



Helping Your Child Succeed

Encourage at-home practice. Many parents are surprised to learn what happens at home and school is actually more important than what happens with the therapist. Therapy is similar to music lessons. If a child is taking piano lessons, his or her teacher reviews progress and assigns new things to practise. But if the child doesn't practise at home, he or she will never learn to play the piano. Similarly, a child who does not practise the techniques and activities assigned by the therapist is unlikely to make progress.

Coach your child. Therapists and parents act as coaches to help a child develop new skills. Your child will be most successful if you take on an increasingly larger coaching role as therapy progresses.

Make the programme a high priority. The more energy and enthusiasm your family can commit to the programme, the higher your child's chance of success. For now, the programme may need to come before other things, like school plays, sports events, or family travel.

Be willing to work hard. If you are willing to work hard in the short term, you and your child will have better long-term results. For example, it can be tempting just to let your child have fun and relax by watching TV or hanging out with friends instead of practising the week's assignments. In the short-term, this may put your child in a good mood, but the long-term anxiety problems won't go away. Working hard now can mean the anxiety problems can be much better for months or years.

Remember that practice is safe. Sometimes your child might feel uncomfortable during practice, complaining or even crying. No parent likes to see his or her child feeling distressed, and you might be tempted to stop the practice. However, try to remind yourself that the practice is safe. Your child is not in danger. The best thing you can do for your child is to be supportive and help him or her face the challenge. With practice, what is difficult for your child now will become easier over time. Some children and young people with epilepsy need to take extra precautions during certain activities, such as swimming. Your therapist will work with you to ensure that the tasks you/your child are practising are safe. You can always discuss with your neurologist or epilepsy team if you are not sure whether something is safe or not.

Stay relaxed. When parents are anxious, treatment can become more difficult. Anxious parents have a particularly hard time watching their children practise things that are difficult for them. This is why the therapist takes on the primary coaching role in the beginning of treatment, deciding what pace is best for your child.

Attend therapy sessions faithfully. You should do everything possible to make sure you and your child attend all therapy sessions and that you are available to speak with the therapist – in person or by telephone – as necessary.

Speak up. Don't be afraid to let your therapist know what isn't working. The practice assignments aren't always easy, especially in the beginning. Parents who communicate about how the programme is working for them and their family help their children succeed. The therapist can help you solve some of the problems you might face, even with things like lack of time or doubts about your child's progress.

		<i>Uninterested child</i>		<i>Enthusiastic child</i>
	Lowest chance of success		Possible success	
	Possible success		Highest chance of success	