



## **Info Sheet: Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)**

### **What is ADD/ADHD?**

ADHD is one of the most common neurobehavioral disorders of childhood. It is usually first diagnosed in childhood and often lasts into adulthood. Children with ADHD may have trouble paying attention, controlling impulsive behaviors (may act without thinking about what the result will be), or be overly active.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

It is normal for children to have trouble focusing and behaving at one time or another. However, children with ADHD do not just grow out of these behaviors. The symptoms continue and can cause difficulty at school, at home, or with friends. A child with ADHD might:

- daydream a lot
- forget or lose things a lot
- squirm or fidget
- talk too much
- make careless mistakes or take unnecessary risks
- have a hard time resisting temptation
- have trouble taking turns
- have difficulty getting along with others

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/facts.html>

### **Tips for Handling an ADD/ADHD Child”**

- Keep things in perspective. Remember that your child's behavior is related to a disorder. Most of the time it is not intentional.
- Don't sweat the small stuff and be willing to make some compromises. One chore left undone isn't a big deal when your child has completed two others plus the day's

homework. If you are a perfectionist, you will not only be constantly dissatisfied but also create impossible expectations for your ADD/ADHD child.

- Believe in your child. Think about or make a written list of everything that is positive, valuable, and unique about your child. Trust that your child can learn, change, mature, and succeed. Make thinking about this trust a daily task as you brush your teeth or make your coffee.
- Take care of yourself. Eat right, exercise, and find ways to reduce stress, whether it means taking a nightly bath or practicing morning meditation. If you do get sick, acknowledge it and get help.
- Seek support. One of the most important things to remember in rearing a child with ADD/ADHD is that you don't have to do it alone. Talk to your child's doctors, therapists, and teachers. Join an organized support group for parents of children with ADHD. These groups offer a forum for giving and receiving advice, and provide a safe place to vent feelings and share experiences.
- Follow a routine. It is important to set a time and a place for everything to help the child with ADD/ADHD understand and meet expectations. Establish simple and predictable rituals for meals, homework, play, and bed. Have your child lay out clothes for the next morning before going to bed, and make sure whatever he or she needs to take to school is in a special place, ready to grab.
- Use clocks and timers. Consider placing clocks throughout the house, with a big one in your child's bedroom. Allow enough time for what your child needs to do, such as homework or getting ready in the morning. Use a timer for homework or transitional times, such between finishing up play and getting ready for bed.
- Simplify your child's schedule. It is good to avoid idle time, but a child with ADHD may become more distracted and "wound up" if there are many after-school activities. You may need to make adjustments to the child's after-school commitments based on the individual child's abilities and the demands of particular activities.
- Make sure your child has a quiet, private space of his or her own. Just make sure it is not the same place as the child goes for a time-out.
- Set up your home in an organized way. Make sure your child knows that everything has its place. Role model neatness and organization as much as possible.

Source: [http://www.helpguide.org/mental/adhd\\_add\\_parenting\\_strategies.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/mental/adhd_add_parenting_strategies.htm)