# Module 2.4 Supporting Attention Issues in the Classroom

**Key Points: Attention**

- Attention is a key fundamental block and considered a "Super Block"
- Activates other blocks-creates "ready to learn" by orienting to information
- EF- matures with age

**An Important View**

- Although the neurocognitive function of attention can be characterized as the core of ADHS, it can also be part of a SLD evaluation. Attention should be accounted for in evaluation
- ADHD is statistically correlated with SPS, behavior difficulties and SED issues

**Impact on Learning**

- Neurocognitive Perspective: No learning can take place without a person first "attending" to a task that is to be learned. Attention is the essential first step
- Information cannot "enter" the brain to be stored in memory if there is an attention problem

**Attention Deficits: What Causes It?**

- Genetics and multiple neural circuitry are possible causes. Not definitive. Primarily a frontal lobe issue
- Low dopamine and norepinephrine in PFC as well as white matter tracts, but not in all cases
- Typically, LOW PS and WM Cog Scores

**Expert Guidance**

- Attention problems (ADHD) are one of the most widely studied neuro-developmental disorder
- Student motivation-use metacognitive strategies- provide the "why"
- Don't change the student, change the environment
- Behavioral techniques are effective, especially when combined with other evidenced based practices

**Interventions**

- Behavioral techniques are effective:
  - Reinforcement (reward, positive feedback)
  - Supervision-simple and effective (consistent feedback)
  - Self-monitoring skills

**Intervention: Self-Monitoring**

- Self-Monitoring is an intervention because it is a skill development that directly addresses a deficit area
- Increases on-task behavior-especially if rewards are employed (combination of rewards + self-monitoring)
- Doesn't cure but helps increase a skill that spans school to other life domains
- Focus not only on "on-task" awareness, but also task performance awareness (work quality)
- Can use a variety of cues to elicit self-monitoring
    - Visual timers
    - Colored cards
    - Checklist- when/then strategy
    - Tactile cues
    - Technology, mobile device, reminder to focus

**Accommodations**

- Environmental- highly effective with supervision
- Provide opportunities for real physical movement
- Routine, set reminders, and supervision
- Help simplify information so it does not overwhelm; organize information for efficient learning
- Use contingency strategies- "if-then"
- Keep new learning lesson and tasks concise in short sessions
- Improve "check" by priming