

6 TYPES OF ATTENTION & TRAINING FOCUS



1 | SUSTAINED ATTENTION

i **Staying focused** on one task over time (e.g., doing a puzzle).

! Always seeking movement, leaving a task incomplete, losing patient easily

✓ Focus training on **task completion** and **self-control ability** to executive functioning and impulsivity



2 | FOCUSED ATTENTION

i **Responding to one specific thing** (e.g., a sound or image, when name being called).

- !**
- Doesn't respond immediately when their name is called
 - Misses the start of instructions or takes longer to "tune in" to lessons.
 - Looks like disconnected or unresponsive at first.
 - Needs extra time or prompts when a task begins or to notice what others are doing
 - Doesn't respond when spoken to unless the adult repeats

✓ Help children increase their ability to notice, orient to and respond to a specific stimulus at the start of an interaction or task

3 | SELECTIVE ATTENTION



i **Filtering distractions** – listening to the teacher despite classroom noise.

! Being curious at everything, showing inadequate ability to screen out less important input or information

✓ **Environmental modification** – minimise distractions; implement **auditory training**



4 | JOINT ATTENTION

*key early skill that supports language and social development.

i **Shared focus between two people** on the same object or event (e.g., a child follows a parent's gaze to a plane in the sky).

! Common in children with **ASD**, following a point, not making eye contact, or not showing toys or objects to others.

✓ Use face-to-face play, modeling pointing, respond to the child's focus, and encourage shared experiences (e.g. turn-taking, looking at the same object together).



5 | ALTERNATING ATTENTION

i **Switching between tasks** (e.g., listening, then writing).

! Difficulty with copying whiteboard in the class, Losing focus when shifting attention

✓ Use **visual supports** like arrows or highlight lines to guide attention, help the child practice shifting focus smoothly



6 | DIVIDED ATTENTION

i **Handling two things at once** (e.g., talking while tying shoes, finding the piano keys while reading the score).

! Perform well on one task but struggle in busy, multitasking environments. Appear overloaded or slow to respond.

✓ Focus on **multitasking training** for a short amount of time. Teach and implement **coping strategies**

