

How to Help Your Child with ADHD Symptoms

Primary Symptoms of ADHD include:

- *Distractibility - Difficulty paying attention and concentrating*
- *Impulsiveness - Acting before thinking of possible consequences of actions.*
- *Overly Energetic- Difficulty sitting still and remaining in their seat*

Special Needs of the Child include:

- *Increased Structure, Support and Supervision*
- *Changes in External Stimulation*

Interventions That Parents and Teachers Can Try:

- *Track when and how often specific problematic behaviors occur. Look for patterns in order to set initial goals for improvement.*
- *Create a routine at home (and in the classroom) for the child to get used to.*
- *Be consistent in your expectations and in enforcing your rules calmly*
- *Give the child a warning before an activity ends to prepare them for this transition*
- *Catch your child behaving well and reward this with positive attention. Focus on:*
 - *When your child cooperates with directions without excessive reminders*
 - *When your child shows good attention*
 - *When your child completes tasks or activities that they start*
 - *When your child is sitting calmly*
 - *When your child is paying attention in group activities*
 - *When your child is able to wait their turn calmly*
 - *When your child shares toys with their peers*
 - *When your child remains quiet when it is not time to talk*
 - *When your child verbalizes their feelings appropriately*

Give Reminders of Classroom and House Rules and Expected Behaviors Often.

Remind the Child of the Expected Behavior on the Way to Errands, Such as Going to Stores or to Doctor Visits.

When Giving Directions:

- *Give one step at a time if necessary*
- *Be sure your direction was heard/ attended to by:*
 - *Touching your child on the shoulder or arm before giving a direction*
 - *Kneeling down for important directions so that you are able to talk to your child eye to eye*
 - *Asking for eye contact before giving a direction*
 - *Having the child repeat the direction to you to be sure they heard it*

Be realistic in your Expectations for the Child.

- *Shorten the duration of groups or activities if necessary.*

- *Allow the child to fidget in their chair if they are quiet and paying attention.*
- *If the child is not distracting others, consider allowing them to walk around the room or participate in another activity calmly.*

Increase External Structure for the Child at Home and in School.

- *Be present while the child completes a direction such as getting dressed for school.*
- *Seat the child in the front of the room, near the teacher.*
- *Seat the child away from friends and distracting (ie. other ADHD) children.*
- *Seat the child away from distractions, such as windows.*
- *Seat the child further than arm's reach from peers, walls and toys*
- *Create subgroups or smaller groups to reduce distractions*

Help the Child Organize Their Work, Papers and Their Room.

- *Create files/separate notebooks for each subject and homework*
- *Check that papers are filed properly every evening after homework is complete*
- *Give specific directions regarding things to organize in their room*
- *Prepare a brief reminder list (ie. 3 x 5 card) of behaviors for the child to keep in mind*
- *For younger children, use pictures or drawings of the child doing the desired behaviors until they can read well.*
- *Create reminders for their classroom, desk, bathroom and bedroom.*

Seek Positive Outlets for the Child's High Energy.

- *Have the child be the parent's or teacher's helper*
- *Have daily opportunities for the child to be outdoors and active.*
- *Suggest activities when the child gets fidgety- puzzles, blocks, reading, videos.*

Some Children do Better When it is Quiet and Others when They are Multitasking.

- *Remove objects they can fidget with during homework or class work*
- *Consider whether background music or TV is a help or a distraction*

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