

Measuring the impact of the *Attention Autism* approach on children's attention skills.

Research project

over to you →

Background

The Attention Autism programme, developed by Gina Davies targets the teaching of attention, communication and social interaction skills (Gina Davies, 2013). The programme is based on progressing through the Reynell stages of attention. These include fleeting attention, inflexible attention, single channelled attention with flexibility, dual attention and integrated attention. After a period of consultation with Gina Davies, Blossom House School began to implement the principles of Attention Autism in lessons. The SLTs in the school began to do therapy blocks working on the stages of attention through structured sessions. After meeting as an MDT, the SLT team decided to use a profile to measure progress and to also collate the data available.

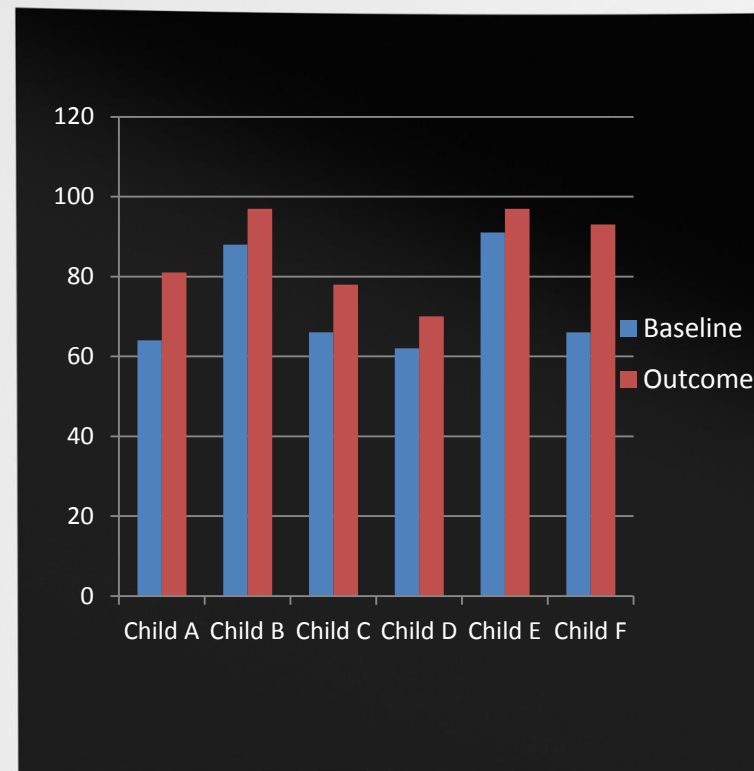
Method

- Four baseline Attention Autism sessions were filmed.
- These videos were then shown to the therapist who delivered the therapy and also to a blind rater who was unfamiliar with both the topic and the students.
- Both raters independently scored the video based on an Attention profile designed by Gina Davies.
- After a 6 week block of therapy the method was repeated and the outcome videos were scored by the same raters.



Next steps

Although the overall trend was that the students made gains, there were a number of outliers. This is likely due to several extraneous factors influencing the children on the days. However, for those who did follow the expected trend, further research will focus on maintenance of these gains and generalisation within other educational environments. The findings indicate that future intervention for the older cohort should focus on developing integrated attention skills through multi-step tasks.



A graph demonstrating the baseline and outcome scores within one therapy group of 6-7 year olds. All children made progress.

Results

The overall trend indicated that the majority of students made positive gains across all the areas of the profile. All children made gains at the activities that required integrated attention. The 6-7 year olds made significantly more progress than the 8-10 year olds in the study; increasing their scores across all areas of the profile. Comparatively, the 8-10 year olds made more progress on the later more complex sections of the profile.

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