

## **PROCESSING SKILLS**

**Processing Speed** describes how efficiently a child can perform a cognitive task. It accounts for the speed at which the child takes in information, processes it, and then acts on it. A child may struggle with one or more of these aspects of processing, and because different children have different capacities in different areas, there are varying processing speed profiles. A child with slow processing speed in written tasks, for example, could be slow in seeing what they need to copy, determining how to do it, or slow to put that information onto paper.

Processing speed also impacts the ability to quickly and automatically complete cognitive tasks, particularly when a child is under pressure to maintain focus, attention, and concentration. Processing speed is associated with reading and math achievement and lack of speed in processing routine information makes it more difficult and time-consuming to comprehend new information. Children with slow processing speed often struggle with work completion, taking notes, and reading and writing efficiency.

### **Ways to help your child's processing speed**

Games like Boggle and Uno stimulate the mind and are great for improving speed of processing within a time limit.

Crossword puzzles, *Sudoku*, Rubik's Cube, chess, jigsaw puzzles.

Teach typing skills. Practicing dictation can increase processing speed. Play a short recording or speak aloud for a few minutes and have your child transcribe what they hear into an online notepad or a word processor.

Beat your best time. Practicing timed activities can help build processing speed. Even something as simple as a challenge to find a word in the dictionary. Time how long it takes and then practice reducing that time. Other examples of timed activities include:

- Quickly find and correctly count out change from a group of coins.
- Find two food items from an array of food products in the kitchen.
- Sort playing cards into suits or number or colours
- Sort coloured counters or smarties.
- Use a highlighter pen to highlight a particular letter in a passage of text.
- Do word searches or spot the difference.