

# Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: What can we do to help?

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In the past, clinicians have called the disorder “organic driveness,” “minimal brain dysfunction,” “kinetic syndrome,” “attention deficit disorder,” and now most recently as “attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.” A.D.H.D. is the most common psychiatric condition among children with speech and language disorders, and is often associated with verbal learning disabilities. Two to five percent of school-aged children have A.D.H.D. and it is 3-10 times more common in boys than girls. We see A.D.H.D. where a task for the child is a challenge, but it is important to educate the child how to deal more effectively and uniquely with his/her learning needs. Statistics will show A.D.H.D. children have a low IQ. I tend to disagree. I feel we aren't truly assessing the child correctly. I feel IQ should be based on creativity and it's not part of IQ tests. I witness these children to be the smartest. **We just need to redirect these attentions to a positive outcome, with positive statements and constant encouragement.** We need not to lump all children into a label saying, “You have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder”; this is more destructive than useful.

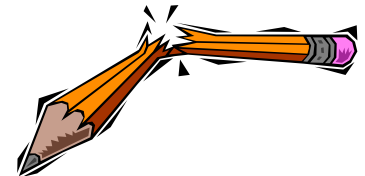


30 – 50% of people experienced A.D.H.D., as children, will continue with it as adults. Medications are recommended by clinicians, but premature, underweight, substance abuse problems, heart, and liver problems children are at risk. I highly recommend the holistic natural approach of Tahitian Noni Juice by Morinda at the academy. Tahitian Noni Juice helps with clarity, memory, balance, etc., and it works! I have witnessed inattention, loss of appetite and sleep, mood swings, etc., with students who are on certain kinds of medication. Be aware and cautious of this and watch for changes in your child's moods and behavior. I do believe children need a balance, and we need to also look at diet, nutrition, and exercise as alternate solutions.

**The following are criteria for the two categories of A.D.H.D. The child must demonstrate 6 or more of the symptoms for either A.D.H.D./Inattention or A.D.H.D./Hyperactivity-Impulsivity for at least 6 months.**

## Here are some signs of A.D.H.D./Inattention

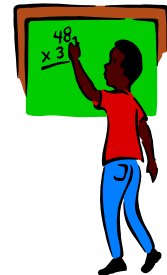
1. Often fails to give close attention to details
2. Makes careless mistakes in school work, or other activities
3. Short attention span/has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities
4. Often seems distracted, has a lack of focus or lack of listening skills
5. Has difficulty organizing tasks and activities
6. Easily frustrated with tasks that require mental effort
7. Often loses things necessary for task or activities
8. Forgetful throughout the day
9. Feels overwhelmed by too many requests or duties



## Here are some signs of A.D.H.D./Hyperactivity-Impulsivity

1. Fidgets with hands and squirms in seat
2. Talks excessively, blurts out comments, interrupts frequently
3. Always on the go and on high speed
4. Has difficulty playing or doing leisure activities quietly
5. Demonstrates restless behavior, sometimes inappropriately, e.g. climbing and running around
6. Inability to successfully interact with peers
7. Has difficulty awaiting their turn

These signs or characteristics should be looked at as attributes; they need to be presented as strengths and not as weaknesses or disorders. Symptoms of A.D.H.D such as easy distractibility, short attention span, disorganization, and impulsiveness can be viewed as the constant need to monitor and track one's environment, the ability to switch tasks at a split second's notice, independent thinking, and understanding of one's needs and wants. Flexibility, high energy and stamina, visual thought processes, courage and initiative to face new tasks, and a willingness to take risks and make decisions are also ways to look at A.D.H.D. qualities. A.D.H.D. people are associated with high achievement, intelligence, creativity, and high adaptability. A few famous people, who would today be diagnosed with A.D.H.D., are Thomas Edison, Benjamin Franklin, Sir Francis Bacon, and Ernest Hemingway to name a few. We need to embrace our children and their learning differences, learning styles, and modes of intelligence to ensure that our children are not living by a label, but by example.



### Ten Ways to assist and support students with A.D.H.D.:

1. Give information at eye level and repeat information, since both help the child to synthesize and process information.
2. Give commands or requests 1 or 2 at a time: "Get your lunch and meet at the door" is okay, but "Get your lunch, pick up shoes, grab coat, and meet at the door" is overwhelming and confusing to students with A.D.H.D.
3. Have your child sit in the front of the classroom for more focus and less distraction. Close communication with the teacher keeps the student on task. A.D.H.D students tend to have more problems with authority figures. Have teacher and parent check student planner and build communication with the child, teacher, and parent.
4. Changing the environment, or variety, of tasks helps keep the child focused, engaged, and stimulated. The same task and same environment for too long a time span creates frustration and burn out. Several breaks are recommended to stretch, breathe, and rejuvenate the mind.
5. Eye contact while talking to your A.D.H.D. child is important. Do not ask or give commands with your back turned. That is why we have so many problems with teachers who face toward the chalkboard and away from students, thereby creating a breakdown of understanding and communication.
6. Most parents and teachers remember to punish, but we need to be sure to reinforce and "catch the child being good" and reward for acceptable behavior.
7. I feel the school bell every 45 minutes has trained these students to "shut off" on cue. We need to build children's academic stamina.
8. Hobbies such as art, music, sports, etc., teach the child to focus, meet deadlines, exert energy, and use creative intelligence, in which they excel. These activities will also build esteem and peer relationships.
9. Be sure to keep positive feelings with the child overall. Negative beliefs and feelings bring about negative behaviors.
10. Most importantly: A.D.H.D. students need to be understood and supported. They are very smart individuals who need to learn differently, but don't necessarily want to feel different.



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