

# Discovering New Perspectives for Parent-School Partnership (DNP)

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## Concentration Basics

### Study Environment

- Environment should be distraction free.
- No friends
- No computer games or TV
- No phone calls
- No other distraction

### Conditions

- Chair – Is it comfortable enough that you can sit for 45 to 50 minutes at a time?
- Desk – do you have adequate space to spread out?
- Lighting – should not cause eye strain.
- Temperature – should be comfortable.

**Improve your attitude** – Some subjects may not be of high interest to you. Some subjects may not seem relevant to your field of study. You must maintain a positive attitude. To move to the next class, you must pass all the subjects, not just the ones you like.

**Attend to the task** – Concentration is a must for successful reading. Concentration is improved if you study when you are the most alert, least tired and in good physical health.

Here are a few simple activities to build up concentration:

1. **The Coin Game:** Parents like this game because it improves memory and sequencing as well as attention and concentration, and kids enjoy it because it's fast-paced and fun. First, you will need a small pile of assorted coins, a cardboard sheet to cover them, and a stopwatch (or a regular watch with a second hand.) Choose five of the coins from the pile and put them into a sequence. Now, tell your child to "Look carefully at the coins arranged on the table." Then, cover the coins with the cardboard. Start the stopwatch, and then ask them to make the same pattern using the coins from the pile. When they are finished, mark the time with the stopwatch and remove the cardboard cover. Write down the time it took them to complete the pattern and whether or not they were correct. If they didn't complete it correctly, have them keep trying until they can do it. You can increase the difficulty of the patterns as you go. You'll see your child's concentration and sequencing improve the more they play, which is a great reward for both of you.

2. **Relaxation and Positive Imagery:** Combining simple relaxation techniques such as deep breathing with positive visual imagery helps the brain to improve or learn new skills. For instance, research shows that if a person mentally practices their golf swing, the brain actually records the imaginary trials of the same as if they were real trials which lead to improvement on the golf course. You and your child can use your own creativity and give this a try.
3. **Mind – Body Integration:** An example of this technique would be to have your child attempt to sit in a chair without moving. The parent times how long the child is able to accomplish this. Repeated practice over several weeks will show improvement. Through this activity, the neural connections between the brain and body are strengthened, providing improved self-control.
4. **Crossword Puzzles and Picture Puzzles:** It sounds simple, but these are great tools for kids. Crossword puzzles actually improve attention for words and sequencing ability, while picture puzzles—in which your younger child has to look for things that are “wrong” in the picture or look for hard-to-find objects—also improve attention and concentration.
5. **Memory and Concentration Games:** Children’s games such as Memory or Simon are great ideas for improving memory and concentration. They are quick and fun. Memory motivates the child to remember the location of picture squares and Simon helps them memorize sequences of visual and auditory stimuli. Through repeated playing, brain circuits are “exercised” and challenged, which strengthens connections and thus improves function. Also, there are some free computer games on the internet that also improve concentration such as Memory.
6. **Reading books** for few minutes every day will also build up concentration.
  - ❖ Also, remember to create opportunities for friendly and honest communication with your child. When children can share their anxieties, fears and have them rationally have them rationally handled by a parent whom they trust, they are more receptive to learning.
  - ❖ Compliment small improvements and identify them to the child as links to a better performance.
  - ❖ Building concentration requires wellness, practice and persistence.
  - ❖ Don’t let the child give up on herself/himself. Keep going. Results will come.

**SCHOOL COUNSELLOR**

