

## Frantic Fidgeting: Why Is Sitting Still a Challenge for My Child?



*Sitting still, especially for an extended period of time, is a big ask for a little tyke! They are new to movement and sensing the world, so it makes sense that they would want to be on the move exploring. That said, concerns about sitting still can arise when the constant need to move gets in the way of living day-to-day life. There are multiple potential reasons why your child may have trouble with this. The good news is that you can do quite a bit to help out.*

### **The Power of Basic Needs**

Let's get down to the basics! Sometimes the trick to getting your child to sit still is as simple as making sure their basic needs are met. Ensuring they get enough sleep and eat enough healthy foods can turn the tide for the better. Even adults who don't have basic needs met may have trouble with sitting still. Hunger and fatigue can be awfully distracting! Another basic need that you don't want to overlook is movement. Does your child have enough time to move during the day? Weak muscles can cause poor posture, which makes your child more likely to twist and turn while sitting. Plus, there needs to be time each day to burn off some energy. Take a look at your daily routine as well. A schedule that is too busy or not busy enough is problematic. A balanced life is good for everyone, so be sure to experiment to see what works best.



## **Other Factors at Play**

If you know that basic needs are met, there may be more complex factors at play such as underlying conditions. ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is a possible culprit, which often comes with symptoms like impulsivity, lacking focus, and the inability to sit still. Another condition that can cause your child to move excessively is sensory processing disorder (SPD). This condition can affect any of your senses, including touch, vestibular sense (sense of balance), or proprioception sense (body awareness sense). Your child may be seeking stimulation to fulfill a sensory need that has been left unsatisfied. Additionally, kids that have trouble self-regulating or who struggle with mental health like anxiety are at a higher risk for moving the body at inopportune times. A body that isn't at rest or that doesn't have needs met, will often let you know through movement, either wanted or unwanted.

## **The Art of Sitting Still**

Sometimes it seems like sitting still is an art form. Keep in mind that kids at younger ages will have a harder time staying still than older children. Our bodies were designed to move after all, and kids are eager to experiment and explore. An inability to sit still becomes a problem when it interferes with daily life, your child's ability to build relationships, or when parents feel stretched to their limit with their kiddo's constant movement. Something easy to try at home is to take movement breaks between tasks. If your child struggles to complete homework at home, for example, breaking tasks up into smaller steps and allowing more time for movement can help. You can also give SENSORY ACTIVITIES or HEAVY WORK activities a try at home. Heavy work activities appeal to the proprioceptive sense and create resistance such as with pushing, pulling, or lifting. For other ideas, you can take a look at our blog all about increasing focus [HERE](#).



## **Introducing Occupational Therapy to the Table**

There are times when your child's inability to sit still gets to be too much such as if they can't sit still in class or complete chores or homework tasks. There's a time and place for everything, and sometimes it is time to sit still even if just for a bit. Pediatric occupational therapy will help your child build the skills they need to be successful across a variety of situations. Plus, an occupational therapist can give families the tools that they need to see big improvements over time. Never be afraid to ask for help. Giving your child assistance now will help them (and you) in the long run.



Our occupational therapists are up for any task and are on the move to help one kiddo at a time. There's no time to sit still right now! REACH OUT today if we can help!

When we're sitting still and staying focused, you might find us writing and creating new posts for our FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM pages. Give us a follow.