

Attention and Concentration Skills

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Keep task descriptions short and repeat where necessary.
- Use observation to identify what the potential distractions are.
- Utilise peers for modelling, demonstration and support, which will help to promote focus.
- Be aware of how sensory factors such as noise or visual stimuli may affect attention and concentration.
- Take into account sensory preferences and allow agreed strategies such as fidget supports or doodling, if these aid focus.
- Consider seating arrangements and how these may improve attention and concentration such as proximity to supportive peers, proximity to teacher, position in relation to windows and doors, and consistency of seating.
- Minimise potential distractions in the room where possible.
- Use visual prompts within activities, such as task lists and pictorial representations of ideas, and visual timetables to help maintain attention and concentration.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) e.g. interactive whiteboard to engage and maintain attention.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Provide individual visual or written lesson plans, and encourage learners to mark off each task when completed.
- Chunk (break down) information and tasks into manageable parts.
- Allow movement breaks.
- Encourage physical engagement with tasks.
- Check understanding of task expectations - ask learner to repeat and rephrase instructions.
- Use a previously agreed 'sign' to indicate that a learner needs to focus if their attention is faltering.
- Use reinforcement, repetition and rephrasing.

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Use visual prompts within activities, such as task lists and pictorial representations of ideas, and visual timetables to help gain attention and interest.
- Focus on and reward positive behaviour such as instances of good listening, attention and concentration.
- Keep learners on task by giving individualised attention.
- Use prompts such as saying their name to gain their attention and keep interest.
- Present short tasks and adjust pace to keep learners engaged.
- Use strategies that promote active learning, including opportunities for multisensory learning.
- Involve learner in decision making process about how to progress attention and concentration skills.
- Use a variety of tasks to engage interest.
- When possible, use the learner's own interests to engage them in topics.