

## **Parenting 101**

### **The Development of Memory and Thought**

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An unfortunate reality is that many important aspects of your child's development are left to chance. Fortunately, one of the most important pieces in the developmental puzzle, if understood by parents, can be significantly and often dramatically improved. That piece is "sequential processing" - the stuff of which memory and thought are made of.

Sequential processing is the ability to take in pieces of information that you hear or see, then hold and manipulate those pieces in your mind. This ability is one of the most basic and most significant of all human functions. To a great degree, sequential processing determines how well you learn, think, communicate and function. Yet it is something that is rarely measured unless you are taking an IQ test. In our society today, the significance of sequential processing is hardly ever understood and virtually never specifically developed.

Sequential processing is most often measured in "digit spans." A digit span refers to how many numbers, presented in random sequence at one-second intervals, you can listen to and repeat; or, how many numbers in a sequence you can look at for three seconds and remember. A digit span can also measure your ability to see or hear a sequence of numbers, remember them, and then repeat them back in reverse order. "Normal" sequential processing for adults is considered to be 7 +/- 2 numbers, a range of 5 to 9. This ability to process and manipulate pieces of information generally develops at the rate of a piece per year up until seven to nine years of age when the development of this critical ability tends to stop.

If you or your children are not processing information well, you or they will likely have problems with learning, problem solving, attending, following directions, communicating and understanding, just to mention a few. You might also get labeled as L.D., Dyslexic, ADD, ADHD, Spacey, Dozy or Dumb. You might wonder why you are really good at some things and have a big problem with others. Or, you might just skate through life relying on what access you do have to your innate intelligence and never realize your true potential.

To help parents understand sequential processing, the first step is to find out how well you and your children who are three or older do in fact process information. Fortunately you can do this quickly, easily, anonymously and for free, and at the same time participate in a very important research study.

To test your sequential processing go on-line to [www.nacd.org](http://www.nacd.org), then click the prompt for the free memory check. Find out how well you and your kids are processing, and in the next article we will teach you more about what sequential processing is and how improving it can help you and your children realize your innate potentials.

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