

Helping Children with Learning Difficulties

Top Tips for Parents at Home and School

At the Developmental Learning Centre, we are committed to setting children free from learning and behavioural difficulties through the use of expert therapies that address the root causes, promoting lasting change. Check out our top tips to try at home and school to ease some of the struggles your child may be facing.

Home

Limit Daily Screen Time



WHAT: Replace TV, tablets and phones with story CDs or talking books.

WHY: Looking at a fixed distance contributes to poor visual skills, irritability and impedes brain development.

Increase outdoor active play



WHAT: Ensure your child engages in daily active outdoor play such as a visit to the park or a swim in the ocean.

WHY: Your child's brain develops through movement and real life experiences - too many sedentary activities lead to immature neural pathways.

Check your child's diet for allergies



WHAT: Remove common allergens from your child's diet - consult a naturopath/dietician for healthy choices to support learning.

WHY: Dairy, gluten and some other foods can irritate the gut, affecting your child's health, behaviour and ability to learn.

Provide some quiet time daily



WHAT: Put on some relaxing music and minimise speech for half an hour after school and limit asking questions.

WHY: Quiet time will allow them time to process the day's sensory input, reducing overload and irritability.

Consider the upside down diet



WHAT: Reverse your child's meal habits - a protein rich start, followed by a protein/complex carbohydrate lunch and light evening dinner.

WHY: Reversing meal habits stabilises your child's blood sugar levels during the day, aiding concentration.

School

Utilise non-verbal cues



WHAT: Instead of instructing your child verbally, get the teacher to use gestures and pictorial charts to support their instructions.

WHY: This helps your child to process the information and to understand and follow instructions more easily.

Assign a listening buddy



WHAT: Seat your child next to a buddy whose listening skills are strong.

WHY: To assist your child in following instructions during class time more quickly.

Minimise background noise



WHAT: Before a teacher offers instructions, ask them to ensure the class is quiet.

WHY: Most children with learning difficulties struggle to process instructions over background noise.

Vary listening tasks



WHAT: Vary learning tasks with multisensory and movement activities, alternated with listening.

WHY: Alternating activities rests the auditory system so that your child can tune back in more quickly and avoid auditory fatigue.

Limit homework to 15-30 mins a day



WHAT: Ensure your child is revising familiar material for homework. Use and sign a homework book after the agreed time limit.

WHY: Reduces exhaustion and the likelihood of parent/child battles by setting clear boundaries after a long school day.