

## Tips for Engaging with High Energy Mentees

It's important to remember session time falls during your mentee's lunch and recess time and that it's natural that they come full of energy. These tips will help channel that energy and direct some of it back towards your time together.

### 1. Sit away from distraction

Choose a space away from the room's entrance or windows, which can often prove distracting.

### 2. Use visual schedules

A visual schedule is a visual representation of a sequence of events that is created using pictures, icons, words, etc. In our case, take out the pie chart you created with your mentee during orientation and let that guide the flow of your session. If the pie chart visual isn't working for your mentee, consider designing another kind of graphic.

### 3. Establish warning signals

If you have a mentee who struggles with inattention or impulsivity, consider developing a warning signal with your mentee that you can use to provide nonverbal cues. This will help you re-focus your mentee without explicitly calling them out in front of his or her peers. For example, you could wave your hand, pull your ear lobe, or tap your foot 3 times as a signal to your mentee.

### 4. Use praise

Children who have problems sitting still, struggle to pay attention, and lack self-control receive a lot of negative feedback throughout the day. Teachers and parents spend a lot of time telling these kids about all of the things they're doing wrong, and while this isn't always done deliberately, it can have a huge impact on a child's feelings of self-worth. Offer praise wherever possible, and make it a point to highlight one (or more) things your mentees does RIGHT each day.

### 5. Take a Brain Break

A brain break is a 2-3 minute active break. See how many jumping jacks your mentee can do in 10 seconds, try a quick yoga pose or ask your Program Coordinator for the brain break activity sticks to guide you.

### 6. Don't sweat the small stuff & keep calm

Focus on the positive aspects of your session. Some days there will be more reading and shared activity and other days your mentee will want to blow off steam. Remember, it's not personal and that you can be a positive role model and teach your mentee appropriate ways to deal with frustration by your own behavior.

#### Sources:

<https://www.merakilane.com/adhd-in-the-classroom-18-teaching-tips-to-maintain-focus-and-motivation/>

<https://childmind.org/article/improving-behavior-classroom/>