

TIME BLINDNESS IN CHILDREN

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What is Time Blindness?

Time blindness is a term used to describe when a child finds it hard to:

- Sense how much time has passed
- Estimate how long things will take
- Plan and manage time



All children can find time tricky. It becomes a concern when this continues as they get older and starts to affect daily life. They are not being lazy or careless. Their brain does not track time in the usual way.

What might you notice?

A child may:

- Often be late or not ready on time
- Lose track of time when playing or on screens
- Say "I will do it later" but then forget
- Underestimate how long things take
- Struggle to start or finish tasks
- Rush at the last minute
- Find waiting very hard



What does this look like day to day?



You say:
"We are leaving in 10 minutes."

- The child:
- Keeps playing
- Seems surprised when it is time to go
- Is not ready and needs to be rushed

At school:

- Starts work late and struggles to finish
- Misses parts of tasks when time is limited



At home:

- Struggles to get ready on time
- (for example, mornings or bedtime)
- Needs repeated prompts to stay on track

How can you help at home?

- Use timers or countdowns (visual if possible)
- Give time warnings (for example, "5 minutes left")
- Link time to actions ("When this ends, we leave")
- Stay calm - avoid rushing where possible
- Use routines to make time predictable
- Help them plan what to do first
- Break tasks into small steps



How can school help?

- Use visual timers in class
- Give clear time limits and reminders
- Break work into chunks with mini deadlines
- Check progress during tasks
- Allow extra time where needed
- Support planning and organisation
- Reduce time pressure where possible



When to seek support

Speak to a professional if:

- Time difficulties affect learning or daily life
- The child is finding it hard to keep up with routines
- The child is often stressed or overwhelmed

Key message

Children with time blindness can learn to manage time. They need support, structure, and clear cues.

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