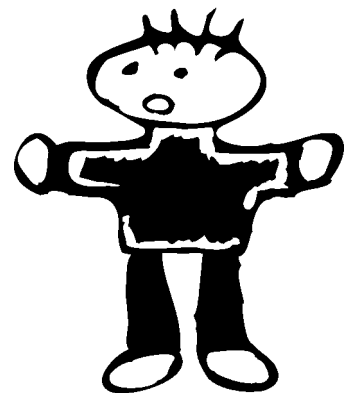
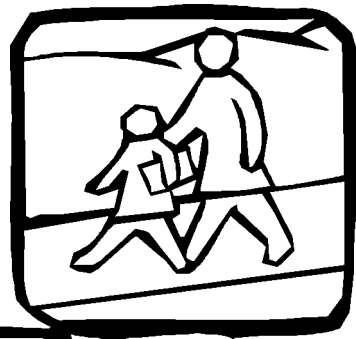
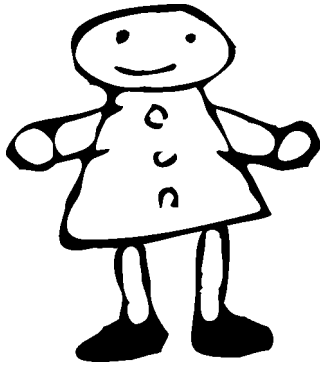


Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder: Your Child and You

A Workbook For Parents



INTRODUCTION -



Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder ("ADHD" or "ADD") affects not only the child diagnosed with the problem, but also parents, families, teachers, and anyone else who cares for the child. The special demands placed on parents and other caregivers can be stressful and frustrating, especially until they are able to learn more about this disorder. As a parent or parents of a child with ADHD, you are likely to experience high levels of stress, placing you at risk for developing health problems and stress-related emotional problems. Children with ADHD are at risk for developing additional emotional problems, under certain conditions.

We have designed this workbook to do four main things:

1. We want to help parents reduce the stress they are under by learning to feel more successful in managing the behavior of the child or children in the home with ADHD. This may make it less likely that parents will experience stress-related problems.
2. In time you may feel more confident in your role as a parent, and better able to cope with stress. As a result, your child with ADHD may begin to function better at home and at school.
3. This, in turn, may reduce the risk that your child with ADHD will develop other emotional problems that sometimes go along with ADHD. These could include depression, and other disorders.
4. The workbook is designed to give you information about ADHD and its treatment and to complement any treatment your child and your family may be receiving for ADHD.

We hope that you will take the time to work through the material in this book, and to complete the exercises and short quizzes.

Don't feel that you have to go through this all at once. The work book is in 4 "lessons" that can each be done at a sitting or you can do them as you have time.

The "Lesson Quizzes" are for you to see what you remember. To see how you did, turn to the end of the Workbook to look up the correct answers.

This Workbook contains references to Internet sites. These sites contain information that is available at the time of printing. Availability of some of the information may be subject to change. If you have any questions about this information, please call 800-872-8592.

Lesson I: What is Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)?

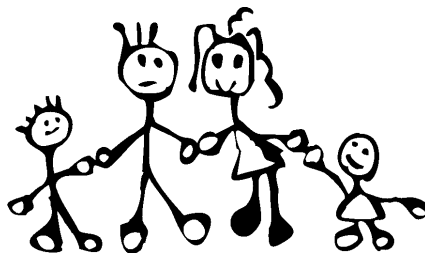
Sometimes parents don't know too much about ADHD or have questions. Also, other children in a family may have ADHD without anyone knowing it. So we thought we'd start by going over some general information about ADHD and how it is diagnosed and treated.

Signs and Symptoms - Children with ADHD often:

- Ⓒ Have a hard time paying attention;
- Ⓒ Are easily distracted;
- Ⓒ Have trouble controlling their actions (even when they want to); and
- Ⓒ Are unusually active or "agitated" (over-excited).

In order to be diagnosed as ADHD, these signs and symptoms:

- Ⓒ Must have been present for at least six months;
- Ⓒ Must be causing problems that people noticed before the child was 7 years old;
- Ⓒ Must be present in at least two areas of the child's life (such as school, home, in public); and
- Ⓒ Must have been evaluated by a qualified health professional.



In order to make a diagnosis of ADHD, a health professional uses the signs and symptoms set out in the *DSM IV*, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. Sometimes children will take special tests to help make a decision about whether he or she has ADHD. There might be some other problem that might result in signs that *seem* like ADHD.

Next, we'll take a closer look at some of the problems parents and teachers may notice with children who have ADHD.

Some common problems in children with ADHD:

Place a check next to those things you have noticed in your child with ADHD:

Ⓒ Attention problems:

- ☐ Has a hard time giving close attention to details;
- ☐ Makes careless mistakes in school work;
- ☐ Loses attention easily;
- ☐ Seems disorganized;
- ☐ Gets distracted by noises or other things going on;
- ☐ Has trouble finishing tasks such as chores or homework;
- ☐ Gets frustrated easily;
- ☐ Often forgetful; or
- ☐ Loses things easily (such as toys, papers, keys, books, etc.).

Ⓒ Often act without thinking:

- ☐ Seems to have a hard time thinking before acting;
- ☐ Seems not to learn from mistakes;
- ☐ Has a hard time finishing chores or homework before watching TV or playing;
- ☐ Has a hard time waiting his or her turn;
- ☐ Has frequent temper tantrums; or
- ☐ Breaks in when others are talking (home or school).

Ⓒ Frequently Overly Active ("Hyperactive")

- ☐ Seems more active and restless than others his or her age;
- ☐ Talks about feeling restless;
- ☐ Shows very high levels of energy;
- ☐ Often unable to sit still (classroom, home);
- ☐ Wants to obey but often doesn't seem able to sit still;
- ☐ Runs or climbs at the wrong times or places (example: runs in church); or
- ☐ Frequently misbehaves in the grocery store.

EXERCISE

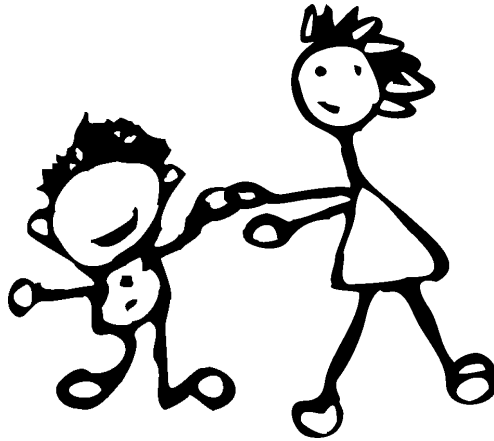
Put a star (*) to the left of the three problems listed above that worry you the most. These are problems that you will want to pay special attention to as you learn some ways to feel better about how to handle them.

How many children have ADHD?

Ⓒ ADHD is very common.

Ⓒ Children are only diagnosed as having ADHD if their behavior causes serious problems at home and/or school.

- ⑥ Boys are more likely to show signs of ADHD.
- ⑥ Many adults show signs of ADHD that are very much like those of children with ADHD.



“ SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT ”

ADHD tends to run in families. A parent may have ADHD that no one has noticed. Think about whether you as a parent have some of the signs of ADHD mentioned above. If so, you may want to talk to your doctor to see if you might have ADHD. There are effective treatments that may be helpful to you in feeling better at home and on the job.

What causes ADHD?

- ⑥ No one knows exactly what causes ADHD.
- ⑥ As we said above, it can run in families.
- ⑥ Often more than one child in a family has ADHD.
- ⑥ ADHD may be a problem in how the “body chemistry” works.
- ⑥ It may have something to do with how a child develops during pregnancy.
- ⑥ Parents do not “cause” ADHD – it is no one’s fault.
- ⑥ Lots of research is being done to try to find out more about how people get ADHD.

EXERCISE

Since ADHD is known to run in families, you should consider whether brothers and sisters of your ADHD child may also have it. Ask yourself the following questions:

- ⑥ Are there one or more children in the household who also have some or all of these signs? Yes ____ No ____
- ⑥ If you answered yes, have these children all been tested for ADHD by a doctor or other health professional? Yes ____ No ____

If you answered “No” to the last question, we strongly urge you to ask your doctor to screen the children who have these signs of ADHD. In the next section we will talk more about what can happen if children have ADHD but don't get help.

What happens when ADHD is not treated?

- ⑥ Children with ADHD who do not get help often develop learning problems. This can cause problems later in school or as adults.
- ⑥ Teachers report that these children may have lots of trouble getting along with others or, may get in trouble more.
- ⑥ They may have more problems with family and work when they become adults.
- ⑥ They may develop other problems such as depression and substance abuse as teens or adults and this may be because they get frustrated and upset at being different.

It is important that children who have been diagnosed with ADHD are helped to follow their recommended treatment plan. It is just as important that other children in the family who may also have ADHD are screened and tested. Then they can also receive the help that they need.

What treatment helps children with ADHD?

- ⑥ Most children (and adults) with ADHD can be helped by special medications.
- ⑥ These seem to work by increasing activity in areas of the brain that control behavior.
- ⑥ Decisions about whether medication could be helpful with any particular child are best made between doctors, other health professionals, and parents.
- ⑥ Under the supervision of the prescribing professional, ADHD medications are safe and generally well tolerated.

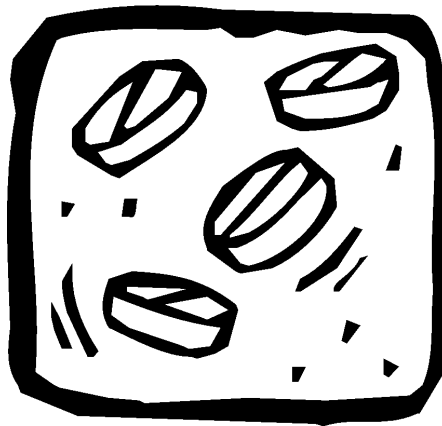
Mental health therapists (such as psychologists, social workers, clinical nurses, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists) can teach children and families some important tools for helping a child with ADHD.

- ⑥ These therapists can often help parents to feel more in control and less stressed.
- ⑥ Each child and family is different and what's right for one may not be right for another.
- ⑥ It is important to talk with your doctor or mental health provider before stopping treatment for ADHD.

**Lesson Quiz 1 – Test your knowledge from this lesson
(Circle True or False & see end of Workbook for Answers)**

1. Most people with ADHD are helped by medications. TRUE FALSE
2. ADHD is a rare disorder and not many children have it. TRUE FALSE
3. Only boys can have ADHD (circle one). TRUE FALSE
4. It is important that brothers and sisters also be screened for ADHD.
TRUE FALSE
5. Only children can have ADHD. TRUE FALSE
6. In addition to help from medication, some children and families may also need help from a mental health therapist. TRUE FALSE

In the next lesson, we will talk about some things you, as a parent can do to help your child learn to better manage his or her behavior.

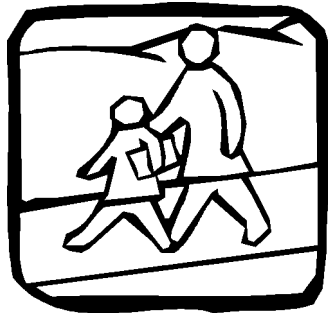


Lesson 2: Taking Care Of Your Child

In this lesson, we talk about some of the problems that kids with ADHD seem to have. We will see if together we can come up with some ideas of things that YOU, as parents, can do to help them. This, in turn will help you to feel better about yourself as a parent!

Focus on your child's experience

- Ⓒ Children with ADHD are usually more easily distracted, get frustrated more easily, and tend to take failure much harder than other children.
- Ⓒ Kids with ADHD don't cause trouble, or get into trouble, on purpose.
- Ⓒ They are usually very eager to please...it just doesn't seem to work out.
- Ⓒ It often helps for parents to try to "see the world as my child sees it".
- Ⓒ The world can be a frustrating place for your child.
- Ⓒ Suppose someone told you to calm down, but you didn't know how? How would you feel?
- Ⓒ Kids with ADHD try to pay attention...but for many it is almost impossible, at least some of the time.



Get to know your child

All kids, even those with ADHD, have things they do well. Just as they have things that are harder for them. Watch and pay attention. Get to know your child's strong areas, as well as his or her problem areas. "Catch them being good" and notice what's happening when they are behaving well. As you do this, you will start to see patterns. Think about your child with ADHD and answer the questions on the following page.

EXERCISE

In the first lesson, we looked at your child's problem areas...those things with which he or she needs help. Now think carefully about what you've observed in your child's behavior. You may want to watch his or her behavior for a day or two. Then, make the following lists:

List 1: The following are my child's strengths, the things he or she does best :

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

List 2: The things I like most about my child are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Now, looking back over your answers, what are some ways that you can let your child know that you noticed his or her strengths? What are some ways that you can let your child know, at least once a day, something that you like about him or her?

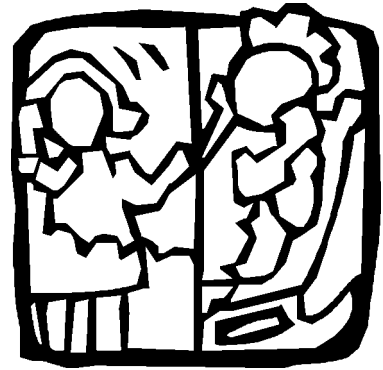
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Communicate with your child

- ⑥ All children, including those with ADHD, need to be told by parents that they are loved, even though they may have behavior problems.
- ⑥ Talking to children with ADHD is very important.
- ⑥ Parents must practice the patience it takes to explain things carefully, sometimes over and over.
- ⑥ Get right down “on their level”; sit with them on the floor if you have to.
- ⑥ Make eye contact.
- ⑥ It may help to touch your child when you talk to him or her. This helps to make sure that you have your child’s attention.

“Shaping” behavior

One of the biggest problems for children with ADHD is forgetting to think before they act. It’s also difficult for him or her to carry out tasks that need to get done, such as homework. You play an important role in helping your child overcome these problems. Think of how you work with clay. You “shape” it to look like you want. Some people call helping children with ADHD “shaping” their behavior. Some important roles for parents to play are:



- ⑥ “Teacher” – Teach your child better ways to solve problems. Set a good example.
- ⑥ “Coach” – Observe your child’s behavior. Encouraging changes. Praise and reward good behavior.
- ⑥ “Rule Maker”- Set up the rules. Reward when rules are followed. Correct when they are not.

Below we will talk about some tools you may find helpful in “shaping” your child’s behavior:

- ⑥ Provide Structure. Think of “structure” as being like the lines on a baseball field. They show players where they are supposed to go in order to stay within the rules.

Structure is:

- ⑥ Telling your child firmly and clearly what actions you expect;
- ⑥ Explaining when and how you expect them to do things;
- ⑥ Giving frequent reminders about what you expect;
- ⑥ Giving rewards for doing what you expect, even if it is only a “pat on the back”;
- ⑥ Helping them learn to make lists of things that need to be done;
- ⑥ Asking your child to repeat what he or she understands you to have said;
- ⑥ Setting time limits for finishing tasks;
- ⑥ Helping your child think through tasks before doing them; and
- ⑥ Teaching him or her to think about results....“If I do this, this will happen”. This helps your child learn to think ahead.

EXERCISE

Pick a project or task that you expect your child to do. Work together with your child to break the project down into small steps that must be done (and in what order) to finish the whole project. Have him or her check off each box as the small task is completed and then check off when the whole project is done. See if you think that this method helped to organize your child's work. Does your child think this was helpful?

Project or Task Name

Step	Task	Completed
Step1	(ex. Organize books)	
Step 2		
Step 3		
Step 4		
Step 5		
Step 6		
PROJECT COMPLETED		

Special places

Parents of children with ADHD often complain that their children lose things. Keys, books and favorite toys, are some of the things that seem to get lost all the time. Try setting up a special place, such as a bowl near the door, where your child can put easily lost items. In time this can become a habit and your child will get used to always putting the items there. Before long, you should notice that things don't get lost as often!

EXERCISE

What is a special place that you can set aside for your child to put his or her frequently or easily lost items such as keys?

Special place: _____

Work out a system of reminding your child to use the special place for a week. Then observe. Do you think things are less likely to get lost?

Setting limits

Limits are just rules to help you and your child to know and keep track of what is expected. Just as a baseball field has lines to provide structure, the game also has a set of rules. These rules include clear statements of the rewards for following them. They also tell clearly what will happen ("consequences") if they are not followed, such as punishments. Here are some tips about rules:

- Ⓒ Rules must be fair.
- Ⓒ Rules must be clearly understood.
- Ⓒ Always mean what you say – if you promise a reward or consequence, follow through, every time.
- Ⓒ It is better to include children in deciding what the rewards and consequences will be.
- Ⓒ Help your child practice thinking ahead. "What do you think will happen if you don't finish your homework?"
- Ⓒ With practice, children can begin to connect actions with likely rewards or consequences.
- Ⓒ Be patient if your child has a hard time remembering. Don't give up!

Rewards

Praise and support is very important. Even children with ADHD always do many things well. But we may lose sight of their strengths when we forget to look for them. You've probably heard the saying, "Catch 'em being good!" Here are some ideas about rewards:

- ⑥ Kids with ADHD often feel that all they hear is criticism from adults. Make sure they get plenty of praise.
- ⑥ Reward good effort and even small changes for the better. This makes your child feel good and can lead to even *more* good efforts.
- ⑥ Expect some failure. Don't let yourself or your child be discouraged.
- ⑥ Point systems, with a chart to record progress, can be very helpful. Your child will know that when he or she earns a certain number of points, a reward will be waiting.
- ⑥ Rewards must be something of value to your child. They don't have to cost a lot but they must be things that your child will see as worth the effort to earn.
- ⑥ Rewards can be *things* (such as toys), *activities* (such as a trip to a special fun place), or privileges (such as being able to play for an extra half hour).

EXERCISE

Make a list below of 5 special things that could be used as rewards for your child. Don't forget to ask your child for his or her ideas too!!

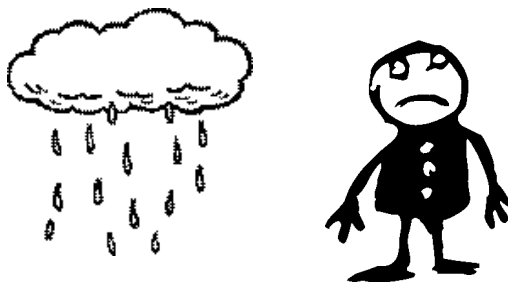
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Discipline

Rewards and praise are the most important tools you have in teaching your child new ways of acting. But when children don't respond to praise and/or rewards alone, some type of discipline is often necessary. Here are some tips about discipline:

- Ⓒ Make it clear what disciplinary actions will happen and why.
- Ⓒ Always follow through on what you promise.
- Ⓒ Make sure the "punishment fits the crime". Punishments that are too harsh or too easy usually don't work.
- Ⓒ Avoid arguments and power struggles. State clearly what you expect, what will happen, and then follow through.
- Ⓒ Avoid punishments that shame or embarrass... they make children feel bad about themselves or make them angry. These punishments rarely work.
- Ⓒ "Time-outs" can work very well. As a consequence, have your child spend a certain amount of time alone in a certain place in the home. This can help them to calm down and to think about their actions.
- Ⓒ Decide in advance what things will result in a "time-out" and follow through every time. Don't give in to temper tantrums during time outs. Younger children may need to be gently held in place during time out until they learn that you mean business.
- Ⓒ Let yourself calm down before you enforce discipline.
- Ⓒ Remember that the purpose of discipline is not to hurt but to teach, and to guide behavior. It is a tool that you need to use. But remember, praise and reward usually work better than punishments.



What about spanking?

- Ⓒ We have not mentioned spanking because most experts, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, believe that it is not a good way to change behavior.

- ⑥ Spanking risks injury to the child.
- ⑥ Spanking may make a child angry, fearful, and resentful.
- ⑥ Research suggests that children who are spanked are more likely to use force in solving problems with other children.
- ⑥ The bottom line is that spanking just doesn't work very well.

Lesson Quiz 2 – Test your knowledge from this lesson (See end of Workbook for Answers)

1. Children with ADHD are usually very eager to please adults (circle one).
TRUE FALSE
2. When talking to a child with ADHD, it is better to stand up and talk down at them (circle one). TRUE FALSE
3. Helping children to learn new ways of behaving is often called _____ their behavior.
4. A good way to make sure your child understands what you expect of him or her is to _____.
5. To help children with ADHD learn how to keep from losing things, it is good to set up a _____.
6. If you tell your child that he or she will lose TV for an hour if homework is not finished on time, you should follow up on what you promise (check one):

 Once in a while to keep them guessing _____
 Most of the time _____
 If there's nothing good on TV _____
 Always _____
7. Rewards should be something of _____ to the child.
8. Check which of these usually works best to change a child's behavior? Rewards for doing something better _____ or a spanking _____.

In the next lesson, we will talk about how you can help your child to have more success at school and especially with homework.

Lesson 3: Your Child and ADHD: School and Homework

In this lesson, we focus on one of the major problem areas for children with ADHD - school and school work. These are major sources of stress for children, parents, and school staff. We hope that the following information will give you some tools for reducing stress for everyone in this important area.

Communication with teachers

One of the most basic steps in improving your child's adjustment to school and school work is to set up a good "partnership" with your child's teacher or teachers. Parents and teachers are two of the most important influences on a young child's life. It is so important that you and your child's teachers talk together often. Yet teachers have many students, and parents are so busy today, that often this step is forgotten.



Teachers aren't the only people who work with a child with ADHD. Coaches, leaders of special activities, counselors, and aides also need to know of and understand your child's special needs. It's important to have a plan for parents and teachers to talk to each other regularly, and not just when there are problems. Talking together regularly can often keep problems from starting in the first place!

Here are some ideas about important things to talk about with teachers and other school staff:

Medication

- ⑥ Teachers should know what medicines your child is taking in case they notice any "side effects".
- ⑥ Tell your child's teachers what special side effects they should look for and whether there are any other medical problems for which they should watch.
- ⑥ Make sure that the school knows of any changes in medication and any problems your doctor has told you to expect as a result.
- ⑥ We suggest you ask your child's doctor about new ADHD medicines that may only need to be taken once a day. This may help reduce the shame that some children feel about taking ADHD medicine in school.

School Activity and Homework Schedules

Make sure you know what is expected of your child. Once you know this, you can:

- Ⓒ Reward improved classroom behavior;
- Ⓒ Help your child to focus on homework;
- Ⓒ Give your child praise and encouragement; and
- Ⓒ Provide help if necessary.



Ask your child's teacher for a "checklist" of activities and projects due each week. Be sure the teacher tells you:

- Ⓒ Exactly what is expected in order for your child to complete the tasks successfully;
- Ⓒ How much time the teacher thinks each task should take;
- Ⓒ What materials are expected to be used; and
- Ⓒ The date the work is due.

Tell the teacher what your rules and rewards are at home. Try to ensure that the rules at home are the same as those at school. Children with ADHD often don't handle different rule systems well.

- Ⓒ Meet regularly with the teacher(s) to talk about progress, problems at home or school, and to see if there's a need to target certain areas for special attention.
- Ⓒ Make sure to give your child lots of "feedback" about how you feel about his or her progress. Remember to give lots of praise for good behavior and improvements.
- Ⓒ Remember that even small changes are a start and, if you pay attention to them, may "start the ball rolling".

Working and Playing With Others

- Ⓒ As you have probably already learned, it's very common for children with ADHD to have trouble getting along with other kids.
- Ⓒ The more you know about these problems, the more effectively you can talk to your child about them. You can also work with teachers to solve them.

- Ⓒ Children with ADHD should, in most cases, not be separated from non-ADHD children. This allows them to “copy” expected behaviors and to observe other children “following the rules”.
- Ⓒ Often children with ADHD are seen as different by other kids and left out or picked on. This is very hard to handle. Children can become angry, hostile, or even depressed. It is best to work on a joint plan with the teacher(s) as to how to help your child get along better with others.

Help Children With ADHD Learn Skills Early

Once you have a checklist of the week's school tasks, you can help him or her to learn to plan the work. Teaching good study and work habits is a hard job, but if you keep at it and be patient, it can pay off. Here are some basic things you can do:

- Ⓒ Reading with your child or telling stories. Practice reading together quietly for slightly longer periods of time each week.
- Ⓒ Let your child take occasional breaks from focusing on tasks.
- Ⓒ Show him or her how to use an encyclopedia if you have one. If not, do some study time in the library.
- Ⓒ If available at home or the library, help your child learn to use the Internet to do school research. We have included some Internet resources for parents at the end of this workbook.
- Ⓒ Discuss news stories with your child. Watch the news together sometimes.
- Ⓒ Plan field trips to museums or historical places that can bring school subjects “alive”.
- Ⓒ Limit the time your child spends watching TV.
- Ⓒ If possible, provide a quiet place where your child can work free of distracting noises and people. We will talk more about this below.
- Ⓒ Make it a point to talk to your child every day about how things went at school. Make sure to look for good things that happened, even on “bad” days.

Tips For Managing Homework

Finding a Good Place to Work

- Ⓒ You may need to test out different places to find the one in which your child works best.

- ⑥ The key question is “Where is my child best able to focus and avoid distractions?”
- ⑥ Help your child find an “out of the way” place or a quiet part of a central area in which to work. This helps to keep his or her attention from wandering.
- ⑥ Some children need to be away from music, television, or other distractions. But some children actually focus better with music playing in the background. Experiment!



EXERCISE

List some possible places that might be good as a workplace for homework:

Organizing the Work

- ⑥ Organizing work cuts down on wasted effort. Without it, homework can seem to take forever!
- ⑥ Many children keep an assignment notebook, in addition to the weekly teacher checklist. It is filled in each day as new tasks are assigned.
- ⑥ You might set up a box or drawer to keep all the things your child might need, such as pens, paper, scissors, glue, tape, and so forth.
- ⑥ Some parents have found it helpful to use file folders, maybe in different colors, for each school subject. This helps to keep things from getting lost.
- ⑥ Don't forget to keep copies of graded papers so that you can look for progress or problems developing over time. These can be kept in the folders mentioned above.
- ⑥ When tasks are finished each day, they can be placed in a special folder and put in your child's backpack or bag so they will not be forgotten.
- ⑥ Marking off finished assignments on a calendar can be a good tool.

Structuring homework assignments with your child

- ⑥ It will probably be helpful, until your child is older, to personally supervise homework time. As your child gets better and better at keeping focused and managing time, you may be able to reduce your direct involvement.
- ⑥ Start by planning the day's work.
- ⑥ Write down what is due the next day, what is due later but needs attention, and any tests or quizzes that need special effort.
- ⑥ Assign a priority to each task, most important to finish might be number 1, least important might be number 10.
- ⑥ It often helps to break big tasks into small ones. You can eat a Hippopotamus, if you just break it up in to small enough pieces!!
- ⑥ The most important or hardest tasks don't always have to be done first. Sometimes it's best to start with something simple. Don't leave tasks that require lots of focus until the end. Attention may be lagging by that time.
- ⑥ Planning can be daily and weekly, which helps both of you see "the big picture".

EXERCISE

If you are reading this while school is in session, talk with your child and find out what tasks are due in the next week or so. Then work with him or her to plan the order in which these need to be completed. Pay attention to which tasks are hardest and will take the most time. Then write down a schedule of when each task is to be complete. List a start date and a finish date. Encourage your child to use this as a guide for the next week.

Planning breaks as rewards

- ⑥ Breaks are very important for kids with ADHD. They help them "recharge".
- ⑥ They can be planned at specific times or at the end of each task.
- ⑥ Breaks can make good rewards for keeping on task and finishing work.
- ⑥ Don't forget that *you* need breaks sometimes too!



EXERCISE

Take a 5-minute break from reading this workbook. Pay attention to how you feel when you return to it. Do you feel more like focusing? Do you feel like you have more energy? Or was it hard to get back to it? Did other things get in the way of getting back to it? These are some of the questions that come up with children and homework breaks.

Starting homework

- ⑥ Getting started with homework can be hard, according to many parents.
- ⑥ Agree on a time to begin. Consider a small reward if your child starts within 5 minutes of the agreed-upon time.
- ⑥ Many parents of children with ADHD have found it helpful to sit with their children for the first few minutes of each homework session. This helps you to track progress and refocus your child as necessary.
- ⑥ Don't forget to give plenty of praise and/or rewards for good progress, especially when things are improving.
- ⑥ Your child may need your help to stay on task for projects that require creative thinking, solving problems, reading large amounts of material, or significant writing. These may require your special attention in helping them to stay on task.

Long-term projects

- ⑥ Projects due weeks or months in the future can be a special challenge for children with ADHD, who tend to think in the "here and now".
- ⑥ Helping your child review weekly plans can be helpful in organizing large amounts of time.
- ⑥ Plan ahead and break big tasks down into small tasks, each with a target date for completion.
- ⑥ Carefully go over instructions for the project and plan the work that will need to be done.
- ⑥ When large projects require creative thinking on the part of your child, gently guide them. It's important not to do the work for them but to help them think about things in new and different ways.
- ⑥ For large projects, make up a "timeline" that shows each small task, the date to be completed, and the overall due date. Update progress at least every week.

Rewards for doing homework

- ⑥ As we talked about in the last lesson, rewards and praise are your most important tool in helping a child with ADHD learn new skills. That is very true in the area of homework.
- ⑥ When you first start to help your child improve homework habits, you may need to reward even small steps in the right direction.
- ⑥ It's especially important that your child writes down assignments, brings home books and homework materials, and remembers to turn in tasks. Always look for and reward progress in these areas.
- ⑥ Some of the things that it is important to reward include:
 - Finishing homework without supervision;
 - Completing projects within a certain time and doing them well;
 - Finishing homework with no mistakes;
 - Using creative thinking and/or solving problems on their own; and
 - While planning tasks, be sure to talk about rewards. Remember that rewards should be something of value to the child but they don't have to be large rewards. Praise and special activities can be good rewards. But the size of the reward should fit the size of the thing your child does well.

"Coaching" Homework

Some of your roles as "coach" include:

- ⑥ Talking over tasks;
- ⑥ Planning tasks and deadlines;
- ⑥ Talking with your child about fears and concerns about projects;
- ⑥ Helping your child to think creatively in solving problems;
- ⑥ Rewarding, praising, urging;
- ⑥ Keeping track of progress in completing work and when your child shows better study skills;
- ⑥ Making sure your child has a place to work with as few distractions as possible;



- ⑥ Checking homework (though older children should learn to check their own work);
- ⑥ Setting a good example of planning and organizing household tasks; and
- ⑥ Looking for ways to make learning fun. This helps them stay focused and it reduces your stress!

EXERCISE

If school is in session as you read this workbook, practice some of the things we've talked about in this lesson (finding a place, beginning the work, planning long-term projects, giving rewards, acting as "coach") during your child's next homework session. Afterwards, go over the list above and check off those "coaching" roles you found yourself doing. Which ones could you add next time?

Lesson Quiz 3 – Test your knowledge from this lesson (See end of Workbook for Answers)

1. At what point should you have the first talk with your child's teacher about his or her ADHD and any special needs (check one)?
 - At the first Parent/Teacher conference ____
 - During "Open House" ____
 - Only when a problem comes up ____
 - At the beginning of the school year ____
2. Children with ADHD often have problems getting along well with other students (Circle one) TRUE FALSE
3. Children with ADHD need lots of stimulation so they should do homework where there is lots of noise and activity (Circle one) TRUE FALSE
4. It's good to give children with ADHD homework breaks at certain specified _____ or after all tasks for a subject are _____.
5. In planning long- and short-term tasks, it is good to have both a _____ and a _____ schedule.
6. Rewards, to be helpful, must be big things that cost lots of money (Circle one) TRUE FALSE



In our next and final lesson, we will be talking about a very important subject for parents of kids with ADHD.....Taking Care of Yourself!!

Lesson 4: Taking Care of Yourself

In previous lessons we have talked about how you can help your child with ADHD to learn new skills and to get along better at home and school. This lesson is about you.

The impact of stress *

Research has confirmed what most parents already know — parenting a child with ADHD can put parents under a high degree of long term “chronic” stress. Chronic stress can be very bad for you. You may notice signs of stress that show up in your body, your thinking, your emotions, and in how you act. Some “signs” that a person is under severe stress include:

Body signs:

- Ⓒ Sleep problems;
- Ⓒ Clenching the jaw;
- Ⓒ Grinding teeth;
- Ⓒ Upset stomach;
- Ⓒ Feeling a lump in the throat;
- Ⓒ Trouble swallowing;
- Ⓒ Nervous behavior like tapping fingers over and over;
- Ⓒ Playing with hair;
- Ⓒ Increases in heart rate;
- Ⓒ Feeling restless;
- Ⓒ Muscle tightness;
- Ⓒ Chest pains not due to heart problems (but talk to a doctor immediately if you feel these!);
- Ⓒ Feeling dizzy, light-headed (ask a doctor about this too);
- Ⓒ Breathing too deeply and/or too fast (“hyperventilating”);
- Ⓒ Sweaty palms;
- Ⓒ General feeling of being “nervous”;
- Ⓒ Stumbling over words;
- Ⓒ High blood pressure (another one that needs a doctor’s attention);
- Ⓒ Lack of energy; or
- Ⓒ Fatigue, whether or not you got enough sleep.

* Adapted from “The Impact of Stress” © 1999 Ronald H. Rozensky, PhD. Reprinted by permission of Lifescape (<http://www.lifescape.com>)

Thinking signs such as:

- Ⓒ Mental “slowness”;
- Ⓒ Confusion;
- Ⓒ Negative thoughts, “bad attitude”;
- Ⓒ Constant worry;
- Ⓒ “Racing” thoughts;
- Ⓒ Trouble focusing on work or home tasks; or
- Ⓒ Forgetfulness.

Emotional signs such as:

- Ⓒ Feeling irritated;
- Ⓒ Loss of sense of humor;
- Ⓒ Frustration;
- Ⓒ Feeling “jumpy or overly excited”;
- Ⓒ Helplessness; or
- Ⓒ Loss of interest in usual activities.



Behavioral signs:

- Ⓒ Decreased contact with family, friends;
- Ⓒ Poor work relationships;
- Ⓒ Feelings of loneliness;
- Ⓒ Decreased interest in sex;
- Ⓒ Avoiding others, others avoid you due to “crankiness”; or
- Ⓒ Don’t take time to relax, play.

There has been research that has suggested that there is a connection between chronic stress and health. Some health problems that may be related to chronic stress include:

- Ⓒ Heart disease;
- Ⓒ High blood pressure;
- Ⓒ Anxiety;
- Ⓒ Depression; or
- Ⓒ Drug or alcohol abuse.

Stress may weaken our ability to fight off health problems we already have, such as cancer, skin disorders, or even the common cold!

There are two major things you can do about chronic stress.

- ⑥ Find ways to reduce it; and
- ⑥ Learn ways to cope with stress.

These two things may reduce the impact of stress on you and on your family. And when you do that, you may very well reduce the risk of having some of the problems mentioned above. And those you do have may be reduced or disappear!

Remember though, that the “stress management” tools we talk about in the next session may help but may not be enough. You may find that you need some type of medical or mental health counseling help in order to feel better. And it is important to talk with your doctor about any medical symptoms.

Learning to cope with stress

You have found that learning to reduce and cope with stress, and taking better care of yourself as a parent, can pay off for you and your family. Here are some reminders:

Don't Blame Yourself

- ⑥ You didn't cause the ADHD. Scientists don't know exactly what causes ADHD but it is almost certainly *not* caused by bad parenting skills or early childhood events.
- ⑥ Many parents try and try but they feel failed...that they are bad parents. This is almost never the case. It is not about being a “good enough” parent but about learning some tools that may help.

Learn as much as you can about ADHD

- ⑥ “Knowledge is power”. The more you know about ADHD, the better you will understand the special needs of your child. Then you can help others, teachers, coaches, other family members, and even medical professionals, to understand the needs of your child.
- ⑥ There are two major National Organizations that can provide help for parents of children with ADHD. They may also have local chapters in your area. These are:

The National Attention
Deficit Disorder Association
E-mail: mail@add.org
Phone: 847-432-ADDA
Fax: 847-432-5874
<http://www.add.org>

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
(800) 233-4050
FAX 301-306-7090
<http://www.chadd.org>

The Internet contains a wealth of resources about ADHD. If you don't have a computer, your local library may offer free Internet access through library facilities. Here are some links to information about ADHD:

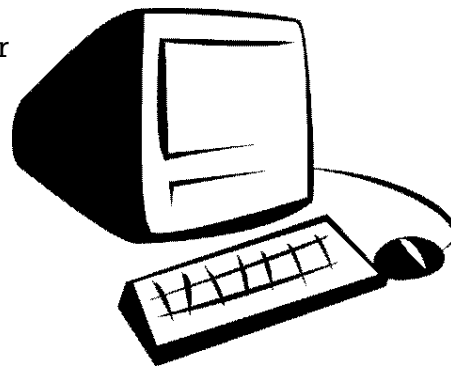
- ⑥ <http://www.central.edu/education/REX/sped/addlinks.html> - A good list of sources of information about ADHD.
- ⑥ Lifescape (<http://www.lifescape.com>) - A mental health consumer information site. Look in the "Child and Adolescent" area.
- ⑥ Google (<http://www.google.com>) - A "search tool". Enter a search word or phrase such as "ADHD" and you should get a list of possible links for information.
- ⑥ Amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com>) - An Internet retailer that lists many books on ADHD for sale. You might also contact your local public library or bookstore.

Build a support group

- ⑥ Your best source of information about how to better manage the behavior of a child with ADHD is other parents of children with the disorder. There may be a local chapter of one of the national organizations listed above where you might find a support group.
- ⑥ Watch your local newspaper for news of local support groups and resources for ADHD.

Other sources of support and information:

- ⑥ Mental health professionals;
- ⑥ Primary care physicians and pediatricians;
- ⑥ School psychologists and guidance counselors; or
- ⑥ The Internet (see previous page).

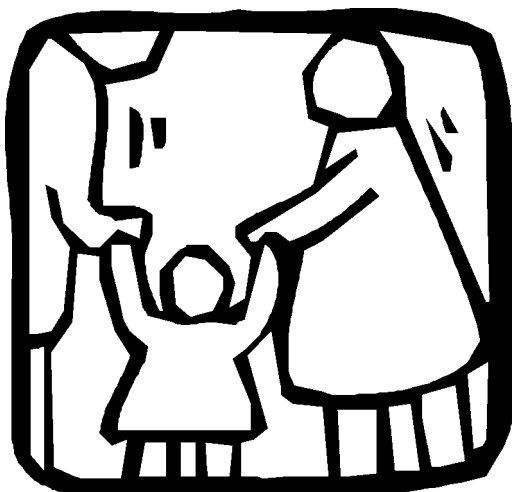


EXERCISE

Take a few minutes and, in the spaces below left, list all the sources of support you have NOW. Then in the spaces below right, list some ideas for additional support resources. Be specific!

Where do I get support now in dealing with ADHD?

What are my possible sources of additional support?



Make Time For Yourself

- Ⓒ Parents need “time outs” too!! You need time to rest and “recharge your batteries”.
- Ⓒ Even short breaks can make a big difference.
- Ⓒ It is especially important to take breaks when you are angry or frustrated.
- Ⓒ Find a quiet, private place or ask someone responsible to watch the children so you can get out of the house for a bit.

Focus on the Positive

- Ⓒ Remember that nothing happens all the time. If you look you will see that even children with difficult problems with ADHD have times when they do well and when things go smoothly.
- Ⓒ Practice noticing those times. You may be surprised at how much there is to be hopeful about!
- Ⓒ Also, focus on your successes as a parent! If you take time to notice, you are probably doing a lot of things right!

Here are some ways you may be able to reduce your overall level of stress related to being the parent of a child with ADHD:

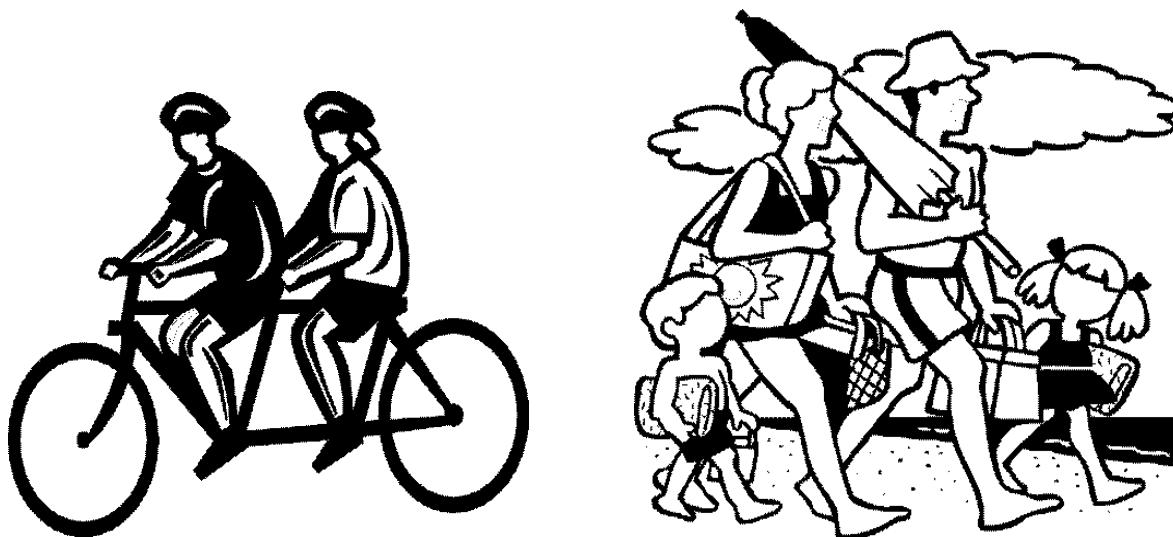
- Ⓒ Plan – As we have stressed in this workbook, planning and organizing your schedule, and your efforts to help your ADHD child to be more successful, may reduce your stress levels.
- Ⓒ Relax – There are many forms of relaxation exercises that you can practice and learn. Most libraries will have books on meditation and the “relaxation response”.
- Ⓒ Play – Play is another form of relaxation. Sometimes in dealing with difficult problems, families forget to play together. Play helps to improve your relationship with your child and helps all of you to feel less stress.
- Ⓒ Laugh – It’s very important to keep your sense of humor. Humor has been shown to reduce levels of stress and to strengthen the body’s immune system. This helps protect against illness.
- Ⓒ Exercise – Research has shown that there is an association between exercise and stress reduction. Recent studies suggest that even moderate exercise a few times a week can have important health benefits. You don’t have to run a marathon!

- ⑥ Learn – As we've mentioned elsewhere in this workbook, the more parents know about ADHD the better. The more you understand how ADHD works, and how children with ADHD learn, the better you are able to help them. And as they become more successful, you will certainly feel less stress!
- ⑥ Reach Out – As mentioned above, no one can go it alone. Reach out for others who are struggling with the same issues. Mutual aid is a powerful tool! Support groups, national organizations, Internet mailing lists, or just developing a support network of fellow parents of children with ADHD can be important "stress busters".
- ⑥ Believe – Believe that things can get better. Believe that you really are a good parent. Believe that your child can improve in school. Believe in yourself.

Remember, small is good. Small steps turn in to big steps. Accept small gains as important beginnings. Don't expect things to get better all at once. And small gains help both you and your child gain confidence to keep going.

EXERCISE

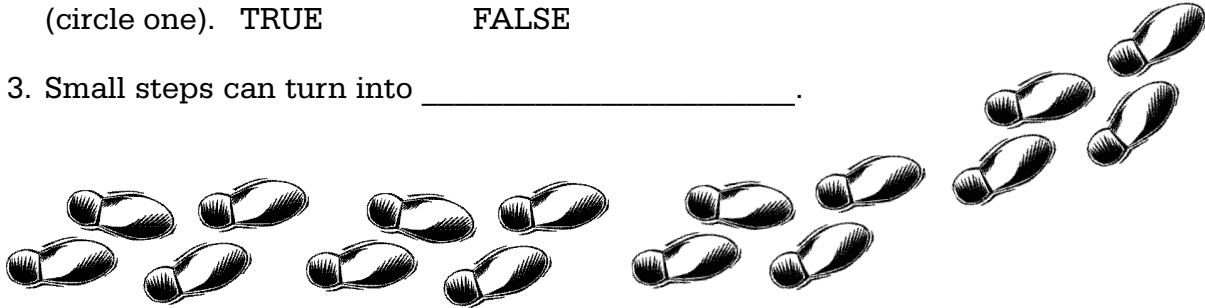
For each of the stress management steps listed above, write down some ideas of changes you can make. For example, what are some ways you can increase your exercise? Perhaps you could swim at the local recreation center a few times a week? Running? Walking? Aerobic dance? (Be sure you have your doctor's OK before starting any exercise program!).



STRESS REDUCTION ITEM	SPECIFIC ACTIVITY	CHECK WHEN STARTED
• Plan (example: make a weekly task list, set up a homework schedule)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
• Relax (example: learn to meditate, set aside time for yourself, read a book)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
• Play (example: taking the kids to the zoo, flying a kite together, "parents' night out)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
• Laugh (example: watch a funny TV show or movie together, remember to keep your sense of humor during homework time)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
• Exercise (examples: take an aerobics class, running 3-4 times a week)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
• Learn (examples: contact a national ADHD support organization, look for Internet information on ADHD at home or the library)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
• Reach Out (examples: find a local support group, Join a national ADHD support organization)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
• Believe (examples: remind yourself daily "I am a good parent", at the end of each day, list one positive thing you've done that day in a journal)	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	

Lesson Quiz 4 – Test your knowledge from this lesson (See end of Workbook for Answers)

1. Researchers think that ADHD is caused by “bad” parenting skills (circle one).
TRUE FALSE
2. There are 2 major national organizations that provide information and support about ADHD
(circle one). TRUE FALSE
3. Small steps can turn into _____.



Conclusion

In this workbook, we at *ValueOptions* have tried to give you some information about how you can:

1. Reduce stress that comes with being the parent of a child with ADHD
2. Find out more about this very complex disorder
3. Learn some tools for helping your child with ADHD to be more successful at school and at home.
4. Develop a better support system to help you cope with the demands of parenting a child with ADHD.

We believe strongly that parents can learn to feel successful in dealing with ADHD and that there are many things that can be helpful, in addition to the medication, if any, that may have been prescribed for your child.

We urge you to consider having other children in the home screened for ADHD. Also, if you, as parents, have any of the symptoms we described, you should strongly consider asking your doctor about a screening for adult ADHD.

Good Luck!!

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<http://www.add.org/>

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ANSWERS TO LESSON QUIZZES

Lesson 4 – 1. False, 2. True, 3. big steps

Lesson 3 – 1. At the beginning of the school year, 2. True, 3. False, 4. times/done, 5. daily/weekly, 6. False

Lesson 2 – 1. True, 2. False, 3. shaping, 4. Ask them what they understand, 5. special place, 6. always, 7. value, 8. Rewards for doing something better

Lesson 1 – 1. True, 2. False, 3. False, 4. True, 5. False, 6. True