



ADHD – PARENTS GUIDE



WHAT IS ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is characterised by symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.

Inattention: trouble getting started on work, doesn't follow instructions, difficulty staying on task, easily distracted, makes careless mistakes, doesn't seem to listen.

Hyperactivity: fidgets, need to wander around the room, often speaks too loudly and excessively/non stop, squirms in seat

Impulsivity: difficulty waiting their turn, blurts out answers

WAYS TO SUPPORT

INATTENTION:

Use visual aids and reminders to help your child remember the steps needed to complete tasks such as getting ready in a morning, bedtime routine. Use checklists and reminders and ensure consistency to establish routines.

When completing homework/tasks at home break them into smaller steps and write these down so it's clear of what to do and in what order. Use planners and organisers to help manage time. Use visual timers to help children know how long they have to complete a task.

Provide a quiet workspace and reduce distractions – turn off the TV/Devices, work in a room to complete tasks away from siblings

HYPERACTIVITY

Plan time for physical activity to release energy – running, bouncing on trampolines, bike riding, walking the dog, go to park, swimming. These movement breaks should be planned throughout the day and be a mixture of longer sessions and shorter sessions.

Encourage participation in sports or physical activities both inside and outside of school.

IMPULSIVITY

Teach self-regulation techniques. Discuss what your child could do if they are finding it difficult to focus or to contain impulses – what is appropriate and not appropriate? Discuss ways to manage frustration as well as calming strategies for when feeling annoyed.

Encourage pausing before acting to allow your child to think through what will happen.

Provide a safe space for emotional regulation – allow your child access to this whenever needed and allow time to calm in this area before you try to talk through feelings and what happened.

Implement structured routines and build in time for "release" of energy so your child knows they have to manage impulsivity for certain periods but that they will have time to let off steam in a safe and managed way.

RELATIONSHIPS

Use positive reinforcement and regularly praise your child for making good choices about managing their ADHD. Make it explicit what you are praising them for.

Introduce rewards to encourage the desired behaviours. Remember though it takes at least 30 days of being consistent in implementing a change to see the change you want so persevere and don't give up too easily. Focus on one area of change at a time.

Avoid using negatives (eg/ don't), instead talk about what behaviour you do want to see.

Validate your child's feelings - use phrases such as "I can see you are feeling frustrated because your hands are clenched", "It's ok to feel annoyed that you didn't win the game, I would be annoyed too. How can we deal with this feeling?"

Use simple and direct language so that your child is clear of expectations and outcomes.

Provide visual cues, use non-verbal communication aids such as picture cards to remind them of expectations, routines

Remember your body language sends a message too – think about how you are standing when speaking to your child, avoid crossing arms, hands on hips, standing over them. Try to get down to their eye level when giving instructions, reassurance. Ensure you are giving your full attention when speaking to them about their behaviour.

OTHER RESOURCES

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

<https://adhduk.co.uk/about-adhd/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/adhd-and-mental-health/>