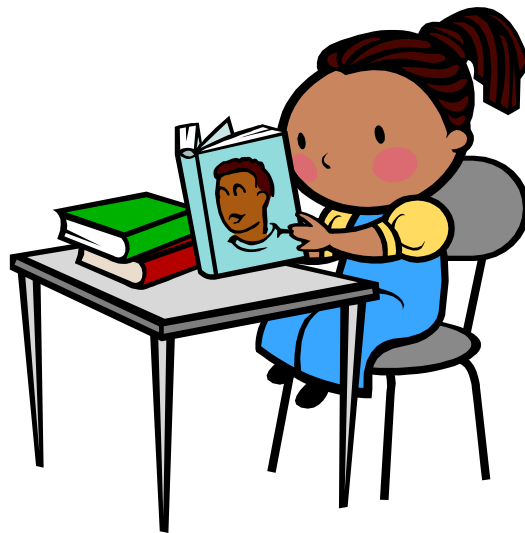


# **INTERVENTIONS AND STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER**

**A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS**



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North Branford  
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The strategies and modifications contained in this booklet were obtained from various sources that included books, articles and material found on various websites. The authors of this booklet would especially like to give credit to the Hamden Public Schools as their guide to Attention Deficit Disorder was the model that was followed in order to organize and plan this booklet.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS**

### **SEATING**

- Preferential Seating-next to the teacher, close to the blackboard, away from high traffic areas such as doors, pencil sharpeners, areas in which teachers give individualized instruction, or windows.
- Consider providing the student with a carrel to complete work.
- Seat student away from talkative classmates.
- Define spatial boundaries perhaps by placing a boundary with tape around the student's desk.
- Surround the student with positive role models and encourage peer tutoring or cooperative learning.

### **OTHER**

- Develop a class routine that will structure the student's day and provide predictability.
- Assign a buddy to help organize assignments and homework.
- Give tasks one at a time.
- Allow the use of a computer for schoolwork.
- Post expectations and class rules in a prominent place.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MODIFICATIONS**

### **WHEN GIVING DIRECTIONS:**

- Provide visual cues while giving oral instruction by the use of the blackboard, overhead, or handouts. Consider giving copies of notes to student prior to lecture so they can highlight information as you teach.
- List the steps of the direction on the board or overhead as you give them verbally.
- Give short one-step directions.
- Ask for feedback-have the student repeat the directions.
- If the directions are in written form have the student underline or highlight key words.
- Make sure you have the student's attention before giving instructions by maintaining eye contact, using verbal cues such as "this is important" or "eyes up here" and maintaining a close physical proximity.
- When giving directions, state the desired behavior in positive terms. For example: tell the student to walk rather than telling them "don't run", say "listen quietly" instead of "stop talking".

### **GIVING FEEDBACK AND ASSISTANCE WHEN WORKING:**

- Be positive and provide frequent feedback to the student.
- Praise even the smallest improvements.
- Catch them working hard and offer a compliment.
- Make frequent checks for work completion.
- Encourage the student to work accurately rather than hastily rushing through work. Make sure the student gets into the habit of always checking their finished product.
- Students with ADHD tend to demonstrate uneven performance and may have some days that are very difficult. Therefore try to be aware that their difficult days are not a reflection of

you. Encouragement and reinforcement that you are there no matter what will be of great value to the student.

## **TEST TAKING MODIFICATIONS**

### **BEFORE TESTING:**

- Allow time to review directly before test.
- Allow ample space for student responses.
- Use alternative forms of assessment that speak to the student's areas of strength. These can include the use of oral reports, tape recorded responses, videotape, fill in the blanks, multiple choice and short answer.
- Consider the use of extra time. Some students may benefit but others may need the structure of time limits.
- Make the first few items on the test the easiest in order to instill a sense of confidence.
- Teach test taking skills and strategies.

### **DURING TESTING:**

- Avoid having student transfer answers from one sheet to another, as it can be very frustrating.
- Read test to student if needed.
- For essay formats consider accepting outlines, lists, mapping or diagrams instead of paragraphs and essays.
- Have student highlight or underline directions.
- Remind and encourage the student to review her/his work and have the student place a check somewhere on the paper to indicate the paper has been reviewed.

### **AFTER TESTING:**

- Interpret the test carefully as the student may have rushed through the test, answered impulsively, or may have been distracted.
- Score content rather than mechanics such as punctuation, capitalization and grammar. When appropriate consider giving two scores, one for content and one for mechanics.

## **TASK MODIFICATIONS**

- Breaking the assignment into parts and giving timelines for completion may help the student organize and complete their work.
- Modify the amount of work to be completed.
- Highlight or underline important information.
- Prioritize assignments and activities.
- Modify worksheets by eliminating distractions and too much information on a page.
- Give out one task at a time.
- Consider alternative methods of completing assignments or testing knowledge (i.e. oral, visual, or hands on projects).
- List the steps necessary for task completion and have the student check off when completed.
- Limit assignments requiring copying in timed situations.
- Organizational skills are extremely difficult for ADHD students. Use organizers, divided notebooks, assignment pads and daily planners to keep track of assignments. Frequent and daily checking of organizers is extremely important. Plan long term tasks using a calendar with specific dates noted for completion.
- Motivation and competition greatly helps students with ADHD. Whenever possible try to make a game out of a lesson.
- Memory is often a problem with ADHD students. Teach tricks such as mnemonics. Utilize flashcards, rhymes or codes to enhance memory.
- Allow students additional time for work completion during class if needed.
- Place a checklist on the student's desk with assignments that are due. Have the student check off as completed.
- Schedule breaks when needed. Try to be cognizant when "enough is enough".

- Vary the activities by alternating between seat work and group activities.
- Recognize that transitions may be difficult and may take the student a little more time than others may require. Give warning of change and allow the necessary time for the student to comply.
- Establish a cue or signal to remind the student to return to task.
- When revising written work have the student use a different color.



## **ORGANIZATIONAL MODIFICATIONS**

### **CLASS WORK**

- Use a consistent format for papers and worksheets.
- Emphasize proof reading of any assignments or tests.
- Use highlighted study guides to organize material
- Note taking assistance in the form of notes prior to class or allowing the use of another student's.
- Encourage the use of underlining and reviewing what was underlined to be sure the student is selecting the appropriate main ideas, details and concepts

### **ORGANIZING SCHOOL WORK**

- Tape folders to the side of desk for completed assignments.
- Assign a "buddy" to assist with organization at the beginning and/or end of each day.
- Make sure the student routinely cleans out locker, notebook, desk or book bag.
- Encourage consistency-make sure the student keeps materials in a specific place.
- Provide specific due dates for assignments and projects, especially long term. Help the student divide the assignment into small manageable units.
- Use organizers, folders and notebooks.
- If necessary make sure the student has daily, weekly or monthly assignment sheets that are kept in an organizer, folder or notebook.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

### **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

- When disciplining, try not to restrict a student's recess time as it's a great way to release energy and give the student a break.
- Try to distinguish between behavior that is noncompliant and behavior that is the result of ADHD. Although support and consequences are needed, try and treat the behaviors accordingly.
- ADHD students may have missed some instruction as a result of their inattentiveness. Please be cognizant that ADHD students may not have the academic skills needed to be successful in school and therefore may act out as a result of frustration.
- "Catch" students behaving appropriately in order to reinforce desired behaviors.
- ADHD students often exhibit difficulty with interpersonal skills and may need teacher support when interacting with others during free time or in cooperative learning situations. Don't assume they know appropriate behavior-it may need to be taught and reinforced.
- Provide close supervision during unstructured times like recess and lunch.
- Avoid vague or unclear messages such as "be good". Clearly state the desired behavior.

### **CLASSROOM RULES**

- Establish routines.
- Keep consistent, explicit classroom rules visible.
- Have students participate in the development of classroom rules.
- Provide consequences in a calm, matter of fact manner.

- Consequence the behavior not the student.
- Have clear and reasonable consequences for breaking rules.  
Don't make idle threats.

## **BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION**

- Contracts work well with ADHD students. Consult with the social worker, school psychologist or special education teacher for assistance if needed.
- Make a contract or behavior management system with the student specifying the behavior that is expected and the reinforcement that will be provided.
- If necessary, periodically update and revise behavior plans. Be careful to recognize when something is not working and is in need of revision.
- Use a time out as an opportunity to take a break in order for the student to regain self-control and not as a punishment.
- Provide advance notice prior to transitions.

## **HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

- Enlist support of parents in the development and implementation of behavior contracts.
- Ask parents to share techniques that work at home and can reinforce school behavior
- Encourage parents to establish a routine at home by providing a set place and time to do schoolwork and to put homework.
- Help establish a plan to make sure that completed assignments get to school and are handed in on time.
- Post a sign by the door saying "Do I have everything?" or a checklist of items needed as the student leaves to go to school.
- Provided written permission has been obtained communicate regularly with any physicians or mental health personnel that are involved.
- Consult with the special education personnel to determine specific strengths and weaknesses of the student.
- Consult with support personnel if needed.

## **DEVELOPING POSITIVE SELF ESTEEM**

- Structure activities for success.
- Train students to self monitor.
- Begin and end each day with praise for the student
- Provide a time for regular meeting with the student to reinforce and review behavioral and academic progress.
- Use concrete methods for monitoring progress such as behavior charts or graphs that depict progress working toward a goal.
- Provide opportunities for the student to share or demonstrate their special skills to classmates.
- Phrase written comments in a positive manner.
- Start off easy by giving the student simple tasks and progress to the more complex.
- Avoid calling on the student when they appear inattentive. Cue an inattentive student ahead of time when a question is coming. For example: "I am going to ask you a question about \_\_\_\_\_ in a minute".
- Try to be cognizant of self putdowns. Help the student change their perception of themselves by encouraging positive statements.
- Provide for small group instruction and social opportunities. This will reduce the number of social variables and will help the student be more successful.
- Call attention to the number of right responses on a test or quiz instead of the number of wrong responses.

## **SOME EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM**

- Praise and acknowledge that are warranted are good reinforcers.
- Start with small and easy rewards and incentives.
- Many students are motivated to work for tangible rewards such as stickers, prizes and food.
- Other suggestions are:
  - Earning free time
  - Choosing a game to play with a friend
  - Earning a breakfast or a lunch with a friend or teacher
  - Using the computer alone or with a friend
  - Listening to music with a tape recorder and earphones
  - Leading a game or lesson
  - Getting a "homework pass" so the student may skip a homework assignment
  - Removing the lowest test grade
  - Reading or looking at special interest magazines
  - Reducing detention time

## **CLASSROOM INCENTIVES**

Here are two ideas for classroom incentives taken from the book Preventing Behavioral Problems in the Classroom Through Management Techniques:

- Students can earn tickets or play money to be used towards a weekly, biweekly, or monthly auction or raffle. The students can use their accumulated tickets/money to buy assorted toys, items or privileges from their teacher.
- Marbles or chips can be placed in a jar by the teacher when students are caught doing something well or behaving appropriately. When the jar is filled the class earns a special privilege such as popcorn, ice cream, no home work for the night or extra recess time.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The following is but a small sample of resources available on the topic of ADHD. The social worker and/or school psychologist in your building may have a copy of some of these or other equally good resources or you may find more in your local library or bookstore.

- \* The ADD Nutrition Solution, Marcia Zimmerman
- \* The Add/ADHD Checklist - An Easy Reference for Parents and Teachers, by Sandra Rief
- \* The ADHD Book of lists A Practical Guide for Helping Children and Teens with Attention Deficit Disorder, by Sandra Rief
- \* The ADHD Hyperactivity Workbook for Parents, Teachers and Kids, by Harvey C. Parker, PhD.
- \* All Kinds of Minds, by Mel Levine, M.D.
- \* Beyond Ritalin, by Stephen Garber
- \* Driven to Distraction, by EM Hallowell and JJ Ratey
- \* Eagle Eyes, by Jeanne Gehret and Susan Covert
- \* Is your child Hyperactive? Inattentive? Impulsive? Distractible, by Stephen Garber, et al
- \* How to Reach and Teach ADD/ADHD Children, by Sandra Rief
- \* Joey Pigza Loses Control, By Jack Gantos



- \* Making The Grade: An Adolescent's Struggle With Add, by Roberta Parker
- \* Putting on the Brakes: A young People's Guide to Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, by Patricia O. Quinn, M.D. and Judith Stern, M.A.
- \* Raising your Spirited Child, Mary Sheedy Kurcinka
- \* Slam Dunk a Young Boy's Struggle with ADD, by Roberta Parker
- \* Sometimes I Drive My Mom Crazy But I Know She Is Crazy About Me, by Laurence Shapiro
- \* The Source Book for ADHD
- \* Taking Charge of ADHD, Revised, by Russell A. Barkley, Ph.D.
- \* Teaching the Tiger, by Marilyn P. Dornbush, Ph.D. and Sheryl Pruitt, M.Ed.
- \* Understanding ADHD: a Practical Guide for Teachers and Parents, by Wm. Bender, Ed.
- \* Zipper the Kid with ADHD, by Caroline Janover

**Web sites:**

[www.addwarehouse.com](http://www.addwarehouse.com)

[www.allkindsofminds.com](http://www.allkindsofminds.com)

[www.chadd.com](http://www.chadd.com)

[www.add.about.com](http://www.add.about.com)