

## **Strategies to improve Working memory**

### **Teach visualisation skills.**

Encourage your child to create a picture of what they have just read or heard. For example, if you have told them to set the table for five people, ask them to come up with a picture in their head of what the table should look like. Then have them draw that picture. As they get better at visualising, they can start describing the image to you instead of drawing it.

### **Have your child teach you.**

Being able to explain how to do something involves making sense of information and mentally filing it. If a child is learning a new skill, for instance how to dribble a football, ask them to teach it to you after it has been explained to him.

### **Play cards.**

Simple card games like Crazy Eights, Uno, Go Fish and Happy Families improve working memory in two ways. Your child has to keep the rules of the game in mind but also has to remember what cards they have and what cards other people have played.

### **Make up category games.**

When words and ideas are put into categories, they are easy to remember. It's like our brain has its very own filing cabinet filled with categories that store different words. Playing games in which you name as many animals as you can think of can eventually lead to playing games with more complicated concepts. For example, you may ask your child to name as many clue words for addition as she can (such as altogether, plus, total, sum etc.)

**Number your directions.**

Beginning a sentence with words like, “I need you to do three things...” can help your child keep a set of instructions in their head. You can do the same thing with other information too like shopping lists – “We need to buy these five things...”

**Connect emotion to information.**

Processing information in as many ways as possible can help your child to remember it. Help them to connect feelings to what they are trying to remember. For instance, if they are learning about how the pyramids in Ancient Egypt were built, ask them to think about what it would have felt like to have to climb to the top of a pyramid pulling a heavy stone in the hot sun.

**Help make connections.**

Connections are the relationship between things. Finding ways to connect what your child is trying to remember with things they already know can help them learn the new material. For instance, show them that the two times table is the same as doubling, so for instance  $4 \times 2 = 8$  and  $4 + 4 = 8$ .