



SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH LOW WORKING MEMORY

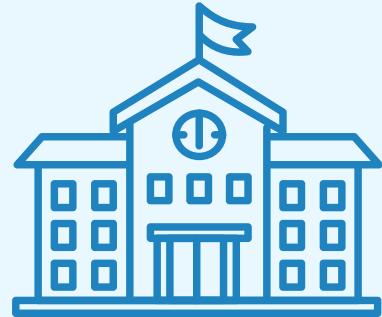
WHAT IS WORKING MEMORY?

Working memory is the ability to hold information in the mind long enough to use it. It plays a critical role in reading, spelling, writing, math, and following directions. When working memory is weak, learning can be challenging even for capable and motivated students.

SUPPORTS AND ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL



- Give directions one step at a time and ask students to repeat them.
- Pair oral directions with visuals or checklists.
- Use consistent routines and instructional language.
- Reduce copying demands from the board.
- Allow students to talk through steps out loud.
- Use sound to print routines with counters or manipulatives.
- Reread short decodable texts multiple times.
- Teach students what to do when reading or spelling feels hard.



SUPPORTS AND ACTIVITIES AT HOME



- Use visual schedules for morning and bedtime routines.
- Give one direction at a time and wait for completion.
- Ask your child to repeat the direction before starting.
- Play memory based games such as *Simon Says* or matching games.
- Cook or prepare snacks together using step by step directions.
- Encourage your child to say sounds out loud before reading or spelling.
- Use supportive language such as: “*let’s break this into smaller parts*”.





SIGNS A CHILD MAY HAVE LOW WORKING MEMORY



- ! Difficulty following multi step directions.
They may complete the first step but forget the rest.
- ! Trouble retaining information long enough to use it.
They may lose steps in a task or forget the beginning of a sentence.
- ! Frequent need for repetition or reminders.
They often ask what to do again.
- ! Struggles with holding sounds in mind during decoding or encoding.
- ! Difficulty copying from the board or transferring information accurately.
- ! Losing track during conversations or stories, and difficulty retelling.
- ! Slow processing when juggling more than one piece of information.
- ! Easily overwhelmed by complex tasks, and may shut down or avoid them.
- ! Inconsistent performance that fluctuates with stress and fatigue.