



What should I know about ADHD?

ADHD affects brain functioning. Several areas are impacted, including regulation of learning, goal-directed behaviors, working memory, motor activity and attention.

- Individuals are born with ADHD.
- Environmental factors impact a child's ability to manage ADHD.
- ADHD affects all social classes, ethnic groups and countries.
- To qualify for the diagnosis, symptoms must be present by age 12.

Signs and Symptoms

- Poor attention to detail
- Making careless mistakes
- Appearing to not listen or follow directions
- Difficulty prioritizing tasks or interests
- Avoiding/disliking tasks requiring sustained focus and attention (except video games)
- Losing things frequently
- Lacking organization, which impacts daily functioning
- Easily forgetting routines and tasks

Hyperactivity/Impulsivity

- Fidgeting, tapping or constantly making noises with hands
- Squirming or difficulty staying seated
- Running/climbing excessively
- Difficulty playing quietly
- Often "on the go"
- Talking excessively
- Blurting out answers before question is completed or when they have not been called on
- Extreme emotional reaction (i.e. poor emotion regulation)
- Interrupting others



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How do I manage working with students with ADHD?

Students with ADHD respond best to external motivators. Students may be internally motivated but have difficulty regulating their emotions, attention and behavior. Because of this, external motivators can help. Here are some ways to help students with ADHD remain productive and successful.

- Structured routines
 - Use one notebook or folder to track assignments.
 - Use color-coded folders to keep track of assignments.
 - Use a calendar or planner to track due dates and other responsibilities.
 - Schedule a time to reorganize and clean out folders and book bags. (The end of the week is ideal.)
 - Place the student in an area where they are closer to instruction and less likely to be distracted.
- Rewards and positive reinforcement
 - Provide opportunities for group learning and positive peer reinforcement.
 - Use learning games that reinforce skills.
 - Choice as a reward assists with decision-making skills and reinforcement. This should occur consistently throughout the week and multiple times a day .
 - Provide a lot of immediate praise. Be simple but specific.
 - Create a home and school behavior tracking and reward system.
 - Utilize contingencies. For example, tell them when they do what is expected, they will be rewarded or can do something they want to do.
 - Catch them displaying desired behaviors. Pay attention to the behavior you want to see and ignore undesirable behaviors.
- Consistency and communication
 - Reduce the number of directions or provide written directions for easy reference.
 - Break tasks down into multiple steps, providing as little information as needed for student to carry out the immediate task.
 - Identify shared classroom goals.
 - Provide verbal redirection, rather than long explanations.
 - Provide corrective feedback. Be simple and brief while avoiding humiliation.
 - Use non-verbal prompts, such as a light tap on their desk.
 - Use the child's personal interests as examples during lessons to catch and keep their attention.

Nationwide Children's has school-based therapists in your school. If you have a student who can benefit from these services, contact the school counselor or school social worker, or call Nationwide Children's Behavioral Health Intake Department at (614) 355-8080.

Learn more at NationwideChildrens.org/Care-Connection.



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