



INCLUDING A LEARNER

With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

1 INTRODUCTION

Around the world there is a far greater emphasis on investigating the symptoms of ADHD and finding out why the child behaves as he/she does, and then finding solutions which may, but do not necessarily, include medication. These could include healthy eating, supplements, exercise, counselling and other therapies.

2 WHAT IS ADHD?

ADD/ADHD is Attention Deficit Disorder with or without hyperactivity. The symptoms occur before the age of 7 years in approximately 1 in 10 children but for a definitive diagnosis symptoms should persist for more than 6 months and occur in at least two settings. ADHD can often occur with anxiety, depression and learning disability.

3 WHAT CAUSES ADHD?

- There is no agreement on the exact cause of ADHD
- It appears to be hereditary in 80% of cases and environmental factors can trigger the condition

4 HOW DO YOU TREAT ADHD?

- Medication is only indicated in 7–10 % of children
- A holistic, eco-system approach is advised
- Changes in diet and home environment
- Supportive changes in teaching environments



*Stop punishing kids for
having ADHD.*

tarafrieden.com

5 HOW DOES ADHD IMPACT LEARNING?

1 INATTENTION

- Distractible and forgetful
- Poor planning and follow-through with tasks

2 IMPULSE CONTROL

- Impatient, interrupts and blurts out answers
- Low frustration and intolerance of delayed gratification

3 HYPERACTIVITY (MORE IN BOYS THAN GIRLS)

- Fidgeting and squirming in chair, always on the go!
- Always talking!

4 BEHAVIOUR

- Chronic low self-esteem because of conflict with authority
- Frustrated by low achievement and “stupid” or “naughty” labels
- They can be bullied or are themselves bullies

6 TEACHING AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES

1 HEALTHY DIET

- There appears to be a link between nutrition, behaviour and learning
- They need essential fatty acids which are vital for brain development
- They need to stay hydrated as they are often excessively thirsty

2 BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

- Create quiet spaces for children sensitive to sound
- Encourage physical play, but supervise all play at all times
- Create a positive, supportive, accepting environment in the school
- Encourage alternative resolutions for conflicts

3 PARENT PARTNERSHIPS

- Partner with parents to help them understand and manage ADHD
- Make a supportive and reassuring link between home and school
- Work on strategies to foster better behaviour and sleep patterns

4 CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

- **Seating** – away from distractions, in the front of the class or close to teacher
- **Different ways of sitting** – allow varied positions to aid concentration – on the floor, on a cushion, standing up
- **A quiet area** – to chill out for short periods
- **Routine and structure** – break up activities and help with transitioning to another activity
- **Instructions** – limit verbal instructions, use learner’s name and write down longer instructions or classroom rules
- **Positive reinforcement** – give individual attention, respect and praise
- **Clear classroom rules** – reduce opportunities for disruptive behaviour
- **Physical activity** – give him errands: hand out papers, deliver messages
- **Social interaction** – promote the development of better social skills – behaviour may be very inappropriate
- **Work towards the goal of self-regulation** – encourage responsibility for his own behaviour
- **Peer mentoring** – promotes social inclusion and positive behaviour
- **Limit competition** – reduce the emphasis on winning and perfect work; failure leads to increased frustration and aggression
- **Class schedule/assignments** – give copies of these to the learner
- **Modify homework tasks** – avoid busy, redundant assignments

RESOURCES

- ▶ Mary Hyam – Activating Attention
- ▶ Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Support groups of Southern Africa www.ADHASA.co.za
- ▶ www.teachADHD.com
- ▶ Teacher’s Guide to Behavioural Interventions – Hawthorne Educational Services
- ▶ www.kellybear.com
- ▶ ADHD Support group – Erika Stander – 021 790 4178 kstander@intekom.co.za



Did you know that kids with ADHD need specific instructions? Instead of “Clean your room”, try saying “Put away your toys and make your bed”.

RaisingtheBlind.com

Tips

- ▶ Never forget that learners with ADHD can have great strengths! Creative, intelligent, imaginative, sensitive, energetic, quick-witted, leaders.
- ▶ Collaborative team work – with other professionals in the school can help with problem-solving and planning.

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH WORKS BEST!



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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For more information about the *Teaching and Learning for Inclusive Education* project: vovb.be/southafrica

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