

# ATTENTIONAL SKILLS REPORT

## RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Dear parents

On October 3rd 2017, your child was administered a computerized assessment to evaluate his attention and concentration abilities. The aim of this assessment is to evaluate the attentional abilities of each child, and to offer parents practical tools to support the child in and out of school environment.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO EVALUATE THE ATTENTIONAL ABILITIES ?

Attention is the basis for learning in all aspects of life, such as school (academic) and social life. For example, in the classroom, attention is reflected in the ability to listen to what the teacher says, while ignoring the background visual and auditory stimulations, as well as the inner distractions. Children with high levels of attentional abilities are more prepared and able to investigate and study.

Attentional mechanisms play an important role in self-control that enables extended effort to achieve long-term goals. A deficit in these mechanisms may lead to a feeling of lack of ability, frustration and social difficulties.

### AT THE ASSESSMENT, THE FOLLOWING ARE MEASURED:

- Functioning in indices of: Attention, self-control (or self-regulation) and hyper reactivity. Functioning at the lower than the normative level indicates attentional difficulty that requires a professional assistance to better understand the underlying causes.
- Performance over time, and performance with the existence of visual and auditory distractions. All these components construct the attentional profile, and on the basis of these, strategies for building optimal (or best) functioning are suggested.

## FINDINGS ATTENTIONAL ABILITY

INDEX	FUNCTIONING ( relative to average)
Attentiveness	Low
Self control	Normal
Hyper reactivity	Normal



EXTERNAL EFFECTS	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS
Performance with visual distractions	Descending
Performance with auditory distractions	Ascending
Performance over time	Descending



## HOW CAN YOU ASSIST YOUR CHILD ?

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Working on attention difficulties requires continuous investment by parents in order to allow the child to gradually develop coping mechanisms. It is very similar to acquiring any other skill, such as walking, riding a bike etc.

In the following pages you will find possible strategies that are individually tailored to your child's attentional profile. You may choose, together with the child, a strategy that suits you both, and practice it.

If you observe a positive change in your child's behavior, or in your relationship dynamics with the child, then that is great! Continue the same strategy, and try to adopt additional strategy at a time. If not, just choose another strategy from the list.

## FINDINGS EXPLANATION

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### Attention Finding: Lower than average

#### What is attention?

The attention index assesses the ability to keep concentration and focus on a task for an extended time, while filtering out unwanted distractions. A task can be listening to someone talking, listening to a lesson or a lecture, reading a book, preparing homework or even cleaning the house.

#### What is the difficulty in attention?

Attentional difficulty is when our thoughts wander. We absorb only part of what is being said or what we read. We perform the task with distractions, we think about sounds, views and smells that we receive from the environment. The ability to keep attention differs from person to person, and depends on the situation. Worries, environmental noise and boring tasks will make our attention difficult to sustain.

Children and adults with attentional difficulties can focus for an extended time on tasks that they find interesting, such as computer games or watching a film, but they find it difficult to concentrate on less interesting tasks, such as doing homework and listening in class. It is important not to fall into the trap of thinking that they can do better, but fail on purpose.

# PERSONAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE



## ORGANIZATION

Children and adults who cope with attention difficulties, find organization, planning, prioritizing tasks and time management, difficult. These difficulties can be very significant in the academic field.

**It is recommended to try the following:**

1. Use of a whiteboard where the child can plan ahead tasks for the forthcoming week.
2. Using a diary (a notebook or a digital one) to write down the tasks and homework for each day.
3. Parent and child time-sharing: Create a routine of a time frame with the child where you are fully attentive to him. This time frame, even if short, will provide you with insight into the daily coping of your child with the academic demands that constitute a significant part of the child's life. It will also provide the child with emotional and practical support.

**This is how you can do it:**

Create an afternoon session, after the child has completed homework, when you and the child are not too tired or too nervous. Try to allocate some 20 minutes a day for this session.

- A. Choose a dedicated place at home, preferably a quite room. Silence phones and alerts and ask family members to allow you this time with no disruptions.
- B. Routine is very important to children with attention difficulties, therefore, agree on a starting and ending time, and try to stick to them as much as possible.-Use a timer (smart phone or alarm clock) to announce the beginning and the end of the session in order to emphasize the importance of punctuality. Do not go beyond the allocated time, unless the child asks to continue and you see that the child is focused and efficient.
- C. Allocate this session for the benefit of:
  - Going through the already completed homework. It is important to praise the child if the task was done in a satisfactory or good way. If you find errors, it is important to say ("Here, I can see an error") in a practical but not a criticizing manner.
  - Ask the child about each subject studied on that day. What did they study? Were there any topics that the child found difficult? Help with the topics he found difficult, or alternatively note to ask the teacher to provide additional assistance on the specific topic.
  - After completing the homework overview and the class subjects, if you still have few minutes left, ask the child what is expected to study in the next lesson. The child's awareness for the next class topics may contribute to his alertness in the class, and provide the child with a better starting point.



## COMMUNICATION

The attention span of children and adults with attention difficulties is shorter than others'. They find it difficult to follow long and complicated instructions. To prepare the child for full attention:

1. It is important that the child is fully attentive to you while talking. Keep eye contact.
2. Break long instructions into smaller chunks. Stop and ask the child for his opinion. Instructions should be given one step at a time.



## CREATING SUCCESS

Children and adults with attention difficulties receive negative criticism, and experience failures in many aspects of life. This may lead them to believe that they are lazy and lack motivation. This is why it is so important to help your child experience success.

### Identify and encourage the child's strengths:

1. Ask yourself what are the child's interests, whether they are hobbies, artistic orientation, sport etc.
2. Discuss it with the child and check if he thinks the same.
3. From the chosen areas of interest, choose together with the child, one area that he would like to improve or strengthen. For example: playing a guitar. Think together about short and long term goals. A short-term goal may be: finding a guitar teacher or finding a relevant internet blog. When this task is completed, remember to reward the child with a smile, a pat on the back or a positive comment. A long-term objective can be: Playing a chosen melody. When the objective is achieved, you can reward the child by allowing the use of favorite activities such as computer games or shared recreation time.
4. Children with attention difficulties tend to start a new hobby and quit it. If you can find a way to reflect the child's progress, even a tiny one, this will encourage and help him develop persistence ability, which is also important for long-term goals in life. For example: you can video the child in the first music lesson and then again after several lessons, to show the progress (because the child is not always aware of it). The message is that persistence leads to improved performance.



## OPTIMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

1. It is found that your child's performance deteriorates when visual distractions are around. Therefore, it is important to maintain a clear and tidy studying area that contains only the relevant learning equipment. Try to eliminate any visual distractions such as pictures, stickers etc. on the wall.
2. It is found that the child's performance increases with auditory distractions. Therefore, check if studying with background music helps concentration levels.
3. It is found that performance deteriorates with time. Therefore, when working on a specific task, take a break of 2-5 minutes every 20 minutes.

Good luck,  
The Millennium School - Noida