

From Go Fast Kids to Calm Kids

Making that transition from holiday mode to classroom.

How excited do kids get with the start of school approaching? Getting kids to go from the freedom of school holidays to move to that place of being settled and ready for school can be a challenge for some parents. Many children now days are identified as being ADD and ADHD I call these kids “go fasts” and the transition from holidays to school can be a bit more of a challenge for these kids. Being a “go fast” kid is fine, they are full of excitement and life, but it does not always suite the classroom environment. So how do you handle the transition time as they move into the structures of a new school year and a classroom environment?

An easy way to assist the transition process is to integrate some basic aromatherapy into your child’s routine. Aromatherapy is a simple and effective way to create a calm, grounded and positive environment for your children and environment. Now we know that you cannot control the classroom environment, but what you can do is take that environment the child is used to and move it into the classroom. This way you are transforming the child’s environment to one where they make the transition easier. This transformation can be achieved easily with aromatherapy. All that is need is to place a few drops of essential oil on a tissue to be inhaled during the day as needed or a massage a couple of drops of the oil onto the soles of their feet before school.

Throughout my years in clinic I have worked with many schoolteachers who have used essential oils in their classrooms to help ground kids especially after they race around at lunch breaks. I have also worked with parents and carers using similar essential oils to ground kids before and after school.

As a naturopath, I have found that “go fast” kids cannot always settle, simply because their minds are so creative and they are not grounded, and it is sad to see the creativity being suppressed with medications. Yes, there are many factors influencing why kids are going fast, but I have found grounding them is a simple place to start and then they function like everyone else, while still retaining their creativity. When a person of any size is grounded they can be attentive and stay focused, sit still and cope with pressures that are presented. In clinic I have treated adults going far faster than any kid is going to go by using the same system of getting them grounded first. We are all human and get caught up in life, kids pick up on everything that is going on, that excitement can build and it has to come out somewhere. The more stimulated, the faster they go, ground them so that they can focus on one thing at a time and anything is achievable.

In aromatherapy there is one essential oil in particular that is excellent at keeping people of any size grounded. That essential oil is Vetiver (*Vetiveria zizanoides*). Vetiver is distilled from the roots of a tall grass like plant and it has a very earthy and musky aroma. Over the years Vetiver has been my most used oil in clinic.

In a two-year study Dr. Terry Friedman MD worked with children between the ages of 6 to 12 years, looking to identify the uses of essential oils in the treatment of ADD and ADHD. Twenty children not diagnosed with ADD/ADHD were used as the control group and twenty children with a confirmed diagnosis of ADD/ADHD were used as the study group. A blend of essential oils was created using Vetiver, Cedarwood and Lavender and the children were encouraged to inhale the aroma whenever they felt “scattered”. The children were assessed over a 30-day period on each essential oil.

When the children inhaled the oils their brainwaves settled back into their normal patterns, which helped improve their behaviour and scholastic performance. The results of the study showed that Lavender increased performance by 53%, Cedarwood increased performance by 83% and Vetiver increased performance by 100%. Essential oils are not the only answer but are very effect and simple to integrate into

a child's environment to assist with handling life's challenges.

In Dr Friedman's study the essential oils were inhaled or used with an aromatherapy vaporiser. In my clinic I also found it very useful to blend the essential oils into a base oil and massage it onto the child's feet where they are quickly absorbed. The following is the blend I have used with my patients and found to be very effective. If you want to vaporise the blend, simply use the essential oils in the vaporiser and if you wish to apply the oils to your child's skin dilute 5 drops of the essential oil into 50ml of cold pressed almond oil that you can get from your local health food store.

Go Fast Kids Blend

Try vaporising my own "Sanity Saver" blend containing Vetiver, Geranium, Australian Sandalwood, Patchouli and Ylang Ylang. This simple and earthy blend stops their minds racing so that you can focus on one thing at a time. It helps to restore some peace and balance to all of your lives. I use the same blend to keep me grounded during my busy brain times.