

Date:



Ignoring things can help us all!

By ignoring things, we can all cope better and get more done. Ignoring has some really good sides, like when you can ignore background noise.

We want your child to learn how to ignore things that might distract him.

Lots of children with special learning needs have real difficulty figuring out what to focus on. Everything, from the air conditioner to the sound of dogs barking or somebody talking, try to grab his attention. He needs some ways to sort through all of this and only think about what's important.

Ignoring is a good place to start. We are giving your child permission to NOT pay attention to some things. But, it's only things that aren't important to what he is doing.

Dear Parents:

Your child is making some good progress in Cognitive Self-Regulation. He is using many of the strategies we presented in the last lessons. Now we are going to add some more.

We are continuing to work on taking in information. The main focus right now is helping your child think only about the more important information.

Some of the strategies we will use are:

- Saying the name of things when he looks at them. Saying the name of things, people and actions can help him remember the information. This strategy works really well with his 'finder finger' - he points and says the name.
- Saying directions over to himself. When we ask him to do something, we want him to say at least some of the words over to himself. That will help him remember what to do as well as keep him focused. For example, if you ask him to go and get his shoes, he should say "shoes" or "go and get my shoes" over and over until he gets them.
- Ignoring things that aren't important. Your child is learning to pay attention to important things AND ignoring the things that aren't important.

Using these strategies in other places

Encourage your child to use the three strategies we've added. You can also show him how you use the strategies. For example, if the phone rings, you can say, "I'm just going to ignore that right now because I have to finish this first."

Just like before, we are also going to work on helping your child use these strategies at other times and in other places. Think about situations **at home**. When should your child help himself remember things

and ignore distractions? For example, he can use these strategies when you ask him to go and get something for you. How about when he's out **in the community**. For example, during swimming lessons he should ignore distractions and focus on just what the teacher says. Once you have written in at least a few ideas in each column, please send it back to us so we can start working on these things.



Ways to help your child learn to ignore unimportant things

There are lots of ways to ignore things. The most obvious is to turn your attention only to what is important. That is often easier said than done, especially when your child is just learning to ignore things.

Other things that can help him ignore distractions include:

- Wearing ear plugs or ear phones to block out sounds.
- Finding a quieter place to work so things don't bother him as much.
- Blocking off the distractions by working behind a screen or putting up a barrier. Some children like having a special 'thinking chair' or large cardboard 'quiet box' where they can retreat and not be bothered.

When and where I want my child to help himself remember some things and ignore others: (carefully describe the situation and what you would like to see your child do)

At home	In the community



Hmm, if I say it over in my head, my brain can remember better.