

Easy to do Convergence Insufficiency Exercises.

It is important to remember what convergence insufficiency is. It simply means you have difficulty either turning your eyes inwards to look at a target close to you or you cannot keep your eyes turned in long enough to do extended periods of close work. This is a coordination problem of the eyes, not a muscle weakness.

Our goal then is to teach you to do this without any strain and to be able to do this without having to think about it. For some this will be easy and will require only one type of exercise. For others it is more difficult to correct and will take a series of exercises.

Remember there is good news - once this problem is fixed, it generally is fixed for life. ***So if you do them now and do them properly, you won't have to do them again.*** 15 minutes a day is all that is required!

Whilst there are more complex exercises, here are 2 very simple exercises to do:

1. **Pencil Push-Ups** – This is the simplest exercise for most people.

Firstly, find a pen and find a target in the distance. Any distant target will do. Now hold the pen at arms length in front of your nose between yourself and the distant target. When you look at the distant target you should see 'two pens' separated by a small distance.

Now look at the tip of the pen. You need to make it clear and single. You should see 'two' of the target that you were looking at originally in the distance.

Now look back at the distant target. You should see 'two' pens again. As you look at the distant target, bring the pen closer to you. You should see the 'two' pens become further apart.

Now look at the tip of the pen again and make it clear and single.

Repeat the above two steps until you bring the pen to a point close to you where you cannot make it single. When this happens, go back to the start where you hold the pen at arms length.

To make this exercise more difficult, and beneficial, ask your child to try to keep the pen clear and single as you do his or her weekly spell-words.

2. **Binocular String** – this is an advanced version of pencil push-ups. It requires you to use both eyes together and helps you train your depth perception. As with the pencil push-ups, the simple piece of information for this is to remember to see two of what you are **NOT** looking at and only one of what you **ARE** looking at.

However you also have to see ‘two strings’ all of the time on either side of all beads. **It is very important that both strings are equally clear, and that one string doesn’t flicker on and off.**

Attach the string to a wall or something similar at eye level. Hold the other end of the string up to your nose. Make sure that your hand or fingers are not blocking one of your eyes.

Begin by looking at the black bead. You should see one black bead, ‘two’ green beads, and ‘two’ red beads. You should also see ‘two’ strings that ‘cross over’ at the black bead. If the two strings do not cross over at the black bead, pull your eyes inwards until the two strings cross over.

Now look at the bead furthest from you. You should see one bead with two of each of the other beads and two strings that join at the bead you are looking at. The strings should be equally clear.

Now look at the bead closest to you. You should see one of this bead and two of the other beads behind it. You should also see two strings. These strings should be equally clear.

If you cannot make the close bead single then look away at the distance bead. Make sure that the two strings ‘meet’ at the single distance bead. Whilst looking at the distance bead, move the close bead further away from you. Again look at the close bead and try to see one bead as described earlier. If you cannot make the bead single, again look at this distance bead and move the near bead away from you.

Once you can make the near bead clear, practice looking from the distance bead to the near bead. You need to be able to make these two beads clear and single as quickly as possible whilst also keeping the ‘two’ strings equally clear.

As with the Pencil Push-ups children should do their list of ‘spell-words’ or ‘sight-words’ whilst doing this exercise.