

SPRING 2020

6 Strategies for Teaching Your Child with ADHD

Homeschooling can prove to be an excellent choice for a child with attention deficits. Using one-on-one tutoring in a warm environment without distractions, you can create the best individualized educational program for your unique child, taking into account their strengths, weaknesses, and interests. You are free to adapt your daily routine to meet your child's specific needs, incorporating movement and breaks, and using curriculum that you think will work best with your child.

WHAT IS ADHD?

It's important to know just what ADHD is and how it works. There are three types of ADHD:

1. **Inattentive**

A child with this type of ADHD shows enough symptoms of inattention (or distractibility) but isn't hyperactive or impulsive. This is what is typically referred to when someone uses the term ADD.

2. **Hyperactive-Impulsive**

A child with this type of ADHD has symptoms of hyperactivity and impulsivity but not inattention.

3. **Combined (most common)**

A child with this type of ADHD has symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.

Kids with ADHD cannot make themselves pay attention unless a task is really interesting to them or if something unpleasant is going to happen if they don't take care of it. This is not something under their voluntary control, rather it has to do with how their individual brain is wired.

According to ADHD expert Dr. Thomas Brown, children don't outgrow ADHD, but their symptoms may change as they become older. Kids may get less hyperactive but still struggle with attention issues. Difficulty with organization and time management may become more noticeable as kids enter middle school or high school. The good news is that things tend to get easier after high school, when young adults can choose classes or find work that fits their interests.

Kids with ADHD display a wide range of characteristics:

- Difficulty staying tuned in
- Problems with being distracted; can't push away thoughts.
- Difficulties regulating alertness and sleep.
- Trouble getting organized and getting started on things; often can't get started unless it is an emergency.
- Difficulty prioritizing their time.
- Trouble staying with a task.
- Difficulty organizing their thoughts and putting ideas in written sentences and paragraphs.
- Difficulty managing their emotions; often have hurt feelings or feel annoyed.
- Difficulty putting thoughts in perspective; tend to worry a lot.
- Problems with working memory, the ability to hold something in your mind while you are doing something else.
- Difficulty managing their actions, such as slowing down when they need to slow down and speeding up when they need to go faster.

Everybody has problems with some of these things sometimes, but kids with ADHD have a lot more trouble and more often. And these challenges interfere in a big way with things they must do in their daily life.

SIX TEACHING TIPS

Here are six practical strategies that you can easily incorporate in your school days!

1. **Model skills for your student.** Kids with attention deficits are often visual learners, so they need to see concepts illustrated as well as hear a verbal explanation. Don't be shy in using white boards, chalkboards, poster boards and paper to add that needed visual component!
2. **Use hands-on learning experiences.** Although students with attention deficits are not all alike in their learning styles, many are strong kinesthetic learners who learn best by doing. Use some of the hands-on activities below or think up more yourself to help your kid experience and enjoy learning!
 - Let your student videotape himself demonstrating a science experiment.
 - Let your teen show off his cooking skills as he studies the culture of a foreign country in geography.
 - Write and illustrate a children's book.
 - Write a song about an event in history.
 - Make a prototype of an invention that uses a pulley
3. **Use right brain strategies.** This whole-to-part approach to teaching inspires kids to see the big picture and think creatively. Pictures, color, and humor act as "glue" to help learning

“stick” in the brain. As an example, a student can learn new vocabulary by drawing a humorous picture to illustrate each word.

4. **Use graphic organizers.** These are pre-printed reproducible blank forms that employ lines, circles, and boxes to organize information. Graphic organizers form a powerful visual picture of the information and this allows the mind to discover patterns and relationships it may otherwise have missed. They can be used to introduce a new topic, structure writing projects, to help in problem solving, studying, and brainstorming.
5. **Use manipulatives** to increase attention and alertness while learning. So, don't be afraid to give your student a Koosh ball, fidget spinner, some Wikki Stix or Silly Putty to handle while he is working on those science questions or writing that essay!
6. **Take A “Brain Break”.** Brain research indicates that physical activity has the capacity to improve cognitive processing by rejuvenating the brain. Encourage your child to get up periodically and move!
 - a. Jump on a trampoline.
 - b. Do push-ups or stretches.
 - c. Toss Koosh balls.
 - d. Dance to music.
 - e. Take turns clapping a rhythm for others to copy.

Website: [Understood: For Learning and Attention Issues](#)

Books:

Teaching Teens with ADD, ADHD and Executive Function Deficits by Chris Dendy

How to Get Your Child Off the Refrigerator and on to Learning by Carol Barnier

Outside the Box: Rethinking Add/Adhd in Children and Adults - a Practical Guide by Thomas E. Brown, PH. D

Connect With Us

- > Online — www.hslda.org/earlyyears, hslda.org/highschool, and hslda.org/strugglinglearner
- > MomPossible community — mompossible.org
- > Facebook — facebook.com/hslda.EduConsultants
- > Email — info@hslda.org
- > Phone — 540-338-5600