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Press Release

Enfield students learn to concentrate with “brain football”



Mindball® α Trainer: a high resolution version of this picture is available on request

Enfield students and teachers are the first in the world to be using a new brainwave feedback technology called Mindball to improve their concentration and relaxation skills.

Students at several local schools, including Kingsmead School in Southbury Road, are learning how to gain more control over their state of mind by moving a ball on the device towards a goal. The greater level of focus and relaxation they reach, the more goals they score.

“One of the big challenges teachers face is encouraging students to stay focussed and to deal with the pressures of school life”, said Angela Poplar, Manager of the Central Enfield City Learning Centre, which is lending the device to local schools. “The beauty of Mindball is that it is so much fun that students don’t have to be told to take part – they want to anyway. They quickly learn that they have much more control over their state of mind than they thought – so much so that they can even score goals just by thinking!”

The new technology certainly proved to be a hit at Kingsmead School. Learning Mentor George Davis said:

“Were the students open to using it? Let’s put it this way, there was a queue. It was a bit like Pringles - ‘when you pop, you can’t stop’. It was very difficult to prise students away from Mindball. The more they used it, the more they wanted to continue, as every attempt became an opportunity to better the last one.”

Mindball works by encouraging the brain’s alpha and theta waves, which are associated with alert concentration and deep relaxation. It translates these signals into movement of

a ball in front of the subject, providing instant feedback on the state of relaxation. As the user relaxes and focuses, the ball moves from its starting position towards a goal. Once the basic technique has been grasped, the user can increase the sensitivity level to achieve even higher states of relaxation and concentration. There are ten levels to master, ranging from beginner to expert.

There is scientific evidence that the use of neurofeedback to control brain activity can boost performance and creativity. A study in 2003 by London's Imperial College found that music students using EEG feedback significantly improved their exam grade and level of creativity.

"People sometimes don't realise that it is possible to learn how to control their state of focus and relaxation through natural means", said Sean Gough, Chief Executive of UK distributor Vivifeye. "This is often a revelation for many people, who can progress from the insight provided by the Mindball, to change how they react to learning and stress. It can be the springboard towards a completely new, natural approach to dealing with pressure."

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More about Mindball

Mindball is a Swedish invention from the company Interactive Productline. There are two variants – a version for two or more players recently seen at the London Science Museum, and a single user version (Mindball α Trainer), which creates the potential for more refined training of relaxation control.

Mindball and Mindball α Trainer measure Theta, Alpha and Beta brain waves and use the values as input to an algorithm. The algorithm uses a Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) resulting in a frequency spectrum from which peak and mean values calculations are made. This is made once for each measured frequency band (Theta, Alpha and Beta brain waves) which is then weighted in the algorithm where an AIF (Artefact Inhibit Function) filter is also included. These calculations are performed and the result is presented graphically on a screen and also correlates to the ball's velocity changes and direction.

For further information about Mindball α trainer and Mindball visit

<http://www.vivifeye.com/mindball.html>.