



What is ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a disorder that affects about 10% of school-age children.

The signs of ADHD are usually present from about 18 months but they tend to become more noticeable as the child grows. The symptoms of ADHD can remain through adolescence and adulthood; however for many, they tend to become more manageable.

ADHD has three different types of symptoms:

- Difficulty paying attention or focusing on certain tasks
- Being hyperactive
- Acting on impulse

All children may act this way at times but the difference with ADHD is that symptoms are present over a longer period of time and they interfere with a child's ability to function in different areas such as home, school and peer relations. Children with ADHD may also have additional difficulties like conduct disorder, sleep difficulties and anxiety disorders.

The exact cause of ADHD is still unknown. However researchers have identified a number of possible genetic and environmental factors that have been suggested as potentially having a role in ADHD:

- Relatives with ADHD
- Being born prematurely
- Injuries to the brain at birth
- Smoking, alcohol or drug abuse during pregnancy

Tips for Children and Young People

- Try to avoid sugary foods, chocolate and energy drinks during school time
- Try to play sport and do some physical activity in the day
- Set a homework routine
- Talk with your parents about your feelings and thoughts
- If you feel upset and/or annoyed you can try different activities which may help you to calm down such as:
 1. Squeeze a ball
 2. Count backwards from 10 or from 100
 3. Tense your whole body and... relax

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Tips for Parents

- **Healthy Diet:** encourage your child to have a healthy diet and limit the amount of foods and drinks containing stimulants, sugar and artificial flavours and colours
- **Encourage physical activities:** exercise may help your child in different ways such as burning energy, decreasing impulsivity and improving concentration
- **Limit TV, computer and video games:** try to limit the hours spent watching TV and playing video games especially those with a high violence content
- **Use goals and rewards instead of punishment:** you can use a chart to track your child's positive behaviours and remember to be sure that the goal is realistic
- **Create a routine:** it is important that your child knows when it is time for homework, play, bedtime etc.
- **Avoid distractions:** especially when your child is doing tasks which require attention. Turn off the TV, computer, mobile phones etc.
- **Reinforce good behaviour:** help your child to find out what they like and do well at to reinforce social skills and raise their self-esteem
- **Take care of yourself:** sometimes it will be very difficult for you to manage daily life and you may feel overwhelmed. Therefore, it is important that you take time for you, recharging your energy through activities you like. Go to the gym, walk or drink a cup of tea with a friend
- **Remember your child IS NOT a diagnosis:** your child may have different needs which it is important to recognize, understand and satisfy through a positive parenting approach. If you have any concerns about your child, please go to your GP.

Websites

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/adhd/>

Books

- 1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12 by Thomas W. Phelan
- The Insider's Guide to ADHD: Adults with ADHD Reveal the Secret to Parenting Kids with ADHD by Penny Williams
- Superparenting for ADD: An Innovative Approach to Raising Your Distracted Child by Dr. Hallowell



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For on-line referrals visit:

www.chums.uk.com/refer