

## Mind control game for ADHD

A new thought operated computer system designed to reduce symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in children launches in the UK this month

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8th December 2010 — Children with ADHD have trouble controlling impulsive behaviour; now software designers have come up with a game that forces a child to concentrate to keep playing – which helps to train the brain to control impulses while having fun.

### Mind not mouse

Researchers from the University of Hertfordshire's School of Psychology have been testing the game called "Play Attention" which uses EEG (Electroencephalography) biofeedback by detecting brain waves. The developers say it uses NASA technology to help make your mind become the mouse, and that it is already in use in 450 US schools.

Researchers got 10 children with an attention deficit from Hertfordshire schools to use it three times a week for twelve weeks. Children have to wear what looks like a cycle helmet, but is really a set of brain wave sensors linked to a computer.

### Keep your head in the game

As long as the child concentrates, they stay in control of the games; but if their attention waivers the game stops.

The researchers found that, at the end of the study, the children's impulsive behaviour was reduced, compared to a control group who had not used the system.

"Children with a diagnosis of ADHD find it hard to control their impulses and inhibit inappropriate behaviour," says study leader Professor Karen Pine in a news release. "This can lead to educational and behavioural difficulties. The Play Attention method may prevent long-term problems by helping the children to be less impulsive and more self-controlled."

### Games for Life

Games for Life's marketing material claims parents can see positive changes in ADHD behaviour in around four weeks. The system costs £1,795 for a home licence and £2,495 for a school licence. The company says it is non-profit making and re-invests money in research and community projects.

Professor Pine and her colleagues are working on more projects with the company, including the use of thought control to assess learning in children with severe communication and physical difficulties.

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