

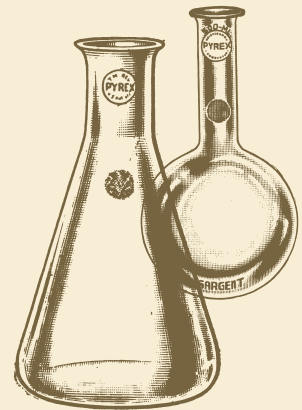
# The WONDER CABINET WISDOM

## Focus and Self-Control - The Sand Laboratory

*Playing with sand, dough or clay helps to develop a child's ability to focus on one task at a time.*

### Ways to support your child's focus and self-control:

- \* **Encourage your child to scoop and pour:** Pouring sand in and out of containers requires children to concentrate on their movements. It also improves their hand-eye coordination.
- \* **Ask questions to encourage observation:** Asking questions such as, "What will happen if you poured sand into the large funnel?" or "Which beaker has more sand inside it?" help to direct a child's focus on the task at hand.
- \* **Use your fingers to draw designs in the sand:** Touching the sand and paying attention to the way it feels on their fingers can be a centering sensory experience for many children. It also helps to strengthen their fingers for writing.
- \* **Use tools in different ways:** Challenge your child to figure out how to use a sand tool in a way that it was not intended. For instance, "How could you scoop the sand with the funnel?" This requires taking the time to think through a solution, an important element in developing the skills needed to focus.



### Why is this important?

Focus and self-control are essential life skills that help children learn to achieve their goals. Playing games that require them to concentrate, such as "I Spy" or "Red Light/Green Light," can help develop this important skill.

Adapted from *Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs* by Dr. Ellen Galinsky  
[www.mindinthemaking.org](http://www.mindinthemaking.org)

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