
XII. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Developmentally inappropriate degrees of inattention, impulsiveness and hyperactivity.

SYMPTOMS

STRATEGIES

Difficulty in accurate diagnosis.

*-Need accurate diagnosis to treat effectively
-- requires TEAM approach: educational, pediatric, psychological. This all needs to be coordinated.
-Provide careful education remediation of the specific deficit (usually ADHD accompanied by learning disability).*

Hyperactive, can't sit still, fidgets. Is always "on the go," acts as if "driven by a motor." Has difficulty staying seated.

*-Keep the learning atmosphere very relaxed at the same time as structured.
-Look the student straight in the eye when communicating.
-Create assignments that require as much activity on student's part as possible (these students dislike too many dittos and endless seatwork).
-Run an absolutely predictable and organized classroom.
-Provide immediate and consistent feedback (consequences) regarding behavior.
-Maintain an interest in the student as a person with interests, fears, and joys - even after a trying day.
-Have an abundance of patience.
-Have a sense of humor.*

Impulsive, acts before thinking. Shifts excessively from one activity to another. Needs a lot of supervision.

*-Tough as nails about rules, but always calm and positive.
-Ingenious about modifying teaching strategies and materials in order to match student's learning style.
-Develop a private signal system with student to gently notify him/her when he's/she's off task or acting inappropriately.
-Do not set up the student for failure in terms of asking him/her to do things in the classroom that may cause embarrassment if he/she cannot do them well.
-Ignore minor distractions, know how to choose battles.*

Inattentive, easily distracted. Can't concentrate; fails to finish assignments; lack of skills for organization.

- Develop times of the day where various strategies, organizational skills, and keeping track of belongings and information can be set up.
- Teach organizational skills. Use simple format for assignment sheets.
- Break up assigned tasks and homework into small steps.
- Keep daily checklist of tasks.
- Avoid lengthy oral directions; give short written directions.
- Go over directions with the student in simple terms or perhaps walk the student through the first couple of questions or problems.

Isn't into homework in a major way.

- Modify appropriately amount of homework and written work in classroom and accept a shorter number of problems, especially if the child knows how to do them. (If they can do 6, they can do 106)
- Establish homework notebook on which each page indicates the assignment, when it should be completed, and when it should be turned in, as well as the necessary materials to complete the assignment.
- Ask for homework assignments when they are "not" turned in.
- Be willing to call or meet with parents frequently to keep in step with student's progress.

Experiences difficulty in taking tests.

- Help the student develop strategies that will help him/her not answer test questions too quickly. (Especially with multiple choice tests.) (Teach student to be more reflective and systematic when taking a test.)

Level of frustration peaks easily in students with ADHD.

- Reward progress that the student might be making.
 - Encourage the student to perform in the areas of strengths rather than weaknesses.
 - Tailor academic material to suit student's abilities and skills.
-

Difficulty relating to others.

*-Work on improving social relationships and encourage proper social feedback in situations involving other students.
-Never humiliate the student in the classroom by ridicule or by setting comparison against other students.*