

A dark, blue-tinted photograph of a family sitting on a wooden floor, playing board games. A child's hand is visible moving a piece on a game board. The text 'SUCCESS ACADEMY' is overlaid in the upper center.

S|U|C|C|E|S|S
A|C|A|D|E|M|Y

Game Night: The Ultimate Brain Training

Actionable tips for building strategy, self-control, and brainpower at home.

Why We Play Games at School

We play games because they help your child build important skills like:

- Self Control
- Planning Ahead
- Adaptability

We see these mental skills as an important part of the foundation for successful learning.



Skill 1: Self-Control

Why We Do It (School)

This is the "stop and think" muscle. In class, it helps students resist the urge to call out, stay on task, and make thoughtful choices instead of impulsive ones.

Actionable Tip (Home)

Use games to practice controlling the reaction to losing or the urge to take a turn too quickly. This is safe, structured practice for real-world self-control.

Skill 2: Planning Ahead

Why We Do It

This is the ability to hold and manage information (like rules and previous moves) while strategizing. It's the same skill needed for multi-step math problems and organizing an essay.

Actionable Tip

Praise your child when you see them thinking ahead. "That was a smart move, saving that piece for later." This reinforces the value of planning.



Skill 3: Adaptability

Why We Do It

This is the ability to switch gears when a plan fails. It's how we teach students to handle setbacks, find a new approach, and avoid melting down when things don't go as expected.

Actionable Tip

When an opponent blocks them or makes an unexpected move, ask: "That changed things! What's your Plan B?" This normalizes the act of changing strategy.



Choosing Your Game

Strategy Over Chance

Games based on *only* luck (like a simple spinner) are fun, but they won't help your child build important mental skills. At school, we use games where students must make decisions to reinforce the strategic thinking needed for academics.

Actionable Tip: Game Ideas by Level



K - 1st Grade

Focus on spatial awareness and basic blocking. (e.g., Blokus, Checkers, Connect Four, Dominoes)



2nd - 3rd Grade

Focus on rules and mid-term planning. (e.g., Mancala, Rummy Cube, Short Monopoly)



4th Grade +

Focus on complex negotiation and long-term strategy. (e.g., Settlers of Catan, Chess, Backgammon)

Coaching Sportsmanship: The 2-Step Intervention

Step 1: The Pause

When your child gets frustrated, stay calm.

Say, "I see you're frustrated. Take a deep breath." This teaches self-control.

Step 2: The Script

Teach them a polite phrase to use.

Example phrases: "Good game, you played well," or "I'll try a new strategy next time."

This helps them build important social skills.

Wrap-Up Question

What was the single smartest choice you made tonight, and why was it smart?