



PARENT TALK: COMMON PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN

Lots of other factors come hand in hand with learning language and language development, for example, parental guidance, personal interest, and developmental progress. We hope to provide the best and well-suited learning experience for our students, therefore we also focus on improving students' social skills and behavioral problems. Here are some common concerns parents may encounter:

Shyness:

There is nothing wrong with being shy. Many people don't understand shyness and equate being shy with having a problem. They believe a shy child must suffer from poor self-image. Some "shy" children are deep-thinkers and cautious. They are slow to warm up to strangers. They study that person to see if the relationship is worth the effort. That said, it is important to find the reason behind shyness. Understanding the root of shyness and working on that would allow children to receive the most help.

Here are a few tips that parents could incorporate combat shyness

- Improve your child's shyness is to become a role model. Parents are the first social reference provided to children and so they will very easily imitate what they observe. Try to model being active and confident at meeting other people.
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement after seeing some improvement
- Teach social skills earlier. Choose to practice one at a time, for example be the first person to say 'hi'.

Inattentiveness:

Attention span of children should be calculated 3-5 minutes per year of child's age. For example, a 3-year-old would have an attention span of at least 9 minutes. It can be hard for children to focus and pay attention, especially when they are faced with difficult challenges.

Here are some ways to improve attention:

- Give small breaks in between long tasks for children to take mental breaks. Have them do more active activities or get them play their favourite toy.
- Find activities that are intrinsically motivating for children to involve in. Children can have great focus when they are doing something that they enjoy. Try to put yourself in their perception. If an activity is boring to you, do not expect your child to be able to focus on it.
- Find the reason for distraction. Are there too many toys around the room? Too much noise? It is important to find out why your child is distracted and actively change the environment to help children focus.

Attention Problem and Television

It had been a recent concern in early childhood education at the effects of television watching on attention problems in late childhood. Research had been conducted on how early exposure to television (before the age of 2) resulted in attention problems at school age. Indeed, research had been found that the more hours of television watched during toddler period, the more likely children would exhibit attention



problems at the age of 7 (Christakis et al., 2004) and would learn 6-8 words fewer than those that do not watch television. Watching television before the age of 2 is considered problematic, as this is the stage at which children learn a lot through their sensations. Solely looking at a screen acknowledges passive learning and requires no brain grow or thinking, it would also cause distortion in the concept of time as everything on television happens so quickly. Despite the vast amount of research against television, it is not to say that watching short 3-minute video clips would cause detrimental damage to the cognitive development of toddlers. Parents should focus on engaging toddlers in other types of stimulating activities, such as unstructured play, interactive activities, which had been proven to benefit toddlers' development.

References:

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