



FOR FAMILIES: WHAT IS ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER?

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, also called ADHD, is a common behavior problem seen in school-aged children. With ADHD, your child may be overactive and restless most of the time. They may also have a hard time paying attention, concentrating, and controlling their actions. These may make it difficult for your child to do well at home or in school. ADHD may also cause your child to have problems getting along with their friends and relatives. You may notice that your child's behavior may seem different from other children of their age. ADHD usually starts before your child is seven years of age and is more common among boys. With proper treatment and care, your child's ADHD may be controlled and their quality of life improved.

Helpful websites:

- Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD): chadd.org or help4adhd.org
 - Spanish: chadd.org/understanding-adhd/recursos-en-espanol/
- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: aacap.org and go to "Families and Youth" Section
- Child Mind Institute: childmind.org (available in Spanish)
- Understood: understood.org
- Parent Resources/Blogs:
 - Thriving with ADHD: thrivingwithadhd.com.au/
 - Tilt Parenting: tiltparenting.com/recommended-resources/

Additional resources:

The following resources can be helpful for you as you make decisions about your child's care after a diagnosis of ADHD. We recommend that parents try books that they think will be helpful to them, but none of these are required reading!

- The ADHD Parent Medication Guide is an overview of ADHD and information on different treatment options. It can be found online at tinyurl.com/Med-Guide.
- The following books can be helpful for parents of children with ADHD.
 - *Smart but Scattered Series*, by Drs. Peg Dawson and Richard Guare
 - *Taking Charge of ADHD: The Complete, Authoritative Guide for Parents*, by Russell A. Barkley, PhD
 - *Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder from Childhood through Adulthood*, by Edward Hallowell and John Ratey.
 - *Mindful Parenting for ADHD: A Guide for Cultivating Calm, Reducing Stress, and Helping Children Thrive*, by Dr. Mark Bertin
 - *The Family ADHD Solution: A Scientific Approach to Maximizing Your Child's Attention and Minimizing Parental Stress*, by Dr. Mark Bertin
 - *What Your ADHD Child Wishes You Knew: Working Together to Empower Kids for Success in School and Life*, by Dr. Sharon Saline
 - *Boy Without Instructions: Surviving the Learning Curve of Parenting a Child with ADHD*, by Penny Williams
 - *What to Expect When Parenting Children with ADHD: A 9-Step Plan to Master the Struggles and Triumphs of Parenting a Child with ADHD*, by Penny Williams
 - *The Insider's Guide to ADHD: Adults with ADHD Reveal the Secret to Parenting Kids with ADHD*, by Penny Williams



- *Faster Than Normal: Turbocharge Your Focus, Productivity, and Success with the Secrets of the ADHD Brain*, by Peter Shankman
- *The Everything Parent's Guide to Children with Executive Functioning Disorder: Strategies to help your child achieve the time-management skills needed to succeed in school and life*, by Rebecca Branstetter
- *Helping Students Take Control of Everyday Executive Functions: The Attention Fix*, by Paula Moraine
- *SOAR Study Skills; A Simple and Efficient System for Getting Better Grades in Less Time*, by S. Kruger
- The following podcasts and YouTube channels also have useful information:
 - Parenting ADHD Podcast with Penny Williams
 - Parenting your Challenging Child by Dr. Ross Greene
 - Distraction by Dr. Ned Hallowell
 - ADHD Dude: Free videos (including ones for kids!) highlighting different topics related to ADHD in boys and young men. [youtube.com/c/ADHDDudeRyanWexelblattLCSW](https://www.youtube.com/c/ADHDDudeRyanWexelblattLCSW)
- The following books can be useful resources for children. We recommend that parents try books that they think will be helpful to them, but none of these are required reading!
 - *The Survival Guide for Kids with ADHD*, by John F. Taylor Ph.D.
 - *Learning To Slow Down & Pay Attention*, by Kathleen Nadeau
 - *The ADHD Workbook for Kids: Helping Children Gain Self-Confidence, Social Skills, and Self-Control*, by Lawrence Shapiro, Ph.D

Consider these non-medication treatments and strategies for ADHD. While medications are considered first-line therapy, many parents find that additional strategies can be helpful in treating their child's ADHD.

- **Behavioral Therapy:** Multiple modalities of behavioral therapy have been found to be effective in treating children with ADHD. These include cognitive behavioral therapy, parent-child interaction therapy, and parent management training. You can talk with your provider to find resources in your area.
- **Sleep:** It is beneficial for children to get enough sleep to focus and learn well during the day.
- **Exercise:** Regular physical activity is associated with decreased ADHD behaviors and improved executive functioning.
- **Green Therapy:** Being outside and moving or playing significantly reduces ADHD symptoms compared to being indoors.
- **Yoga:** Yoga reduces hyperactivity, impulsivity, mild mood swings, and severity of ADHD symptoms.
- **Limiting Screen Time:** Screen time harms attention.
- **Nutrition:** Children who eat healthy foods and a nutritious breakfast pay better attention in school.