

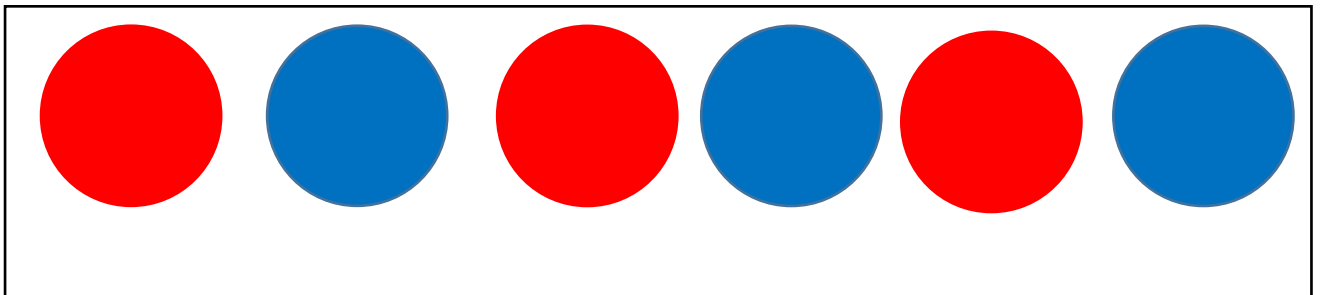
### **Developing concentration and focus during home learning**

Getting your child to concentrate on a task can be a daunting process for many, and even more so in their own homes during lockdown. Research suggests that typically, a child can maintain their concentration for three - five minutes for every year of their life. So your four/five year old may only be able to maintain their focus and concentration for around 10/15 Minutes. Factor in the environment of 'home' and sometimes, it might seem particularly challenging on some days. This is why we have compiled a list of fun games/activities you can do to improve your child's concentration, memory, attention and focus to ensure that you continue to get the best from your child.

#### **The coin game**

This game can be altered to use counters, toys or shapes – anything that you can make a clear pattern from.

Start the game by creating a pattern for your child; for example:



Can they continue it? If they didn't get it right, get them to try again a couple more times and then support them.

The more you play this game, the faster and more accurate your child should get – and you can increase the difficulty by creating more complicated patterns.

#### **Spot the difference**

This activity is fantastic for getting your child to spot small details and really pay attention. You can tailor these to your child's ability/age easily and there are dozens of examples to be found online. Puzzles such as 'where's wally' are also very good at developing concentration.

#### **Kim's game**



The game will support concentration and build on your child's memory. In preparation for this game, you will need to gather around 10 distinctive, and memorable household objects.

Next, arrange the objects on a tray and show them to your child. Give your child 30 seconds to study the objects, then cover them up with a tea towel.

There are then two ways to play the game: either you can ask your child to recall as many objects as possible within a set time, or you can sneakily remove one item then uncover the tray and ask them to identify what's missing.

### **Colouring circles**

Mindful colouring and doodling is big news amongst adults at the moment, helping to take our minds off everyday distractions and focus on the task in front of us, and it's just as beneficial for kids, too.

Start by drawing a series of small circles on a sheet of paper for your child to colour, as neatly as possible, staying within the lines – because the circles are small, this should only take them a minute or so. The next day, draw slightly larger circles that will take a little longer to colour.

**As your child's ability to focus improves, you can introduce bigger shapes and more complex patterns** that will take them longer to complete, helping to extend the amount of time they can concentrate for.

### **Picture copying**

This exercise will help your child get better at sitting still and focusing on the work in front of them. Give them a picture – a simple illustration from a colouring book is ideal – and a sheet of blank paper for them to copy it onto.

Ask them to concentrate on copying the picture for a short period – as little as 30 seconds at first – then give their arms a good shake to get rid of energy and tension, then do another 30 seconds' copying, and so on. As they get better at focusing, you can increase the time they spend copying, and reduce the number of breaks they get.

Teach them the signs that will show you that they're concentrating – **sitting properly, looking in the right direction, pencil moving** – to remind them to stay on task.

\*Try to keep everything fast paced (before they have chance to disengage) set timers (you have 1 minute -how many \_ can you find? before the timer runs out) and try to keep it fun! (be silly, playful and try to make it a game) \*