



Community Paediatrics

Useful information following a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

We understand that a diagnosis of ADHD can be difficult to come to terms with and as a family, you may be coping with a condition you know very little about and trying to find new ways for everyone to live together and feel supported.

This leaflet provides you with useful information and details of national and local websites and places to visit for support.

What is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is also known as attention deficit disorder (ADD) and hyperkinetic disorder. It is a fairly common condition that mainly affects a child's behaviour. There may also be problems with the child's intellectual, social and psychological development as a result of the behaviour.

What are the symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?

Children with ADHD show persistent restlessness, impulsiveness and/or inattention. These features are seen in more than one setting. For example, at school and at home. They are also seen in more than one activity. For example, in schoolwork and in relationships. They occur at a level greater than expected for their age and cause significant disruption to the child's daily life.

There are three subtypes of ADHD:

Hyperactive-impulsive subtype. Some features of this type of ADHD are that a child may fidget a lot, run around in inappropriate situations, have difficulty playing quietly and may talk excessively. They may interrupt others and have trouble waiting their turn in games, in conversations and in queues.

Inattention subtype. In this subtype, a child may have trouble concentrating and paying attention, may make careless mistakes, may not listen or follow through on instructions and may be easily distracted. They may also be forgetful in daily activities, lose essential items such as school books or toys, and have trouble organising activities.

Combined subtype. If a child has this subtype, they have features of both of the other subtypes.



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Children with ADHD are also more likely than average to have other problems such as anxiety and depression, conduct disorders and co-ordination difficulties. Some children with ADHD also have reading difficulties and dyslexia.

Information for parents on managing the signs and symptoms of ADHD in your child

General advice for parents:

- Develop consistent routines at home and at school
- Keep rules clear and simple
- Remember the child does not intend to be difficult
- Attention-seeking means something
- Try to understand what triggers the behaviour response
- Listen to the child with your full attention
- Check that the child is making eye contact before giving instructions
- Supervise closely; impulsivity can place children in dangerous situations
- Be positive about the child and continually look out for them 'being good' and praise them
- Try to ignore minor irritating behaviour
- Provide clear disciplinary consequences such as time-out



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Definitions

Hyperactive also known as highly active.

Definition: very active; always into things; makes you tired; gets wild or 'revved-up'; loses control; hates to be confined.

Inappropriate descriptions: interrupts, wild, destructive, uncontrolled.

Say this: Examples: "You're over-excited". "I think you are getting too revved-up". "You are beginning to lose control".

Do this: Intervene early. Provide quiet distraction. Provide cooling off time/space. Provide space for blowing off steam.

Impulsive

Definition: unpredictable needs; child is never hungry or tired at predictable times; moods change suddenly

Inappropriate descriptions: uncooperative, loner, moody.

Say this: Examples: "I know you are not hungry now. I'll put your plate in the refrigerator and you can eat your meal when you are hungry". "I know you are not sleepy now, but it is time to be in your bedroom".

Do this: Separate meal time from eating time; bedtime from sleep time. Create routines, even if they are unusual. Be flexible.

Distractible

Definition: has trouble concentrating and paying attention, especially if not interested; doesn't listen.

Inappropriate descriptions: forgetful, irresponsible, absent-minded, lazy.

Say this: Examples: "I know it's hard for you to pay attention". "I need to see your eyes when I'm talking to you".

Do this: Establish eye contact, by touch if necessary. Give short instructions. Reduce distractions.



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Additional advice to parents

Be reasonable

Parents must know a child's capabilities before establishing expectations. Knowledge of child development will help any parent in setting realistic standards.

Be explicit

Children can listen and still not understand the words or ideas a parent is trying to communicate. When setting limits, parents need to allow children to re-state the requirements using their own words. This 'check for understanding' is critical to later enforcements. "Do you understand?" won't work.

Be consistent

Set rules that are necessary and important to the family. If a rule is made only because other people think it is important, enforcing the rule will be difficult at best. Parents must set limits they can and are willing to enforce every time no matter how inconvenient.

Be fair

Use set consequences for when a rule is broken. Children deserve to know what will happen when their behaviour goes out-of-bounds. Consequences should teach, not punish. Children need practice in learning what is expected of them. They will forget and make mistakes. If consequences make sense, children will remember the next time.

Be patient

Learning takes time for children and parents. Some children will test a limit once and accept it. Other children will test the limits over and over and over before they ever accept the inevitability of the situation. Parents of such children deserve special recognition if they can maintain consistency and sanity through the challenges.

Be child-oriented

Don't destroy a child to enforce a rule. Destroying a child's sense of self-worth through humiliation, embarrassment or degradation isn't necessary. Limits are set to guide our children, not to prove who is boss.

Seeing the behaviours

1. Recognise how the trait affects the child's behaviour (*definition*).
2. Avoid the incorrect labels that demean the child and pass judgment (*inappropriate descriptions*).
3. Label the true behaviour for the child. Use consistent phrases so the child will understand what is happening and can relate to your expectations (*say this*).
4. Finally, take action. Do what needs to be done in a positive manner. Remember, the child is not doing this "on purpose" (*do this*).



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National Support Services

NHS website

For advice on symptoms, diagnosis and living with ADHD.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/>

ADDISS

ADDISS (National Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service) is the UK's only national ADHD charity. ADDISS provides a wide range of information and resources about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder to parents, sufferers, teachers and health professionals. They also run annual conferences, training and a telephone helpline.

<http://www.addiss.co.uk/>

Adders

Set up in 1998, this site aims to promote awareness of ADHD and provide information and practical advice to sufferers and their families in the UK and around the world. Lots of information, downloadable resources and a comprehensive list of local support groups.

<http://www.adders.org/>

ADHD Foundation

The ADHD Foundation is based in Liverpool and provides services to ADHD sufferers and their families in that area. However, their website has a lot of information on ADHD, including a very detailed FAQ.

<https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/>

ADHD Kids

A site run by Alison Thompson, a UK-based ADHD author, speaker, coach, and mum to Daniel, who was diagnosed with ADHD when he was six. The aim being to help parents of ADHD kids support their children to overcome the challenges of ADHD and reach their potential. To help teachers understand what ADHD is and how they can best support ADHD kids in the classroom to dispel the myth that ADHD is not real ...!

<http://adhdkids.org.uk/>

ADHD Voices

A research project that encourages children and young people to talk about their experience of ADHD and medication.

<http://www.adhdvoices.com/>



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ADHD Pages

An introduction to the ADHD Pages available on the “Hi2u 4 people with hidden impairments” website, which is a site centred around ADHD, Asperger’s Syndrome, Dyslexia and similar “hidden” neurological differences along with any other type of hidden impairment.

<http://www.adhd.org.uk/>

ACE Education Advice

The ACE Advice and Information Service offers parents/carers information and advice on anything relating to education, including bullying, SEN provision, government guidelines and exclusions. There’s plenty of information on the website plus a term-time telephone helpline.

<http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/>

Living with ADHD

This is a website from one of the pharmaceutical companies, Janssen, but it includes a lot of information for teenagers with ADHD as well as parents, teachers, and medical professionals, including videos and downloadable resources.

<https://www.livingwithadhd.co.uk/>

Understanding NICE Guidance Booklet

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg72>

Parent Partnership

Parent Partnership is an organisation that offers support and advice to parents and carers of children with SEN. Every area has a local Parent Partnership group who can advise on support in schools, exclusions and more. The link takes you to the national website, where you can get details for your local group.

<http://www.parentpartnership.org.uk/>

SEN Magazine

SEN Magazine is a subscription-only, bi-monthly magazine that features articles on a wide range of disabilities and educational needs, including ADHD. Many of the articles also appear on the website – the link will take you to the index of ADHD articles.

<https://senmagazine.co.uk/>

The UK ADHD Partnership

The UK ADHD Partnership is a group of mental health and allied who want to improve outcomes for children with ADHD. However, their website has lots of useful information and a list of local support groups.

<https://www.ukadhd.com/>



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YoungMinds

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. The link will take you directly to the ADHD section.

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

UKAAN

The UK Adult ADHD Network (UKAAN) provides support, education, research and training for mental health professionals working with adults with ADHD.

<http://www.ukaan.org/>

Local Support Services

Details of local support services can be accessed via the Local Offer website.

<https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/home/>

Other useful services as recommended by Swindon parents

Disability Living Allowance for children aged under 16

<https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children>

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for children aged over 16

<https://www.gov.uk/pip>

Personal budgets and direct payments

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/benefits-care/community-care/personal-budgets.aspx>

Visual Supports and Beyond

<http://www.visualsupportsandbeyond.co.uk/index.html>

The CEA Cinema Card

<https://www.ceacard.co.uk/>

The Carers Trust – Days Out

<https://carers.org/article/days-out>

Bournstream - A play and picnic site for children with special needs

<https://www.bournstream.org/>

Hard Days Out Made Easy

<https://harddaysout.com/>

My Family Our Needs



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<https://www.myfamilyneeds.co.uk/activities-for-disabled-children/>

Special Needs Jungle

<https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/>



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Merlin's Magic Wand

<https://www.merlinsmagicwand.org/>

Family Fund – Helping Disabled Children

<https://www.familyfund.org.uk/>

Disability Sport Swindon

<http://disabilitysportswindon.co.uk/>

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

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