the habit of completing a task.

Choose very short activities your child can finish, like a four-piece puzzle.

Say clearly, “First we finish this, then we play,” so there is a clear end point.

Celebrate the moment it is done, so finishing starts to feel good.

⚡ **Try this:** Start far shorter than you think. A finished small task beats an abandoned big one.

Week 3 – Notice and name the good

Use praise to grow attention.

Watch closely and praise the second your child stays with something, even briefly.

Be specific: “You kept going with your blocks, well done,” rather than just “good boy”.

Praise trying and sticking with it, not only getting things perfectly right.

⚡ **Try this:** What you praise, you grow. Catch the focus while it is happening.

Week 4 – A steady rhythm

Use routine so the day feels predictable.

Keep wake-up, meals, play and bedtime at roughly the same times each day.

Use a simple picture chart so your child can see what comes next.

Build in plenty of movement and outdoor play between calm, focused activities.

 **Try this:** A predictable day frees up a child's mind to focus on the task, not the surprise.

Week 5 – Stretch it gently

Slowly lengthen focused time.

Add just a minute or two to a favourite activity once it feels easy.

Play simple attention games like “Simon says” or spotting objects on a walk.

End every session while it is still going well, never when it has fallen apart.

 **Try this:** Stretch by tiny amounts. Always finish on a win so your child wants to come back.

Tricks that make it work

- ✓ Give one instruction at a time, in short clear words.
- ✓ Break big jobs, like tidying up, into small named steps.
- ✓ Keep your own voice calm and steady; your calm is catching.
- ✓ Get down to your child's level and catch their eye before you speak.
- ✓ Let your child move — wriggling and fidgeting can actually help some children think.
- ✓ Protect sleep and cut back on screens, as both make focus much harder.

How you'll know it's working

- Your child stays with an activity a little longer than a month ago.
- They finish more small tasks without wandering off.
- They follow a simple instruction more often the first time you ask.
- There is less frustration and fewer battles around getting things done.



Is this based on real methods? This program draws on approaches recommended in NICE guidance for attention difficulties, where parent-training focused on structure, predictable routines, short focused activities and praise is a first-line support for young children.