

# **ADHD Strategies for Teachers and Parents**

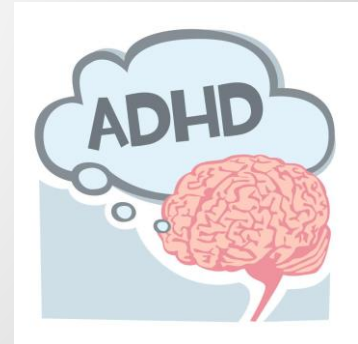
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# **What is ADHD?**

## **-Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**

**Health experts say that ADHD is the most common behavioral disorder that starts during childhood.**

**However, it does not only affect children-people of all ages can suffer from ADHD. Psychiatrists say ADHD is a neurobehavioral developmental disorder.**



# 3 Types of ADHD

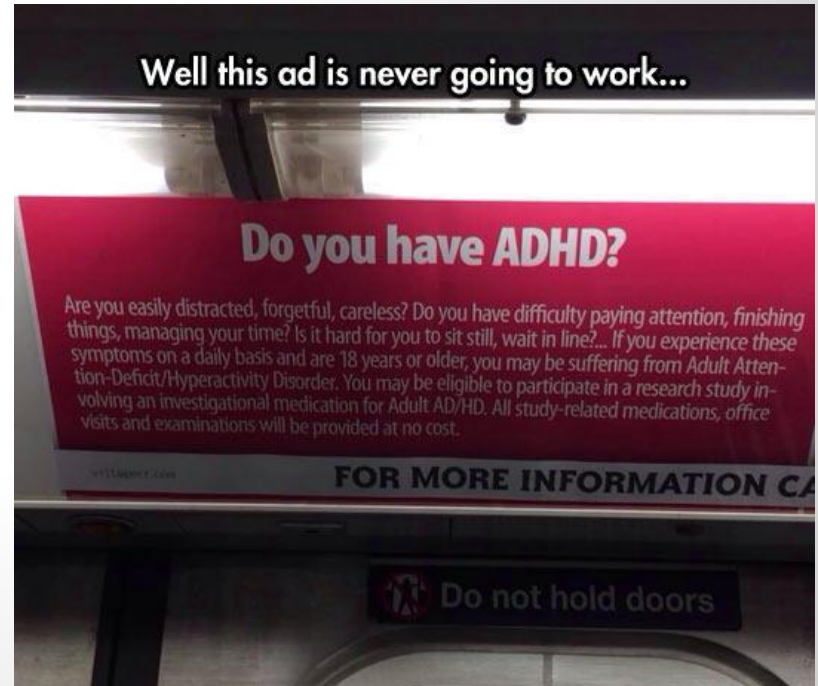
**Predominantly Inattentive Presentation:** The person is distracted easily or forgets daily routines. It is hard for the individual to organize or finish tasks, to pay attention to detail, or follow instructions.

**Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Presentation:** The person feels restless and has trouble with impulsivity. They may fidget or talk a lot, have difficulty taking turns, and listening to directions.

**Combined Presentation:** Symptoms of the above two types are equally present.

# What it feels like to have ADHD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GBMS7WPFSS>



# ADHD in Girls

Girls often fly under the radar because their symptoms often look different than boys.

Poor attention to detail, distractibility, forgetfulness, poor social skills

Girls with ADHD can be rejected by their peers because girl relationships often require greater sophistication and more maintenance.

Girls with the hyperactive type are often stigmatized more than boys with the disorder.

**So basically.....**



We like to think of ADHD students as having a brain like a racecar with bicycle brakes.



**What do we do to help these students,  
parents, and ourselves teachers??**



1. Think positively-you will all survive this
2. Laugh-children with ADHD are super creative and can put you in situations where all you can do is laugh.
3. Remain calm and have patience
4. Do things DIFFERENTLY! Don't keep trying to hammer the square pegs into the round holes. Come up with something different :)

# Tips on giving directions

## At Home

### In the Classroom

**Grab their attention.** Use a bell, chime, or gong to indicate you're about to give instructions. Vary the pitch and volume of your voice. Write instructions on the blackboard with colored chalk. Use props - a butterfly net, for example, if you're assigning a project on nature. Tell an anecdote or perform a pantomime - anything to keep all eyes on you.

**Establish eye contact to be sure an ADD student is listening** when you give directions, or walk over and gently tap her on the shoulder. Whenever possible, provide instructions individually to the child with ADD rather than to the entire class.

**Avoid language that's open to interpretation, such as "behave appropriately."** Telling your class at dismissal to put their spelling notebooks and music folders in their backpacks is better than saying, "Pack up everything you need."

**Each time you give an assignment, have three students repeat what you said.** Then have the class say it in unison. This gives the student with ADHD multiple opportunities to hear it.

- See more at:

<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/1033.html#sthash.60gQ79sr.dpu>  
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**Don't compete with music, video games, or the television when giving instructions.** Turn these off, if necessary, to get your child's full attention.

**Tell your child what to do - and then stop talking.** Many parents continue to explain and elaborate, but this only distracts the child instead of allowing him to comply.

**Break complex tasks into small, simple steps.** Give your child a single instruction, and tell her to complete it and report back for another. If the task is an unfamiliar one, demonstrate how it's done.

**Create a checklist of daily routines.** A checklist will help your child operate independently. For children who are not yet fluent readers, snap a photo - or draw a picture - to illustrate each step of a regular routine.

**Inspect your child's work.** Offer praise when he follows directions or tries his best. Reward deserving efforts with a favorite activity or snack.

**If your child gets sidetracked, gently redirect him.** If you asked him to feed the dog but then found him outside playing basketball, say: "Remember, you're supposed to be feeding Beethoven right now. I'll hold on to the basketball, so you'll know where to find it when you're done."



# Tips on getting organized

The key...constant communication between teachers and parents

## In the classroom

- Provide additional supplies-2 sets of books
- Use the right supplies-students might need 1 binder instead of several folders
- Give assignments in writing
- Have a weekly locker/desk clean out
- Use one of the parent communication apps that allow you to text/email parents with information about school and assignments
- Buddy system-pair the student with a kind/organized peer that doesn't mind providing a cue
- Give direct instructions about what is expected- "Put this paper in your take home folder" NOT "put this away"

## At home

- Check assignment notebooks
- Keep multiple copies of important papers-post around house
- Have a weekly backpack/folder clean out
- Enforce time concepts- first, next, then, before, after.
- Make a calendar at home of both family and school events
- Create a filing system that coordinates with school-ex, science folder and notebook are both red
- Provide a place for everything-box for school supplies, shelf for books, bulletin board for announcements etc.

# Tips for homework completion

## In the classroom

- ★ **Assign the right amount of homework-**  
Students with ADHD work more slowly and may frustrate quickly. Ex. Only assign even problems
- ★ **Develop a plan with parents/students to ensure that assignments are complete.** Ex.  
The parent reminder phone app/email assignments
- ★ **Send parents a list of suggestion for productive homework sessions** \*See attached
- ★ Clearly post assignments
- ★ **Set aside a certain time each day for students to write assignments in their planners.** Assign a student to check his group or row for completion.



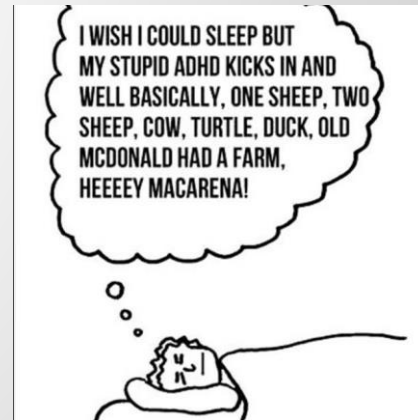
# Homework completion continued

## At home

- ★ **Establish a time for homework**-Figure out if your child works best right after school while still in “school mode” or needs a break and snack first.
- ★ **Find out assignment routines from your child's teacher**- Ex, spelling due every friday, reading logs are due at the end of the month
- ★ **Schedule a five-minute break for every 20 mins of work**
- ★ **Make an office for your child**-Use a tri-fold presentation board to make an “office”, make pockets out of duct tape for pencils and markers. Kids think is cool to design and it sets the mood/routine for working. It also limits distractions.
- ★ **Surprise positive reinforcements**-Kids with ADHD may not have the intrinsic motivation to complete assignments but they do feel good when parents make a big deal of accomplishments, give extra time for a preferred activity, an extra cool pencil to complete work with etc. Make the positive reinforcement fun and varied to maintain interest.
- ★ **Respect your child’s “saturation point”**-If your child is too tired or frustrated STOP!
  - Try the Post it method-prearrange with the teacher that if homework is going badly that your child can put a certain color post it on it and tell the teacher about the issue tomorrow. Most children are able to turn it around rather than tell the teacher they couldn’t/wouldn’t do it. If they do come to school with the post it the teacher knows the student had a difficult time and can work through it.

# ADHD Meds tips for parents and teachers

- ★ For a parent to decide to try medication is a very scary thing and not to be taken lightly by teachers and school staff
  - Giving your child medication with potential significant side effects is a hard decision. Parents need a lot of support from the teacher to observe symptoms and effectiveness.
- ★ Make sure both teachers and parents are aware of side effects
- ★ Is the student eating? When? How much?
  - Weight loss is a huge concern and common side effect
- ★ Sleeping? When? How much?
  - Students with ADHD have difficulty falling asleep and limited sleep can impact their mood and focus



# ADHD Meds continued

- ★ Irritability? When meds are wearing off the child can experience a “crash” and feel very irritable.
- ★ When are you seeing the medication being effective, if at all?
- ★ Meds react to everyone’s metabolism differently so they will be processed at different rates. Meds that are supposed to last for 6-8 hours may only last for 4 in a particular child.

Encourage Parents and yourself to print out a monthly calendar and write down what you see when a child is newly on meds. These can be great resources to take to the doctor. It is also an easy way to see patterns. It is also good for parents to have information from school. \*Some parents may not be with their child at all during the medications effectiveness window and they need teacher input!

# Top 10 perks to having ADHD

1. Compassion
2. Creativity
3. Drive
4. Problem Solving
5. Hyper-Focus
6. Sense of Humor/Comedic Flair
7. Resiliency
8. Intuition
9. Idea Gathering
10. That "Something Special"



**Successful People rumored to have ADHD:** Whopie Goldberg, Justin Timberlake, Jamie Oliver (Chef), Karina Smirnoff (DWTS), Will Smith, Michael Phelps, Jim Carrey, Robin Williams, Howie Mandel, Terry Bradshaw, Paul Orfalea (founder of Kinkos), Pete Rose, David Neeleman (founder of JetBlue), Adam Levine, Michele Rodriguez, Erin Brockovich, Charles Schwab...just to name a few ;)

