

*from the editors of*

\$14.<sup>95</sup>

**ADDITUDE**

# The ADHD Parent-Teacher Handbook

**Practical learning solutions to  
common ADHD symptoms in  
the classroom and at home**



# ADDITUDE SPECIAL REPORT

A trusted source of advice and information for families touched by attention-deficit disorder—  
and a voice of inspiration to help people with ADHD find success at home, at school, and on the job.

**adhdreports.com**

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# The Parent-Teacher ADHD Handbook

Smart solutions for ADHD symptoms at  
school and at home

## CONTENTS

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<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Your Child's Rights at School</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Eight Steps to School Support .....	<b>6</b>
Understand the Law .....	<b>9</b>
Write an IEP That Works .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Distractibility .....	<b>14</b>
Hyperactivity .....	<b>17</b>
Disorganization .....	<b>19</b>
Disruptive Behavior .....	<b>22</b>
Turning in Assignments .....	<b>25</b>
Interrupting .....	<b>28</b>
Following Directions .....	<b>30</b>
Poor Memory .....	<b>33</b>
Social Immaturity .....	<b>37</b>
Oral Language Delays .....	<b>40</b>
Written Language Delays .....	<b>43</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Getting on the Same Page</b> .....	<b>46</b>
The Parent-Teacher Partnership .....	<b>47</b>
Be Your Child's Strongest Advocate .....	<b>51</b>
Learning Styles .....	<b>53</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Glossary and Additional Resources</b> .....	<b>56</b>
Special Education Glossary .....	<b>57</b>
Classroom Accommodations to Help Students with ADHD & LD .....	<b>60</b>
Parent-Teacher Communication Forms .....	<b>62</b>
Required Reading .....	<b>70</b>
Additional Resources .....	<b>72</b>

## Introduction

# The Parent-Teacher ADHD Handbook

Each school year, parents of ADHD students brace themselves by learning everything they can about their children's academic needs. Each year, classroom teachers get in-service and on-the-job training to help them better manage ADHD at school. But seldom do teachers and parents get the same message, the same advice, and the same insights from the same source.

Children with ADHD forget to write down assignments, they lose completed homework, and they forget what you've just said. Add that to the typical ADHD symptoms of distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity, and you've got a whole set of "invisible" obstacles that neurotypical students (and sometimes teachers) may not understand. That's why ADDitude created this user-friendly guide: to provide parents, teachers, and students with information they can use to communicate and partner on behalf of children with ADHD and special needs in the classroom and at home.

The Parent-Teacher ADHD Handbook aims to address very specific challenges with even more specific solutions. It addresses eleven challenging behaviors associated with ADHD (and related disorders, such as autism spectrum disorders, Tourette Syndrome, and learning disabilities). For each challenge, we describe the behavior, its cause, and the obstacles to change. Then we offer practical, time-tested strategies to assist the parent-teacher team in managing these behaviors and teaching new ones.

By cooperating and problem solving as a unit, a parent-teacher team can reverse some of the troubling issues raised by *ADDitude* readers, a third of whom report that it was "frustrating to get services even after the school knew" of their children's special needs. Nearly half say they have to "stay on top of the school and fight to get the services" their children need.

Helping kids should never be about fighting and frustration. What are schools, teachers, and parents for if not to set an example of cooperation and commitment for the next generation? Unless we demonstrate to our children that they're worth fighting for and not about, they may never really believe it about themselves. Read on to learn how to work in concert with all of your child's caregivers and educators to ensure that school is a positive place filled with learning, laughing, and growth.

Sincerely,  
The *ADDitude* Editors

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## **CHAPTER 1**

# **Your Child's Rights at School**

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## Eight Steps to School Support

An overview of the process to mobilize school support for your child with ADHD or learning disabilities.

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Although federal law requires local public schools to provide extra educational services to students who need help, it's up to parents to make sure this happens. Here's what to do:

**1. Get an accurate evaluation.** If your child is struggling, his teacher or another member of the school staff may suggest an evaluation to see if he might benefit from special services. If they don't, request one. Should the school decline your request, or if you're dissatisfied with the evaluation's findings, arrange for a private evaluation. (In some circumstances, the school may have to pay for the outside assessment.)

**2. Meet with the evaluation team.** A school-sponsored evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team—including special education teachers, the school psychologist, and other professionals—assembled by school officials. As part of the process, they'll want to meet with you to learn more about how your child functions in school. Come prepared: Bring copies of your child's report cards, standardized test results, and medical records, as well as a log of your communications with the school and other professionals.

Team members will also review your child's academic records, conduct a behavioral assessment, and observe her in the classroom.

Following the assessment, you will meet with your child's teacher, a school administrator, and the rest of the evaluation team to discuss the results. Together, this group will decide whether your child needs special education services to address how ADHD impacts her ability to learn.

**3. Be an advocate, not an adversary.** A parent who is assertive, considerate, and respectful while supplying information and requesting services will make more headway than one who is confrontational.

*Learn what a thorough, accurate ADHD evaluation looks like:*  
<http://additu.de/yq>

## CHAPTER 1 Your Child's Rights at School

However, if you feel the school is being insensitive to your child's educational needs, don't be afraid to dig in your heels and fight.

If the team decides your child doesn't need special ed, for example, you're entitled to appeal your case in a "due-process" hearing—a legal proceeding that often requires legal representation for the family, testimony from independent experts, and a review of meeting transcripts, test scores, and other documents.

**4. Make sure the IEP is enforceable.** If your child qualifies for special-ed services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), you will become part of the team that develops an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP specifies your child's educational goals and how those goals will be met in the "least restrictive environment"—which generally refers to a regular classroom.

The goals should be specific, measurable, and achievable. Include time limits: "By month three, James will reduce his interruptions from 10 per day to two per day." The IEP should explain exactly how James will be taught to stop interrupting. Unless the strategies are specified, there's no way to enforce them.

To learn more about writing and implementing an IEP, refer to *ADDitude's The Complete IEP and 504 Guide* (<http://additu.de/iep-504-ebook>). This eBook describes the required provisions of an IEP, the composition of the team, and how to put the plan into practice—and includes a sample IEP.

**5. Insist on a customized plan.** The school may try to tailor your child's IEP around its existing programs, even though IDEA requires schools to customize the plan based on the child's needs. If you're not satisfied with the IEP, don't agree to it. The school may offer something more, or you can request a due-process hearing. If you prevail in the hearing, the school district may have to pay for your child's education in another school that offers the needed services—even if it's a private school.

**6. Monitor your child's progress.** By law, the educational team must meet annually to review your child's IEP. Many school districts schedule the annual meeting in the spring, so that team members can review current strategies and set goals for the coming year. In addition, you can request a meeting

### IEP VS. 504

*Does my child qualify? What's he entitled to under each one? And more common questions—answered:*  
<http://additu.de/p4>



## CHAPTER 1 Your Child's Rights at School

whenever you think one is needed. You may want to revisit your child's IEP at the beginning of each school year. Her progress during the summer, or the demands of the new grade, may necessitate changes in the plan.

If your child receives special services under a Section 504 Plan, the school is not required to hold an annual review or to involve parents in meetings. However, you may still request a meeting at any time, and many schools invite parents to participate in the process.

**7. Create a paper trail.** As you secure services for your child, put all requests, concerns, and thank-yous in writing—and keep copies on file. A note asking the teacher for your child's test scores can be valuable if you later have to document that the request went unmet.

After each IEP meeting and conference with school staff, summarize the main points in a letter to participants. This establishes a written record of what was said.

A 2005 U.S. Supreme Court decision underscored the importance of good record-keeping. The Court ruled that, in a due-process hearing, the legal burden of proving that a plan fails to meet a child's needs falls on the parents. It's more important than ever to document your child's difficulties, to be assertive about receiving progress reports, and to push for changes to the IEP as the need arises.

**8. Seek support.** If at any point you reach an impasse with school authorities—or if you just want an expert to accompany you to meetings—contact an educational advocate or attorney. Many offer free or low-cost consultation. To find one in your area, look online at [chadd.org](http://chadd.org), [ldaamerica.org](http://ldaamerica.org), [copaa.org](http://copaa.org), or [wrightslaw.com](http://wrightslaw.com).

### HOW TO DOCUMENT WARNING SIGNS

*Four rules for compiling the documents you need to substantiate the poor grades, behavior problems, and hurt feelings that follow your child home from school: <http://additu.de/cm>*



## Understand the Law

Learn about the two federal laws that require schools to provide special education services.

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Two federal laws require public schools to provide additional educational services to children who need them—at no cost to parents. To qualify under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a child must meet the criteria for one of 14 specific disability categories. ADHD is not one of these categories, but your child may be eligible if he's also affected by one of the specified conditions, which include learning disabilities and developmental delays. Or he may qualify under IDEA's "Other Health Impairment" category. In either case, just having ADHD (or LD) doesn't guarantee eligibility for special services. To qualify, the disorder must substantially affect his ability to function in school.

Children who qualify under IDEA are entitled to special education services, including individual instruction by educational specialists. Parents, teachers, and other school staff work together to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a plan for the delivery of special education and related services. The IEP describes the child's learning problems, details the services to be provided, sets annual goals, and defines how progress will be measured. By law, parents have the right to ask for changes to the plan.

The other federal law providing educational support is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It guarantees certain rights to people with disabilities, including access to a free and appropriate education. If ADHD symptoms "substantially limit" a child's ability to learn, he is entitled to Section 504 services.

Usually, services included in a 504 Plan involve accommodations in the classroom—like extra time to complete assignments. But the plan may also include the use of assistive technology, such as computer-aided instruction, and access to therapy. There are no legal requirements about what a 504 Plan should include, and the school isn't required to involve parents in the process (although many schools do).

***What does IDEA really mean for your child?***  
***Find out at <http://additude/idea>***

## Write an IEP That Works

Follow these six rules to draft an individualized education program that will help your child achieve success at school.

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**1. Memorize the list of ADHD symptoms psychiatrists use for diagnosis**

(see the box on page 12). Your child cannot be punished or discriminated against for displaying the symptoms of his condition, such as inattention, forgetfulness, or interrupting.

**2. Determine how these symptoms play out for your child at school.**

Does he forget to turn in his homework? Does he fail to follow directions? Is he impulsively aggressive on the playground? List your child's specific problems, then read up on strategies that address them.

**3. Prepare yourself.** Come to the team meeting with the list of your child's symptoms, as well as a list of interventions you want the school to provide. (Interventions are provided on each of the ADHD symptom pages that follow in this eBook.)

**4. At the team meeting, work together to develop a list of very specific, measurable and achievable goals for the school year, and set time limits:**

Johnny will improve his ability to respond to the teacher from one out of ten times to eight out of ten times by the end of the first semester; Johnny will reduce his interruptions from ten times a day to twice a day by month three; Julie will be able to decode words at the 50th percentile, as measured by the "Evaluation of Basic Skills," by the end of the first semester.

**5. Enunciate the ways in which the school will teach your child to achieve these goals.**

Have the school write into your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) exactly how they will teach Johnny to follow directions or stop interrupting. Which services will help Julie attain higher reading scores? If these strategies aren't written into the IEP, you can't enforce them.

**6. Ask for the data.** If the school insists on certain interventions, ask for

**MAKE IT COUNT**

*For tips on a more productive mid-year IEP meeting, check out <http://additu.de/do>*

## CHAPTER 1 Your Child's Rights at School

written evidence that what they're suggesting is effective. For example, if you have an inattentive child and the teacher says, "Johnny, pay attention," you're not going to get good results. Your child doesn't know how it feels to pay attention and will have to be taught, step by step, how to pay attention, and how to filter out distractions.

***"The best accommodation we have found for my son is a visual schedule. It stays on his desk and helps him know what he should be doing when."***

—PIPER, AN ADDITUDE READER

## DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria for ADHD

People with ADHD show a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that interferes with functioning or development:

### **1. Inattention:** Six or more symptoms of inattention for children up to age 16, or five or more for adolescents 17 and older and adults; symptoms of inattention have been present for at least 6 months, and they are inappropriate for developmental level:

- Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, at work, or with other activities.
- Often has trouble holding attention on tasks or play activities.
- Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.
- Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (e.g., loses focus, side-tracked).
- Often has trouble organizing tasks and activities.
- Often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to do tasks that require mental effort over a long period of time (such as schoolwork or homework).
- Often loses things necessary for tasks and activities (e.g. school materials, pencils, books, tools, wallets, keys, paperwork, eyeglasses, mobile telephones).
- Is often easily distracted
- Is often forgetful in daily activities.

### **2. Hyperactivity and Impulsivity:** Six or more symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity for children up to age 16, or five or more for adolescents 17 and older and adults; symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity have been present for at least 6 months to an extent that is disruptive and inappropriate for the person's developmental level:

- Often fidgets with or taps hands or feet, or squirms in seat.
- Often leaves seat in situations when remaining seated is expected.
- Often runs about or climbs in situations where it is not appropriate (adolescents or adults may be limited to feeling restless).

- Often unable to play or take part in leisure activities quietly.
- Is often “on the go” acting as if “driven by a motor”.
- Often talks excessively.
- Often blurts out an answer before a question has been completed.
- Often has trouble waiting his/her turn.
- Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games)

### **In addition, the following conditions must be met:**

- Several inattentive or hyperactive-impulsive symptoms were present before age 12 years.
- Several symptoms are present in two or more setting, (e.g., at home, school or work; with friends or relatives; in other activities).
- There is clear evidence that the symptoms interfere with, or reduce the quality of, social, school, or work functioning.
- The symptoms do not happen only during the course of schizophrenia or another psychotic disorder. The symptoms are not better explained by another mental disorder (e.g. Mood Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Dissociative Disorder, or a Personality Disorder).

### **Based on the types of symptoms, three kinds (presentations) of ADHD can occur:**

- **Combined Presentation:** if enough symptoms of both criteria inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity were present for the past 6 months
- **Predominantly Inattentive Presentation:** if enough symptoms of inattention, but not hyperactivity-impulsivity, were present for the past six months
- **Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Presentation:** if enough symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity but not inattention were present for the past six months

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## **CHAPTER 2**

# **Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School**

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## The Problem: Distractibility

The student with ADHD may daydream, look out the window, or focus on irrelevant noises or other stimuli. As a result, he misses lessons, instructions, and directions. Teachers and parents need creative ways to keep a child focused and engaged.

### The Reason:

You've probably noticed that your child can focus intently on certain activities—playing video games, for example, or building Lego creations. But when it comes to school work, he's easily distracted and has a hard time staying on task. That's because ADHD is not just an inability to pay attention. It is an inability to control what one pays attention to. Some scientists suggest that children with ADHD have a lower level of brain arousal, and are therefore easily distracted when a current activity is not sufficiently stimulating. They are unable to tune out distractions such as noise in the hallway, movement outside, or their own inner thoughts and feelings.

### The Obstacles:

Children with ADHD struggle to stay focused on lectures or any tasks that require sustained mental effort. Sometimes, this distractibility appears intentional and annoying—which works against their getting the help they need. Remarks such as “Earth to Amy!” or “Why don't you ever listen?” will not correct this attention deficit. If children could pay better attention, they would.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

- **Seat ADHDers away from distractions**, such as doors, windows, high-traffic areas, and noisy radiators. Surround them with well-behaved classmates. Arrange the room furniture in a configuration that will allow you to circulate freely and have easy access to all students—your movement will help hold their interest and let you gently redirect a student whose attention is drifting.
- **Make lessons exciting, funny, and mysterious.** Turn off the lights and use a flashlight to illuminate objects or words on the blackboard. Invite a surprise guest. Draw silly stick figures to illustrate key points, and invite students to the board to do the same.

### BETTER IN BACK

***“Conventional wisdom is that kids with ADHD should be seated in the front of the classroom. However, I’ve found it’s sometimes better to seat them in the back. In the front, ADHDers tend to be the ‘stars of the show’—acting out to entertain friends. In the back, they can stand and stretch, if needed, without blocking anyone’s view.”***

—SARA BYKOWSKI, MIDDLE-SCHOOL TEACHER, ANGOLA, INDIANA

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Distractibility

When possible, plan lessons around current events or topics of particular interest to your students. For example, calculating batting averages and other baseball statistics should hold their attention during math.

- **Vary your teaching methods.** Spend less time lecturing students. Have them chant math facts, tap out the number of syllables in words, or formulate “test questions” for their classmates to answer. Have students work in small groups, and give each student a specific task.

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

- **Get the medication right.** If your child takes ADHD meds, make sure he’s getting the right medication at the right dosage. When paired with behavioral techniques, stimulants and other ADHD drugs can dramatically improve a child’s ability to focus.
- **Make learning interactive.** Encourage your child to get involved in his homework. Have him underline reading material with colored pencils, or draw cartoons to illustrate vocabulary words. When he’s working on math problems, let him use pieces of popcorn to work out computations.
- **Teach self-monitoring.** Help your child become aware of the things that distract her. With time and practice, she’ll get to know what being distracted feels like, and will recognize when her attention is drifting. ADHDers benefit from positive affirmations, such as “I will pay attention to my work” and “I will stay focused until I’m finished.” Teach your child to repeat these as needed to encourage herself to keep going.
- **Play attention-boosting games.** Many classic children’s games, including Simon Says and musical chairs, require attention and good listening skills.

In a game called Champion Distractor, one player focuses on completing a task, while the other does everything possible to distract him. Then, they switch roles. To win the game, a player needs to be a good Distractor, and also must be able to avoid being distracted by others.

### OUR EXPERIENCE

*Readers discuss how they found the right medication for their children at <http://additude/sx>*



## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Distractibility

- **Spend more time outdoors.** Recent studies link time spent outside, especially in natural environments, with improved concentration. Whenever possible, plan activities in parks, gardens, and other “green” settings.

Try walking or driving the green route to school, and give your child time to play outdoors before she sits down to do homework.

### OUTSIDE THE BOX

*For more on the science behind green time, read these recent studies, at <http://additude/1ot>*

## The Problem: Hyperactivity

Children with ADHD have energy to spare. It is difficult for them to sit still for long periods of time. They may fidget and squirm in their seats, kick their desk legs, or stand up or pace while working. Often they talk excessively or make noises while trying to sit still.

### The Reason:

ADHD kids' bodies and minds are like a motor on the go. One study of ADHD boys showed that they moved around the room eight times as often as other boys, making twice as many arm motions. They were also four times as fidgety and wiggly while seated for psychological testing.

### The Obstacles:

Hyperactive behavior isn't a choice, but an expression of impaired motor control centers in the brain. Hyperactive children also have problems with impulse control—among other things, they can't resist the impulse to move. You can tell them to sit still or stop fidgeting or talking, but within minutes they'll be at it again.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Provide physical outlets to release pent-up energy.

- **Ask your ADHD students to run errands, such as delivering a message to another class or taking a note to the office.** These tasks help kids build a sense of self-worth while providing an opportunity to stretch their legs and move around.
- **Let students stand and walk around between lessons.** We know of one teacher who put a mini-trampoline in her classroom for kids who got restless. In the beginning of the school year, everyone used it frequently; after the novelty wore off, only the ADHD students who needed to use it continued to do so.
- **Provide students with fidget objects, such as worry beads, Wikki Stix, and squeeze balls.** (Attach squeeze balls to the desk, so they don't get hurled across the room!) Not having to focus on staying absolutely still conserves the student's energy for focusing on class lessons.

### THE WIGGLE METHOD

***"I had one of my ADHD students sit on an exercise ball during class. He could wiggle back and forth without standing up, and, for the first time, he was able to complete his work consistently. Now I have three or four students sitting on balls."***

—MARTHA HIGHFILL, THIRD-GRADE TEACHER, OXNARD, CALIFORNIA

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Hyperactivity

- **Keep lessons short and provide frequent breaks**—even during tests—if you sense that a student needs to move.

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

Support your child's need to expend energy by encouraging her to join a sports team or engage in regular physical activity.

- **Choose sports carefully.** Soccer is better than baseball because there's less standing around. One girl we know roller-skated each morning or ran around the block before school started, just so that she could sit still longer in class.
- **Many ADHD children do well in karate or other martial arts** that teach discipline and concentration, as well as allow for movement.
- **Don't force your child to sit still at the dinner table** when he's past the point of controlling his need to move around. Tell him to take a quick break, during which he can run and jump, and then invite him to rejoin the family when he's able. Use the same strategy at church or synagogue, sporting events, and other settings that require kids to sit still for extended periods.

### GO TEAM!

*7 sports that bring out your child's best, at*  
<http://additu.de/7sports>

## The Problem: Disorganization

Your child forgets to bring the right books and supplies home, or to bring them back to school. His desk, locker, backpack, and notebook are in disarray, and he frequently misses deadlines and scheduled activities.

### The Reason:

The neurological process that keeps us organized is called “executive function.” It is the ability to organize, prioritize, and analyze in order to make reasonable decisions and plans. Children with ADHD and related neurobiological problems have impaired executive function skills.

### The Obstacles:

Students with ADHD are inconsistent in their ability to organize. If a child handles one task in an organized way, it is tempting to believe he could always be organized “if he wanted to.” But punishment will not change disorganized behaviors that are related to brain pathology. Nor will calling the child “sloppy” or “lazy.”

### IT'S A DATE

*A planner can work wonders — if your child knows how to use it. How to help your child learn what to put in and what to leave out, at <http://additu.de/8n>*

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

- **Color-code academic materials.** Use green, for example, for all science notebooks, binders, folders, and textbook covers. Keep related classroom books and materials in bins of the same hue.
- **Post steps for routines.** Hang colorful signs to show where homework, lunch boxes, and parent-teacher correspondence should be placed. (For pre-readers, use drawings or photos.) A reminder about dismissal might read: Did you clear off your desk? Did you pack your book bag? Do you have your jacket, lunch box, and homework?

Post procedures for special periods, such as library time or computer lab, and hand out copies for students to keep in their binders.

- **Simplify the flow of papers.** Homework, permission slips, and PTA letters are easily lost or crumpled. Provide each student with three clear, pocket-type folders—labeled “Mail,” “Homework to Do,” and “Completed Homework.”

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Disorganization

- **Schedule a class clean-up.** Provide time for students to de-clutter their binders, backpacks, and desks. Hold periodic desk and notebook inspections, and award prizes—a homework pass or tokens redeemable at the school store—for tidiness.
- **Post a master calendar.** It should show all upcoming activities, projects, and deadlines. Allow time for students to transfer the information to their personal planners.
- **To help students with time management, use an analog clock.** That makes it easier for students to track the passage of time. Make a game out of predicting how long activities take. How long does it take to walk from the classroom to the school office? To write a book report?
- **Provide structure for long-term projects, and give ADHD students a head start.** Break projects into manageable steps—choosing a topic, submitting an outline, and so on. Post deadlines for each stage and refer to them frequently. Let parents know about these due dates, as well. And encourage students to use *ADDitude*’s step-by-step guide to writing term papers at <http://additu.de/term-paper>.

*“We got him a binder, notebook, and folder for EACH subject, and color-coded them all. Everything is red for math, green for science, etc. He says it makes it easy for him to go to his locker and grab everything he needs for each subject.”*

—VERONICA, AN ADDITUDE READER

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

- **Buy school gear that encourages organization, such as a backpack with multiple compartments.** Help your child categorize his school materials—notebooks/binders, workbooks/texts, pens/pencils—and assign each category its own compartment.

A three-ring binder, with colored tabs for separate subjects and inserts with pockets for notes, works well for many students. Buy paper with reinforced holes to reduce the risk of losing pages.

- **Bring order to your child’s room.** Separate ongoing projects, finished work, and school and art supplies into labeled bins, folders, file cabinets, or an under-bed box.

Provide a shelf for books and a bulletin board for reminders. Give your child a stapler, a three-hole punch, and big binder clips. (For ADHD-friendly products, log on to [addconsults.com/store](http://addconsults.com/store), and click on “Get Organized!”)

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Disorganization

- **Keep extra supplies on hand.** Kids with attention problems tend to lose things, so fill a supply cabinet with pencils, rulers, tape, binders, and other essentials. Post a checklist in the cabinet that your child can mark when she takes an item.
- **Keep an extra set of textbooks at home.** That way, your child won't have to remember every book every day. Make the extra books part of the IEP, or request them from the teacher at the beginning of the term.
- **Prepare for the next day.** As your child packs his book bag each evening, make sure that homework is in its folder and that everything he'll need—violin, sneakers, lunch money—is ready to go. On weekends, help him go through his backpack to remove old work and see if he needs any new supplies.
- **Reserve a shelf or cabinet by the front door for items that your child takes to school every day.** Label it with colored stickers, so that glasses, wallet, and bus pass can be easily found. Hang a hook underneath for a backpack or sports bag.
- **Give your child a pad of sticky notes,** and encourage him to post special reminders on mirrors, doors, and elsewhere.
- **Give your child a daily planner** to keep track of deadlines, appointments, events, and so on. Encourage her to keep a daily to-do list, and teach her to prioritize by dividing tasks into two groups: IMPORTANT (do it now!) and LESS IMPORTANT (do it anytime). Go over the next day's schedule together every night.

### *Teen Tips*

*If your child is older, find high-school specific organization tips at <http://additu.de/ace-hs>*

## The Problem: Disruptive Behavior

Children with ADHD are often labeled unruly or aggressive because of their impulsive physical and social interactions. Even though these children can be caring and sensitive, their good qualities are often overshadowed by their impulsivity.

### The Reason:

Children with ADHD act before they think, often unable to control their initial response to a situation. The ability to “self-regulate” is compromised; they can’t modify their behavior with future consequences in mind. Some studies show that differences in the brain in those with ADHD are partly responsible for this symptom.

### The Obstacles:

Many children with ADHD seem to spend their lives in time out, grounded, or in trouble for what they say and do. Lack of impulse control is perhaps the most difficult symptom of ADHD to modify. It takes years of patience and persistence to achieve success.

### THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

*Transitions are tough for children with ADHD. Learn ways to help your child change tasks smoothly, at <http://additu.de/sm>*

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

- **Some children need “behavior cards” taped to their desks** (“Raise hands before speaking,” etc.). If privacy is an issue, tape the cards to a sheet of paper that remains on the desk during class but can be stored inside the desk.
- **Write the day’s schedule on the blackboard and erase items as they are completed** to give ADHD students a sense of control about their day. Alert the class in advance about any revisions to the daily routine.
- **To avoid meltdowns due to transitions (a stress point) give the class a five-minute warning**, then a two-minute notice of an impending transition, so that ADHD kids have adequate time to stop one activity and start another.



## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Disruptive Behavior

- **Anticipate potentially explosive situations**, such as those that can happen in unstructured play. Overstimulation—lots of noise and running around—can overwhelm ADHD kids.
- **Have a plan ready in case lack of structure or another circumstance sets off an impulsive reaction.** Perhaps the ADHD child can be given a special job, such as “monitor” or “coach,” to help him stay focused on self-control.
- **Discipline can and should be used in certain situations.** While ADHD is an explanation for bad behavior, it is never an excuse. ADHD may help explain why Johnny hit Billy, but ADHD did not make him do it. Children with ADHD need to understand their responsibility to control themselves.
- **Discipline should be immediate, short, and swift.** “Natural consequences” (such as detention) tend to be delayed, which works fine for most kids but not for those with difficulty anticipating future outcomes. Consequences must be instantaneous: If he pushes another child on the playground, he must sit out of recess for 10 minutes. If he uses foul language in class, respond with a quick time out.
- **Provide immediate, positive feedback and attention when ADHD kids behave well.** Catch them doing something good. Be specific in labeling what they are doing well, such as sharing ideas with a partner, raising their hand, or waiting their turn.
- **With younger children, establish the behaviors you expect and post them in the classroom** (“Talk Nicely,” “Respect Others,” “Use an Indoor Voice,” etc.) as visual reminders for the children who act before they think.
- **Younger children often respond to a “point system”** in which they earn pennies or stickers each time they demonstrate a positive target behavior. They can redeem their points at the end of the week for a prize.

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Disruptive Behavior

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

Provide ADHD kids with clear, consistent expectations and consequences. Children with ADHD have difficulty making inferences about right and wrong, so parents must be specific.

Telling your child to “be good” is too vague. Instead, be explicit: “When we go into the store, do not touch the dishes, just look with your eyes.” “When we visit the playground, wait in line for the slide, and don’t push.”

- **Be proactive in your approach to discipline.** Recognize and remark on positive behavior. Respond to positive actions with praise, attention, and rewards.
- **Holding your child accountable for his actions is imperative in molding a responsible adult.** Punishment must come soon after the misbehavior. If it takes place long after the fact, your child may not fully understand its relationship to the misbehavior.
- **Let the punishment fit the crime.** Hitting calls for an immediate time out. Dinnertime tantrums can mean dismissal from the table without dessert. Keep punishments brief and restrained, but let them communicate to your child that he’s responsible for controlling his behavior.
- **Let minor misbehaviors slide.** If your child spills the milk because he’s pouring it carelessly or hurriedly, talk to him about the importance of moving more slowly, help him clean the mess, and move on.

### BETTER BEHAVIOR

*For solutions to 10 common discipline dilemmas, download our free guide at <http://additu.de/10-discipline>*

## The Problem: Turning in Assignments

Your child consistently neglects to hand in homework or long-term projects, even though he or she may claim to have completed the work.

### The Reason

Children with ADHD have difficulty keeping track of bits of information. They have the same problem with keeping track of paperwork, remembering to bring home the right books, keeping track of due dates, and copying down assignments. This problem seems to be related to an inability to focus on more than one thing at a time.

### The Obstacles

An assignment, from the presentation to handing it in, actually represents many different tasks. Somewhere along the way, ADHD children get interrupted and forget where they are in the process. They often want to comply, but as their focus shifts from one task to another or one class to another, they may lose the memory of what just transpired.

Mental disorganization causes children to be inconsistent, often leading adults to believe the lapse is intentional. When teachers respond by giving zeroes or bad grades, it only discourages the child and doesn't solve the problem.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

- **Set aside time each day for students to copy homework assignments in their planners.** Write the assignments on the board and read them aloud to reinforce the information. If attention or language deficits make copying hard for some kids, provide typed assignments for everyone to take home. Post assignments to the school's Website for backup.
- **Make sure students copy each assignment completely** (and on the correct calendar page), or assign "study buddies" to check on each other. Before dismissal, have students work together to pack their planners and the books they'll need at home.
- **Provide a labeled folder for bringing in completed homework.** If a student consistently leaves completed assignments at home, have her

### HE TALKS, I TYPE

*"A student who struggles to get his ideas on paper may need nothing more than a typist. When I have such a student, I have him list the story's characters, setting, problem, solution, and four main events. Using this 'story map,' he composes his story orally as I type it into the computer. Along the way, I ask questions and refer to his notes to keep us on track."*

—KAREN SUNDERHAFT,  
FOURTH-GRADE TEACHER,  
SHAKER HEIGHTS, OHIO

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Turning in Assignments

parents sign a homework sheet each evening when the work is finished and packed in the child's school bag.

- **Lighten the homework load.** Students with ADHD work slowly and are easily frustrated. Assigning just the odd-numbered math problems lets a child demonstrate what he learned in class without pushing him too hard.

### SOLUTIONS IN AT HOME:

- **Ensure that assignments come home.** If your child has trouble copying homework assignments, alert his teacher. She may allow him to read the assignments into a cassette recorder, or may be willing to e-mail them to you at home.
- **Establish time for homework.** Some children need a break after classes. Others work best while still in “school mode.” If after-school activities make a regular schedule impossible, post a weekly calendar that lists homework start and finish times each day.
- **Select a spot for homework.** Find a place your child can work comfortably—the kitchen table, where there's room to spread out, or perhaps a quiet nook in the den. Allow background music if it helps her focus, but keep distractions to a minimum.

Don't let her procrastinate: Make sure she understands the assignment and gets started, then stay nearby to offer support.

- **Schedule a five-minute break for every 20 minutes of work.** Concentration takes a lot of energy for kids with ADHD. Short, frequent breaks help them recharge.
- **Respect your child's “saturation point.”** If he's too tired or frustrated to finish his homework, let him stop. Write a note to the teacher explaining that he did as much as he could. If he has problems focusing, writes slowly, or needs extra time to understand concepts, assignments may consistently take longer than expected. Speak with his teacher about reducing the homework load.
- **Check to see that finished homework is packed in your child's book bag**—and that the bag is placed by the front door.

### HOMEWORK HELP

*Listen to our expert webinar “Homework Made Simple” for even more tips on completing and turning in assignments, at <http://additu.de/hwk>*

- **Praise your child's efforts and reward him** with a favorite snack or game. Some kids benefit from a token system: When your child finishes his homework on time, add a star to a chart. The stars can be redeemed for special privileges or items from a wish list.

#### **MOTIVATION MATTERS**

*To set up an effective reward system for your child, follow the 8 simple steps at <http://additu.de/a5>*

## The Problem: Interrupting

Students with ADHD often interrupt the teacher and classmates by calling out answers or commenting while others are speaking.

### The Reason:

Children with ADHD have difficulty controlling their impulses. Scientists believe that a problem with dopamine, a brain chemical, causes them to respond immediately and reflexively to their environment—whether the stimulus is a question, an idea, or a treat. That’s why they often seem to act or talk before thinking.

### The Obstacles:

Children with ADHD don’t realize they are interrupting or understand that their behavior is disturbing to others. Simply telling them that their behavior is wrong won’t help. Even though they know interrupting is wrong, their impulsivity overrides their self-control. Other cues such as frowning don’t work either; ADHD children have difficulty reading social cues and often can’t determine the precise meaning of other people’s facial expressions.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Kids with ADHD need reminders to keep them on target, but reminding them verbally in front of other students only adds to the disruption and can damage an ADHD child’s fragile self-esteem. Instead, try visual reminders as part of a secret “contract” with the student.

- **Develop a secret gesture that tells the student that he or she is interrupting and needs to stop.** Only the two of you need to know what’s going on. One teacher had success with a “wind it down” hand signal in the shape of a descending spiral staircase.
- **Post a list of rules on the wall of the classroom.** Highlight “No Interrupting.”
- **Tape a reminder on the child’s desk with the initials “N.I.” for “No Interrupting.”** None of the other students need to know that the initials don’t mean: “New Inventions.”

*“My son is given sticky notes to write down his questions for the teacher. It helps to curb the impulsivity to speak out and interrupt, and makes him feel like his question is out of his system.”*

—CHANDRA, AN ADDITUDE READER

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Interrupting

- **Point out the student's behavior concretely.** One teacher uses an abacus, silently sliding over a bead every time her ADHD student talks out of turn. No one else knows what she's counting, but the boy benefits from this repetitive visual cue to help curb his behavior.

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

Parents also can use the abacus method, but as part of a reward system. Begin the week with a pot of \$5. Assign a value—say, 10 cents—to each bead. Slide a bead every time your child interrupts, which translates into a loss of 10 cents. At the end of the week, your child gets to keep what's left over.

- **If your child doesn't respond well to the "negative" method, reverse the system to provide positive rewards.** Slide a bead for every time your child does not interrupt, to reinforce good behavior. At the end of the week, the child keeps what's been earned.
- **In both cases, take your child out to purchase a treat with the earned money.** The one-on-one attention will cap off their sense of achievement and provide reinforcement for not interrupting.
- **Tell your child ahead of time when you're going to be involved in an activity during which you'd prefer not to be interrupted** (say, talking on the phone). Provide your child with a high-interest task that will hold his attention while you're talking (for example, coloring or playing with a toy). Take a break every few minutes to visit with your child and praise him for not interrupting.

*For a glimpse into real life with , at*  
<http://additu.de/blogs>



## The Problem: Following Directions

Difficulty following instructions is a hallmark of ADHD. Children may seem to understand, and even write down, your directions, but then turn in the wrong assignment or execute it in the wrong way.

### The Reason:

A student with ADHD has difficulty focusing and sustaining attention. Their minds, like their bodies, are constantly in motion. So the ADHD student may not be “tuned in” at the moment when instructions are given. Often she’ll hear the teacher’s first direction and then become distracted by other thoughts or stimuli.

ADHD students may only hear bits and pieces, or hear and achieve only one of four assigned tasks. A student may still be processing the first step of your instructions while you are announcing the second step. Then, they may tune back in for the third step, and so on. Difficulty processing language exacerbates the problem.

### The Obstacles:

A student may leave class assuming that she heard and “got” everything right. She may have listened as closely as she could, but still missed specific steps or directions. When she turns in work that’s completed only partially or incorrectly, it’s easy for teachers to become angry and frustrated. But giving poor grades will only exacerbate the problem, since the child may come to believe he is stupid, or, worse, fail his courses or drop out of school.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Be mindful of the ADHD student’s tendency to “wander” mentally or to lose his place because of slow language processing skills.

- **When giving specific directions to an ADHD student, establish eye contact.** You may need to pause in your sentence until the student’s eyes meet yours.
- **When giving instructions, be specific and brief.** If possible, provide instructions personally to the child, not to the entire room.

**“1, 2, 3—ALL EYES ON ME!”**  
*Learn how teachers can draw students’ focus, at <http://additu.de/hp>*

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Following Directions

- **Write the instructions or directions on the board.** Colored chalk will highlight the important topic or specific assignment. Insist that students copy the assignment word for word. Then check what the student has written.
- **A digital audio recorder can be useful for dictating homework assignments** and other important reminders throughout the school day.
- **Provide instructions in writing.** One teacher's ADHD student assured her he'd written the assignments, but then wasn't sure what to do when he got home. The teacher found that the child had written "Reading Assignment" but then failed to write down which chapters to read and what questions to answer. After that, the teacher always provided a typed list of instructions.
- **When giving verbal directions, sometimes it's helpful and fun to ask three students, from different parts of the room, to repeat the assignment.** This method gives the ADHD student more than one opportunity to "tune in" to the directions.
- **Raising or lowering your voice in a dramatic fashion can catch the attention of a student** who may have tuned out temporarily.

*For 13 other great assistive learning aids, check out <http://additude/assist>*

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

At home, as well as in school, multi-step directions are almost impossible for ADHD students to master. There is just too much information to take in and retain.

- **Parents need to break down large jobs with multiple tasks into smaller, single steps.** Give your child one instruction, ask him to complete it and then report back to you. Provide the second step only when the first step is done.
- **Older students do best with a checklist or daily routine,** allowing them to assume more responsibility by referring to a list of things to accomplish. They can check off completed assignments as they go.
- **For younger students, some parents and teachers take pictures of each step of a routine.** For example, getting ready for school involves multiple steps and instructions. Take a picture of your child at each activity—getting dressed, eating breakfast, brushing teeth, preparing

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Following Directions

backpack—and then place these pictures in order so your child has a visual reminder of the daily morning routine.

- **If your child needs more reinforcement, you can adopt a reward or token system** to provide external motivation. Either way, making instructions simpler and clearer will help ADHD children feel more responsible and become more successful at home and in school.
- **If the child agrees to do something, but gets sidetracked by something else, try to “redirect” rather than punish.** If you’ve asked him to feed the dog and then found him outside playing basketball, redirect: “Remember, you’re supposed to feed the dog. I’ll hold on to the basketball so you’ll know where to find it when you’re done.”

### NAGGING DOESN'T WORK

*Stop nagging—and start disciplining smarter—for better behavior results.*

*Here's how:*

<http://additu.de/y9>

## The Problem: Poor Memory

Many kids with ADHD have weak working memory, also known as short-term memory. In some cases, this is because distraction prevents them from taking in information. In others, they have problems retrieving memories. This is why instructions from 20 minutes ago can be long forgotten by the time they're supposed to be carried out.

### The Reason:

Working memory is the ability to hold information in mind while performing complex tasks. It comes into play throughout life—particularly when a child is in school. A young child uses his working memory to execute simple tasks—sharpen his pencil when asked—while one in middle school uses it to remember the expectations of multiple teachers. Kids with ADHD who struggle here may seem defiant, lazy, or disinterested.

We use working memory when we learn, too. In writing, it helps us juggle the thoughts we want to get on paper while keeping the big picture in mind; in math, working memory lets us keep track of numbers and operations throughout the steps of a problem.

### The Obstacles:

Working memory is most likely related to the frontal cortex, which is often underdeveloped in children with ADHD—up to three years behind their same-age peers. Combined with other problems, like inattention and impulse control, it can put children with ADHD at a serious disadvantage.

### SOLUTION IN THE CLASSROOM

- **Put homework assignments in writing.** Write each assignment on the blackboard in the same place every day, so that students know where to find it. Kids with ADHD may not be listening or paying attention when you give them oral instructions—and you can't rely on them to always remember instructions.
- **Find out what they heard.** Have students with weak working memory repeat assignment instructions and clarify any parts that they may have forgotten.

### OUR MORNING MANTRA

***“To make sure my kids get to school on time, we get everything ready the night before. Lunch is made, and book bags are packed and put in the car. As a final check, there’s a big sign on the inside of the front door: “Do you have lunch/homework/glasses/library book/coat?” I can hear them say it as they walk out the door each morning.”***

—ESTHER WETHERILL, ROGERS, ARKANSAS

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Poor Memory

- **Make time at the end of class for students to write down homework in their assignment books.** Make sure the kids with ADHD are doing what you've asked.
- **Make eye contact with a child** before giving him a classroom assignment.
- **Keep homework assignments on the school website up-to-date.** Parents of kids with ADHD depend on this information to make sure their kids know what to do.
- **Speak slowly and provide information in small units.** Given too much information at once, a child with weak working memory quickly loses track. She may still be working through the first few minutes of the lesson after you've moved on.
- **Make lectures interactive.** To get kids with weak working memory to remember something important, structure the lecture to include responses from them. For instance, when teaching a math lesson, you might encourage students to volunteer to share what they learned about fractions, division, or whatever material was covered that day. Repeating a key point will help anchor it in their memories.
- **Have a routine for handing in homework assignments.** Some teachers ask students to place their completed work on their desk as soon as they sit down for class—and then check off in their grade books that the homework was done. Another idea: Make handing in homework the “ticket to get out of class” at the end of the day. Stand by the door and collect it as the students leave. As you can imagine, kids will comply when the alternative is staying in school one minute longer.
- **Talk with students about what to do if they forget something.** Assign—or ask students to select—a study buddy they can talk with if they've forgotten what they're supposed to do for homework or can't remember what to do in class.
- **Use an analog clock during lessons to help your students with time management.** They will be able to keep track of how much time has passed and how much remains.
- **Call close attention to due dates.** Post them, refer to them frequently, and remind parents and students in notes home, newsletters, or school voicemail.

*All Cows Eat Grass*  
*For examples of mnemonic devices that help some children with ADHD retain information, go to [vocabularycartoons.com](http://vocabularycartoons.com)*

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Poor Memory

- **Ask students to design their own “tickler systems.”** A “tickler system” is a way to remind themselves of things they must remember (permission slips, lunch money, gym clothes). This could lead to a class discussion, to give students a chance to share the strategies that work for them.

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

- **Email completed homework to the teacher, with her permission.** This is easy for kids who do homework on the computer. Some families scan the homework and email it to the teacher. This tip won't strengthen working memory, but it's a good coping strategy for students with weak executive function.
- **Reward your child for remembering.** Email teachers once a week to make sure all the homework was handed in. Give your child five points for all homework turned in, four points for missing only one assignment, and no points if he misses more than one. Create a menu of rewards the child can earn. Allot more points for more complex assignments.
- **Give your child a homework routine to follow.** Homework is a complex series of subtasks that must be completed in sequential order. It requires plenty of working memory. Teach your child that, in order to complete a homework assignment, he must:
  - Know what the assignment is
  - Record the assignment
  - Bring the required materials home
  - Do the homework
  - Return the homework to his backpack
  - Bring the completed homework to school
- **Have your child record the steps of his morning routine.** Listening to his own voice on playback creates less tension than your nagging reminders. If he forgets a step, he can just replay that section.
- **Rehearse what you expect your child to remember.** For example, if he needs to ask the teacher for a study guide or one-on-one help, prep him by asking, “So, what do you need to say to your teacher when you go up to her desk?”

### EXECUTIVE ASSISTANCE

*Working memory is one of 7 executive functions often thwarted by ADHD. Learn more at <http://additu.de/i5>*

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Poor Memory

- **Use digital reminders.** With children in middle school, use cell phones, text messages, or instant messages to remind them of things they have to do.
- **Keep external distractions to a minimum**—turn off the TV or turn down the volume if you want your child's full attention when you're saying something important.
- **Follow through.** Children with weak working memory will indicate that they did something—put their homework in their backpack, say—when you ask, but will proceed to forget. Until the child gets used to taking action when prompted, check on him to make sure he did what he told you.

### FREE SELF-TEST

*Could your child have executive functioning deficits? Take our screener at <http://additude/-v>*



## The Problem: Social Immaturity

Children with ADHD often lag behind their peers in social maturity. They may have difficulty reading verbal and physical social cues—misinterpreting a neutral remark as an insult, or not “getting” the point of jokes and games. With responses and reactions that are frequently inappropriate, they may have trouble making and keeping friends their own age.

### The Reason:

ADHD is a developmental disorder in which brain maturation is delayed and uneven. Students may behave appropriately in some situations but not in others, leading some unenlightened adults to believe that “they can behave when they want to.”

### The Obstacles:

Children with ADHD usually are not aware of how immature or off-base they may seem to peers and adults. They blurt out answers and get too close to classmates; they misinterpret remarks and miss references or jokes. Desperate for positive attention, they may try behavior that is outrageous, funny, or negative, mistakenly believing it will gain them friends and respect. And when adolescence arrives and social interactions become even more complex, ADHD children fall farther behind. They may be ostracized by their peer group and singled out by teachers, all of which negatively affects their self-esteem.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Understanding the developmental level of your ADHD student is critical. While a child’s academic performance may be up to par, socially he or she may lag several years behind the rest of the class.

- **Do not expect the child to behave as responsibly or rationally as his classmates.** Thinking of him as two or three years younger than the group will help you better understand and respond to his needs.
- **Never embarrass or humiliate an ADHD child in your classroom for off-target social behavior.** Whatever their maturity level, chil-

### STICKS & STONES

***Bullies can be a problem for children with ADHD, who may stick out due to impulsive behavior and delayed social development. Learn strategies to shut down mean kids at <http://additu.de/122>***

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Social Immaturity

dren with ADHD often don't learn social skills "naturally." These skills have to be taught.

- **Work privately with the student to suggest appropriate words and phrases to use with peers,** and practice them one-on-one. Then, provide opportunities for the student to work with small groups and monitor interactions closely.
- **Consider posting "emotion" drawings or photos on the wall,** displaying a variety of facial expressions with words describing what the expressions mean ("Angry" "Sad" "Surprised"). These visual reminders help ADHD students better interpret situations that occur in real life. The rest of the class does not have to know that the drawings are primarily for your ADHD students.
- **Praise the child in front of peers for his special talents and skills,** and for work that's well done. This will increase the child's self-esteem, and he will not have to resort to antics and off-target remarks to get the attention he needs.

**Smart Smartphone**  
**Check out our favorite**  
**social-skills apps for**  
**kids at <http://additu.de/3f>**

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

- **Prepare your child for social situations.** Tell him what to say when meeting someone for the first time, and teach him the importance of transitional phrases like "Hello" and "Goodbye." Children with ADHD have trouble generalizing; help him practice these skills in a variety of settings.
- **Express behavioral goals in positive terms.** Reminding your child to take turns is more effective than a statement like "Don't be mean." If you observe positive behavior, praise it—and be specific. "I liked the way you shared that toy with Tina" says more than "You were good at Tina's house."
- **Teach conversation courtesy.** ADHDers often interrupt conversations to launch topics of their own. Use dinner time to practice how to maintain eye contact, listen to others, and politely join a group. Urge your child to count to five silently before making comments—it may stop him from blurting something hurtful.
- **Invent games that foster empathy.** Role-play difficult social interactions, such as disagreeing with a friend. Swap roles in each encounter,

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Social Immaturity

so your child can experience the other point of view. If your child has a hard time reading social cues, use photos from magazines or characters from TV as tools for explaining body language and facial expressions.

- **Create the conditions for successful play dates.** Lots of kids and little structure is a recipe for trouble. With a new friend, keep the visit to one hour, and provide structured activities, like board games. Stay nearby, and intervene if the fun sours. If all goes well, gradually extend the visits and the amount of free play.

- **Let your child play with younger kids, if that's what she prefers.** Such interactions will give her a chance to take a leadership role—something that might be difficult when she plays with children of her own age.

### TAKE A DEEP BREATH

*Help your child understand and manage his feelings with ADHD-friendly emotional control strategies, at <http://additu.de/zt>*

### FRIENDSHIP GROUPS

Weekly friendship groups are a great way to teach social skills. Led by a psychologist or social worker, participants engage in role-playing to learn how to listen and respond, respect personal space, read social signals, and manage anger. Ideally, kids should participate in such a group before middle school, when social pressures intensify.

If your child's school doesn't offer such a group, a nearby learning center or a local therapist might. Since this service can be costly, ask to have it added to your child's IEP (Individualized Education Program).

## The Problem: Oral Language Delays

Children with ADHD frequently have delayed language skills. They sometimes do not understand what they are told (or what they read) and may have difficulty expressing themselves. Sometimes they use words improperly or trip over their own words. Other times, they misinterpret what they've been told, which can result in social difficulties, academic problems, and internal frustration.

### The Reason:

Children with ADHD often suffer from developmental language delays. They have difficulty remembering words and are slow to process oral language. Expressive language is impaired because word retrieval is not automatic for these children. It takes them extra time to search for the right words to express and organize their thoughts, which can render them unable to respond quickly to questions in a classroom setting. Poor short-term memory also compromises their language ability because they may only retain part of a direction or communication.

### The Obstacles

When students can't answer a question in class, teachers and classmates automatically assume they don't know the answer. However, ADHD children may simply need more time to remember and retrieve the answer. Unfortunately, some teachers respond by telling the child to "hurry up" or quickly pass the child over when he doesn't respond right away. Repeated frustration in this area may overwhelm the child and make him reluctant to participate in class discussions.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Time and latitude are the most important interventions you can provide.

Sometimes, teachers and students develop a secret agreement that the teacher will never "pop" a question that requires a speedy answer on the student. This alone will help the student relax.

- **Work with the student to develop manageable ways for him to demonstrate his knowledge to the class.** Educator Richard Lavoie

### IS IT MORE THAN ADHD?

*Problems with language may indicate an auditory processing disorder. Learn the signs at <http://additu.de/go>*

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Oral Language Delays

offers an example of one effective technique: Tell your students you want them to provide three reasons for the American Revolution. Pause for a minute to write something on the blackboard. Turn around and ask the ADHD child for one of the reasons. It's likely he'll have come up with one, but not yet three. Then, go on to other students for the other two answers.

- **Speak slowly and provide information in small units.** When teachers provide too much information in the first few sentences, the child with language processing problems quickly loses track. He may still be thinking about the first part, while the teacher (or parent) may have moved on.
- **Reinforce verbal instructions and lessons with written materials or by writing on the blackboard.** Sometimes, for a child who has difficulty with oral expression, it may help to ask him to approach the blackboard to write his answer rather than saying it aloud. This technique also provides extra time to retrieve the answer and does not overtax the child for whom speaking aloud is too daunting a task.
- **There is no one answer to helping ADHD kids with language difficulties, so it's important to work closely with each child** to determine her individual needs and discover which techniques work best for her.

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

Children with ADHD benefit greatly from a language-rich environment—one in which they are encouraged to interact verbally but never shamed for their slow processing or misuse of words. In this safe setting, children's communications skills can improve significantly.

- **Different props help to build a stronger language base.** Fill your home with high interest books, movies, educational materials, and computer programs. Bring a lot of people into your child's world—friends, extended family, and others who will interact with him and provide another forum in which to practice communication skills.
- **Use every experience as an opportunity to enrich language, and the earlier the better.** At the grocery store, talk about the apples and let your child retrieve and count them. At the gas station, show your

### SOUND THERAPY

*Music can help children with language delays express their thoughts and strengthen their brains. Read one parent's story at <http://additu.de/12v>*

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Oral Language Delays

child and name the nozzle, the gas cap, and the squeegee. Ask him to repeat your words.

- **Older children should be encouraged to recap their daily experiences at the dinner table each night.** Ask about the movie they saw or the class trip to museum. Give them words when they reach an impasse and help them move on. Help the child feel comfortable using language and never criticize efforts to communicate.

Early intervention is critical for children with language difficulties. If you suspect a problem, be sure the school evaluates your child. If the evaluation determines that your child's language is delayed, arrange for language remediation either privately or through your school.

### RESOURCE FOR PARENTS

*Childhood Speech, Language, and Listening Problems,*  
by Patricia McAleer Hamaguchi

<http://aaditu.de/19q>

## The Problem: Written Language Delays

ADHD students may find writing and communication tasks challenging due to difficulty getting their thoughts on paper, poor handwriting, grammar and spelling errors, and slower writing ability. These challenges make it difficult for them to copy information from the blackboard, take notes, and complete homework within a reasonable time period.

### The Reason:

The sequence of listening, taking in information, thinking about it, and then writing it down is extremely challenging for ADHD children. They frequently have difficulty with word retrieval and language processing, so while they may know the answer to a question, they may be unable to retrieve it and write it down. They often need more time with language-based tasks than do their peers.

### The Obstacles:

Education is not designed to allow an entire class to go more slowly in order to accommodate the needs of two or three ADHD students. The teacher, therefore, often tries to “speed up” the ADHD students, making them flustered, frustrated, and embarrassed. Often ADHD students recognize the difference in their writing ability compared to others, which makes them feel hopeless and stop trying. They may say, “I can’t do it,” or hand in simplistic or incomplete work just to satisfy the teacher.

### SOLUTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

More than anything, children with ADHD need extra time. This approach can be handled in several ways.

- **Shorten assignments.** Abbreviating the task makes it more manageable. For example, instead of requiring ADHD students to answer 20 questions on a test, have them answer 10.
- **Provide extended time if the full assignment must be completed, as in standardized tests.** For example, give the child an extra day or two to complete a long-term assignment.

### WRITE STUFF

*Find 18 writing tricks for students with ADHD, at <http://additude/kg>*

## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Written Language Delays

- **Assign homework with an emphasis on quality over quantity.**

Allow the child to demonstrate his or her knowledge by assigning six math problems instead of 20.

- **Children with ADHD are often unable to listen to the teacher and write at the same time.** Allow the ADHD student to share notes written by another student, so that the child with special needs can focus on what is being said. The child who struggles to write things down will likely miss important class content.

- **Don't take off points for poor handwriting or grammar**—unless the assignment specifically measures these areas, in which case you can provide a wider latitude of acceptability. Understand that these children expend enormous effort to communicate and remember, so it's best to let some things slide as long as they're demonstrating their knowledge and trying their best.

- Sometimes ADHD students excel in other areas, such as visual or oral presentations. For example, a child who has trouble completing a written test may excel when allowed to respond orally to the questions. Whenever possible, **allow the student to express knowledge using his or her strongest skill.**

### IS IT ADHD + LD?

*Poor handwriting may indicate dysgraphia.*

*Learn the signs at <http://additu.de/ve>*

### SOLUTIONS AT HOME:

Parents may need to provide extra support to their ADHD children when it comes to pencil-and-paper tasks.

- **A parent can write down the answers that a child provides orally.**

- **Many ADHD students benefit when they can use a word processor instead of writing** everything by hand. Impaired fine motor coordination, spatial orientation, and related neurological problems are more likely to interfere with handwriting than with keyboarding.

- **Provide computer programs your child can use to make the assignment more visually interesting.** Computers provide children with immediate feedback and a good-looking work product, which can inspire and motivate them to do more. Children with ADHD often need that additional motivation to stay focused on tedious or difficult tasks.



## CHAPTER 2 Solutions for ADHD Symptoms at School: Written Language Delays

- **Help your child understand and focus on his strong points**—how he learns best (visually, orally, or kinesthetically?), how he communicates best (written language, oral language, or visual demonstration?)—and discuss with the teacher the ways in which your child can apply these skills in the classroom.

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## **CHAPTER 3**

# Getting on the Same Page

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## The Parent-Teacher Partnership

Forge a strong alliance with the teacher to ensure that your child will be supported in the classroom.

Your child needs her teacher's support for the school year to go well. To ensure a committed ally in the classroom, be in touch early and often.

- **Write to the teacher before the year starts.** Explain how ADHD affects behavior and learning, and describe classroom strategies that have helped your child in the past. Strike a respectful tone, and express your interest in working together. (See a sample letter, below.)
- **Meet with the teacher during the first month of school.** Use this time to share information and to learn the classroom routine. How are transitions handled? Are there opportunities to move around? Inquire about classroom rules and consequences. This is also the time to assess the teacher's knowledge of the disorder. Ask how she's worked with ADHDers in the past, and offer information, such as articles from <http://additu.de/teacher>.

State your child's goals for the year—better grades, for example—and talk about her interests. Suggest specific measures that might help your child in terms of motivation, discipline, and structure.

- **Set up a system of regular communication.** Keep the teacher informed about educational assessments or family situations. Whatever the format—daily emails, weekly phone calls, or informal chats—show that you value his time by keeping your communications brief.
- **Stay positive and show your appreciation.** When discussing problems with the teacher, focus on solutions and steer clear of blame. Volunteer to tutor students who need reading help or to run a class project, to free up the teacher's time a bit.
- **Provide updates.** Keep all school professionals, tutors, sports coaches, and others who work with your child up-to-date on his progress. If problems arise, solicit their ideas.

### TOP ARTICLE

***“ADHD Secrets My Teacher Should Know,”***  
at <http://additu.de/gl>

### Introducing Your ADHD Child to a New Teacher

**Start the year off right with a letter explaining your child's symptoms of ADHD, dyslexia, or other learning disabilities, his medication, and accommodations that have helped in previous grades.**

To Zachary's Teachers:

Zachary Klein will be in your class this year. Over the years, we have found it helpful to give teachers some background about him, in addition to the IEP in his file. This often ensures a successful beginning to the year.

Zach has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). As a parent, I expect my child to behave in an acceptable manner at school and anywhere else. However, I have had to recognize that certain behaviors are characteristic of ADHD. (He is on medication, but it doesn't change who he is, and it is more effective at helping him focus than at controlling his behavior.) Some of these behaviors may be inconvenient or unexpected, but they are not necessarily unacceptable or "bad." They are simply different. Zach has a great sense of humor, and tapping into this early in the year usually works well. Zach takes criticism personally and hates being yelled at. He won't always let you know it, but he worries and is very sensitive. He might act cool and tough, but, if he has had a bad day, he falls apart at home.

Zach is excited about the new year. He wants to settle down and "be mature and responsible." Last school year was a difficult one, and Zach's self-esteem is pretty beat up.

Please keep these differences in mind as you teach my child. Correct when you must, and please accommodate—or tolerate—when you can. Below, we've listed of classroom strategies that have worked well in previous grades.

**1. Praise.** Zach responds to praise. When he receives positive reinforcement, his anxiety decreases, and he can better stay on

#### COMMUNICATION KEYS

Educational consultant Ann Welch offers the following tips for communicating effectively with your child's teacher...

- Be positive
- Ask questions
- Use reflective listening
- Stay on topic
- Work toward a solution

## CHAPTER 3 Getting on the Same Page

task. It is best, when possible, to talk to Zach about misbehavior in private.

**2. Flash pass.** In the past, teachers have given Zach a “flash pass,” so he can leave the room when he needs a break. He doesn’t use it often, but knowing that he can helps him control anxiety. He may get up from time to time to get a tissue or sharpen a pencil, and this helps him settle down for the rest of the class. He gets anxious, almost to the point of claustrophobia, when he is in the same setting for too long.

**3. Quiet space.** Zach has difficulty focusing for long periods of time when taking a test and when reading. During these extended periods, you might move him to a quieter, private space, such as a teacher’s office or the hallway.

**4. Enlarged math problems.** Zach has trouble with taking math tests. He does better when tests are enlarged, so that one or two problems are on each page. He sometimes folds his math paper into quarters, with only one problem on each quarter, to help himself focus.

**5. Limited in-class reading.** It is nearly impossible for Zach to read in class for any extended period of time. It is best to send reading assignments home, where he can read quietly.

**6. Scheduling for difficult classes.** If possible, Zach’s hardest classes should be scheduled in the morning hours. Concentration becomes more difficult for him as the day progresses. Teachers in his later classes should be made aware of this.

**7. Leniency for lateness.** Unless he’s given plenty of reminders, Zach’s disorganization inhibits his ability to hand work in on time. While we strive to meet deadlines, we’d appreciate leniency for late assignments.

***“When my son is having an extremely hard time focusing in class, his teacher lets him walk up and down the hallway to get his wiggles out. Then he can come back and sit for a while.”*** —STEPHANIE, AN ADDITUDE READER

## CHAPTER 3 Getting on the Same Page

We welcome any ideas you have to keep Zach engaged in school, while boosting his self-esteem and helping him succeed. Please contact us at any time by phone or by email. We have flexible schedules and are able to meet whenever it is convenient for you. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,  
Zach's Parents

### TEACHER TOOLBOX

*For 11 ways teachers can help support our kids, visit <http://additude.gg>*

## Be Your Child's Strongest Advocate

You are the expert on your child's unique needs. Here's how to speak up and secure what he needs to succeed at school.

For the parent of a child with ADHD, advocacy is not a role of choice—it is a responsibility thrust on us the day the child was born. The question is not whether the child will need us to speak for his or her educational needs, but rather when, with whom, and to what purpose.

### Being an effective advocate for your child requires:

- Fully understanding your child's strengths, weaknesses, and needs.
- Knowing about educational rights, how the system works, and what resources are available.
- Communicating effectively and working cooperatively with your child's educators.
- Involving the child in planning and decision-making, to demonstrate unequivocally that you are on the same side all the way.

### Understand Your Child:

For decades, I've given parents the same message: "I have a Ph.D. in psychology and I'm an expert on human behavior, but YOU are the expert on your child." There is no substitute for parental insights about the nuances and details that make a child unique.

To be an effective advocate, you must understand your child's strengths and weaknesses from both the "clinical" and the personal perspectives. Beyond that, it is vital to communicate your knowledge about your child's needs to educators and other professionals. You will share your information with many educators over many years until your child is grown.

### Learn the Law:

Every parent of a child with ADHD should be familiar with the legislation

**WEBINAR ON DEMAND**  
***"Your Legal Rights At School" with Matt Cohen, Esq.***

**Listen now at <http://additu.de/legal>**

## CHAPTER 3 Getting on the Same Page

contained in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Rehabilitation Act.

### Communicate Effectively:

The most effective advocacy is collaborative, not a battle between parents and educators. The parent who is assertive, considerate, and respectful will likely make more progress than one who goes in with an aggressive or confrontational stance.

Sadly, there are exceptions. In some instances, the child's needs are clear, reasonable accommodations or services are requested—and then the parents run into an implacable teacher or school administrator. The parents' task at that point is to fight like a tiger for the child's needs.

### Involve Your Child:

The most important person in this process is your child. It can be daunting for a child of any age to be singled out for special interventions, but it is even worse if the reasons are not clear to the child and he doesn't feel included in the decision-making. Their parents and teachers are asking them to do things that none of their friends have to do! Younger children may internalize the feelings of shame and the sense of being "bad." Older children feel stigmatized and react with resentment and noncompliance.

It is better to feel like a participant than a pawn. Even very young children will accept interventions when the reasons and benefits are explained in a way that makes sense to them.

Equally important is the parent's attitude about advocacy and intervention. It's not enough to provide discipline and guidance. ("It's time to start working on your homework; turn the TV off.") Let your child see you as cheerleader and knight in shining armor. ("I believe in you, I want the best for you, I'm behind you all the way.") Educational interventions always work best when children see their parents as a source of unflagging support.

*By Peter Jaksa, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist in private practice in Chicago.*

#### YOUR TURBO BRAIN

*For tips on framing ADHD treatment in a positive way, visit <http://additu.de/x5>*



## Learning Styles

Every child picks up and processes information in his own unique way. Determine your child's learning style, and find ways to work with her strengths.

Does your child get more from a story when he sees it in print or when he hears it read aloud? Does he need to draw it or act it out to really understand it? Each child has his or her own learning style—a unique way of taking in and processing information.

Most kids use all of their senses for learning, but favor one sense over the others. “Visual learners” prefer reading or observing. “Auditory learners” do best with talking and listening. “Tactile/kinesthetic learners” benefit most from a hands-on approach.

Good teachers choose instructional methods to accommodate each child's strengths. You can do the same with your child at home, by tuning in to the ways she learns best.

***“To make reading fun for our kids, we dress up as characters in the stories, and make food related to the topic or country in the book. We also use drama to reenact our favorite parts! We have ‘family theater night’ where we each perform. They love it and can’t wait for it now.” —LISA, AN ADDITUDE READER***

### IF YOUR CHILD IS A VISUAL LEARNER:

- Have her type up class notes or homework in typefaces of varying style, color, and size.
- Use flash cards, drawings, and diagrams to help him study for a test.
- Ask the teacher to provide homework assignments in writing. At home, make a written list of instructions, schedules, and routines.
- Introduce Scrabble, crossword puzzles, anagrams, and other word games.

### IF YOUR CHILD IS AN AUDITORY LEARNER:

- Have him read study materials into a cassette recorder as if he were a disc jockey or sports announcer. This will hold his interest when he reviews them for a test.
- Help her recite multiplication tables and other facts to the rhythm of a favorite song.

## CHAPTER 3 Getting on the Same Page

- Allow him to study with a partner or a few classmates.
- Look for the audio version of books she's reading in class or for pleasure. Your child may be eligible to borrow recorded textbooks from Learning Ally ([learningally.org](http://learningally.org)) for a modest annual membership fee—or to get non-textbook recordings from the National Library Service at no cost ([loc.gov/nls](http://loc.gov/nls)).

### IF YOUR CHILD IS A TACTILE/ KINESTHETIC LEARNER:

- Provide blocks, jelly beans, or playing cards to use to compute math problems; give Scrabble pieces or alphabet cereal to spell words.
- Create hands-on learning experiences—nature hikes, science experiments, and so on.
- Have her act out scenes from history or literature.
- Explore various materials and techniques for assignments—a collage, diorama, or clay construction.

### MIND MATCH

*Finding a school that matches your child's unique learning style can be tough. Read expert advice and personal stories at <http://additu.de/qu>*

## How Kids Think

Children differ in the way they conceptualize ideas. “Analytic learners” see the particulars. “Global learners” take a broad view. Each cognitive learning style has its strengths, and each requires a certain kind of support.

### An analytic learner...

...works better without distractions, so provide a quiet work space for homework or study. Encourage him to save questions for later to avoid losing his concentration.

...needs help seeing the relevance in what she's learning at school. If the teacher doesn't make such connections, talk about them at home.

...tunes in to details, but may not see the overall theme. Help her to spot key words in reading material, and prompt her to think about larger concepts.

...favors true/false and multiple-choice tests. To help him prepare for essay exams, create practice tests that require lengthy answers.

## CHAPTER 3 Getting on the Same Page

### **A global learner...**

...has to see the big picture before he can appreciate details. Provide an example of a finished product—a book report or science poster—to let him see “the whole.” To draw his attention to details, specify facts to watch for as he’s reading.

...leaves tasks unfinished or skips to the “creative part.” Provide a step-by-step checklist to lead her through each assignment.

...prefers tests that require essay-writing, not a command of facts. Teach him strategies—like the process of elimination—for use with multiple-choice tests.

### **SCHOOL MATRIX**

*For more on finding a learning environment that’s right for your family, download “Choosing an Academic Program for Your Child” at <http://additu.de/4x>*

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## **CHAPTER 4**

# Glossary and Additional Resources

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## Special Education Glossary

Our ADHD/LD glossary deciphers the acronyms and language of special education.

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If your child has been diagnosed with ADHD or a learning disability, you've entered a new world of special ed acronyms, abbreviations, and terms. This glossary will help you penetrate the jargon to get your child the educational help he or she needs.

**Accommodations:** Techniques and materials that help ADHD or LD students learn or perform schoolwork more effectively. Accommodations include extra time on tests, a lighter homework load, and permission to tape-record assignments.

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**Assistive Technology:** Equipment or software that helps children compensate for learning impairments. Examples include electronic spell-checkers and audiobooks.

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**Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** A neurobiological disorder that causes problems with attention span, impulse control, and activity level.

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**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):** A set of strategies developed by school personnel to help a child behave in a way that is appropriate to the classroom and that allows him to learn.

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**Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician:** A physician who specializes in childhood behavioral problems, such as ADHD and aggressive behavior, as well as difficulties at school.

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**Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5):** A publication of the American Psychiatric Association that is used to diagnose psychiatric disorders, including ADHD.

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**Educational Advocate:** A professional who works with families to secure appropriate educational placement or services for students with ADHD or LD.

### **ADHDDIRECTORY**

*Do you need an educational advocate? Here's what you need to know:*  
<http://additu.de/r5>

## CHAPTER 4 Glossary and Additional Resources

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**Educational Psychologist:** A psychologist who specializes in learning and in the behavioral, social, and emotional problems that interfere with school performance.

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**Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** Under IDEA (see below), public schools are required to provide disabled students with appropriate educational services at no cost to the parents.

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**Formal Assessment:** A school-based evaluation of a student's learning difficulties using standardized tests and other tools. A team of school professionals uses the assessment to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services.

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**Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE):** An evaluation conducted by a qualified professional who is unaffiliated with a public school district. Schools are required to consider the findings or recommendations of an IEE.

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**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** The federal law that guarantees special education and related services to students with disabilities. ADHD is not listed among IDEA's disability categories, but children with ADHD often qualify under a category called "Other Health Impairments."

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**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** The formal, written plan that guides the delivery of special education services to a child who qualifies for such assistance under IDEA.

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**Learning Disability (LD):** A neurobiological disorder that impairs a person's ability to read, write, or do math by affecting the way he receives, processes, or expresses information.

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**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** Under IDEA, school districts must provide special ed services in a general education setting, rather than in separate classes or schools, whenever possible. A regular classroom is the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities.

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**Modification:** An adjustment in the curriculum that creates a different standard for students with disabilities, as compared to others in the class.

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### FREE SCREENER

*Could your child have a learning disability? Take this quick screener quiz at <http://additude/ld-screener>*

## CHAPTER 4 Glossary and Additional Resources

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**Multidisciplinary Team:** A group of people who work together to develop and review a child's IEP. The team might include the child's classroom and special education teachers, school administrator, school psychologist, therapist, educational advocate, and parents.

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**Neuropsychologist:** A psychologist who specializes in the relationship between brain function and behavior.

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**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:** The federal law that grants children with disabilities the right to an appropriate public school education. Children with ADHD or LD who are ineligible for special education services under IDEA may qualify for accommodations and services under Section 504. The written plan outlining these services is called a 504 Plan.

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**Special Education (SPED):** Specially designed instruction for children whose educational needs can't be met in a regular instructional program.

### FREE RESOURCE

*Download a sample 504 plan at <http://additu.de/aj>*

## Classroom Accommodations to Help Students with ADHD & LD

**If your child has these problems:**

**Suggest these accommodations:**

### CLASSROOM SETUP

- Easily distracted by classroom activity or by activity visible through door or windows
- Acts out in class to gain negative attention
- Is unaware of personal space; reaches across desks to talk to or touch other students

- Seat student front and center, away from distractions
- Seat student near good role model
- Increase distance between desks

### ASSIGNMENTS

- Is unable to complete work within given time
- Does well at the beginning of an assignment but quality of work decreases toward the end
- Has difficulty following instructions

- Allow extra time to complete assigned work
- Break long assignments into smaller parts; shorten assignments or work periods
- Pair written instructions with oral instructions

### DISTRACTIBILITY

- Is unable to keep up during classroom discussions and/or note taking
- Complains that lessons are “boring”
- Is easily distracted
- Turns in work with careless mistakes

- Provide peer assistance in note taking and ask student questions to encourage participation in discussions
- Seek to involve student in lesson presentation
- Cue student to stay on task with a private signal
- Schedule five-minute period to check over work before turning in homework or tests

*continued next page »*



## CHAPTER 4 Glossary and Additional Resources

### If your child has these problems:

### Suggest these accommodations:

#### BEHAVIOR

- Constantly engaging in attention-getting behavior
- Fails to “see the point” of a lesson or activity
- Blurts out answers or interrupts others
- Needs reinforcement
- Needs long-term help with improving behavior

- Ignore minor inappropriate behavior
- Increase immediacy of rewards and consequences
- Acknowledge correct answers only when hand is raised and student is called upon
- Send daily/weekly progress reports home
- Set up behavior contract

#### ORGANIZATION/PLANNING

- Can't keep track of papers
- Has trouble remembering homework assignments
- Loses books

- Recommend binders with dividers and folders
- Provide student with assignment book; supervise writing down of assignments
- Allow student to keep set of books at home

#### RESTLESSNESS

- Needs to move around
- Has difficulty focusing for long periods of time

- Allow student to run errands or to stand at times while working
- Provide short breaks between assignments

#### MOODS/SOCIALIZATION

- Is unclear as to appropriate social behaviors
- Does not work well with others
- Is not respected by peers
- Has low self-confidence
- Appears lonely or withdrawn
- Is easily frustrated
- Is easily angered

- Set up social-behavior goals with student and implement a reward program
- Encourage cooperative learning tasks
- Assign special responsibilities in presence of peer group
- Compliment positive behavior and work; give student opportunity to act in leadership role
- Encourage social interactions with classmates; plan teacher-directed group activities
- Acknowledge appropriate behavior and good work frequently
- Encourage student to walk away from angering situations; spend time talking to student

## ADHD Monitoring System

Use this tool with your child's teacher to track the effectiveness of his ADHD treatment and his performance and behavior at school.

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One of the most important things one can do to help promote the healthy development of a child with ADHD is to carefully monitor how he or she is doing at school. The ADHD Monitoring Program, created by David Rabiner, Ph.D., of Duke University, offers an easy system for doing this.

By using this program on a weekly or monthly basis, you will be able to carefully track how your child, student, or patient is doing in school, and will be alerted when any adjustments or modifications to the child's treatment need to be considered.

**Find the full instructions on using the ADHD Monitoring System at:** <http://www.helpforadd.com/monitor.pdf>.

*David Rabiner, Ph.D., is a research professor in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at Duke University and is currently serving as an Associate Dean in Trinity College of Arts and Sciences. Since 1997 Dr. Rabiner has published an online newsletter called Attention Research Update that helps parents, educators, and health professionals keep up with new research on ADHD. Dr. Rabiner thanks Novartis for supporting his efforts to distribute this tool to the widest possible audience.*

## Weekly Monitoring Report

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

0	Not at all
1	A little
2	Pretty Much
3	Very Much

Teacher: Please answer the items below on your observations of this child during the past week by circling the number that best applies.

Question	Scale			
1. Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.	0	1	2	3
2. Difficulty remaining seated.	0	1	2	3
3. Difficulty waiting turn.	0	1	2	3
4. Talks excessively.	0	1	2	3
5. Interrupts others.	0	1	2	3
6. Always "on the go".	0	1	2	3
7. Easily distracted.	0	1	2	3
8. Fails to complete assigned tasks.	0	1	2	3
9. Trouble paying attention.	0	1	2	3
10. Careless/messy work.	0	1	2	3
11. Does not seem to listen when spoken to.	0	1	2	3
12. Difficulty following directions.	0	1	2	3
Note: For the following three items, higher scores indicate better functioning by the child.				
13. Follows class rules.	0	1	2	3
14. Gets along with peers.	0	1	2	3
15. Seems happy and in good mood.	0	1	2	3

Please indicate how the behaviors rated above compared during morning and afternoon times for the prior week by circling one of the choices below.

**Note:** If you only have this child in class during morning or afternoon, this does not apply.

<b>Morning better than afternoon</b>	<b>No clear difference</b>	<b>Afternoon better than morning</b>
--------------------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------------------

Circle the value below to indicate the approximate percentage of assigned class work that this child completed during the past week:

<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	------------

The quality of work completed by this child this week was:

<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
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If the quality of this child's work varied significantly between academic subjects, please indicate this in the next column.	
Did this child turn in all assigned homework? If not, please indicate the missing assignments	
Please indicate any other comments or observations that you believe are important:	

Thank you for your help!



## Monthly Monitoring Report

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

0	Not at all
1	A little
2	Pretty Much
3	Very Much

**Teacher:** Please answer the items below on your observations of this child during the past month by circling the number that best applies.

Question	Scale			
1. Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.	0	1	2	3
2. Difficulty remaining seated.	0	1	2	3
3. Difficulty waiting turn.	0	1	2	3
4. Talks excessively.	0	1	2	3
5. Interrupts others.	0	1	2	3
6. Always "on the go".	0	1	2	3
7. Easily distracted.	0	1	2	3
8. Fails to complete assigned tasks.	0	1	2	3
9. Trouble paying attention.	0	1	2	3
10. Careless/messy work.	0	1	2	3
11. Does not seem to listen when spoken to.	0	1	2	3
12. Difficulty following directions.	0	1	2	3
Note: For the following three items, higher scores indicate better functioning by the child.				
13. Follows class rules.	0	1	2	3
14. Gets along with peers.	0	1	2	3
15. Seems happy and in good mood.	0	1	2	3

Please indicate how the behaviors rated above compared during morning and afternoon times for the prior month by circling one of the choices below.

**Note:** If you only have this child in class during morning or afternoon, this does not apply.

<b>Morning better than afternoon</b>	<b>No clear difference</b>	<b>Afternoon better than morning</b>
--------------------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------------------

Circle the value below to indicate the approximate percentage of assigned class work that this child completed during the past month:

<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	------------

In general, the quality of work completed by this child this month was:

<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
------------------	-------------	---------------------	-------------	------------------

If the quality of this child's work varied significantly between academic subjects, please indicate this in the next column.	
Did this child turn in all assigned homework? If not, please indicate the missing assignments	
Please indicate any other comments or observations that you believe are important:	




*Thank you for your help!*




## Sample Daily Report Card: YOUNGER CHILD

See next page for printable version of this report card

Home report card for: John

Date: 10-1-2015

Played nicely with other children:   

Obedied class rules:   

Teacher signature: Mrs. Jones

Comments: John seemed to be making a good effort today!

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Daily Report Card: OLDER CHILD

See page 69 for printable version of this report card

Name: John Date: 10-1-2015

	MATH	READING	SPELLING	ENGLISH	SOC. STUDIES
On-task during class:	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Followed instructions:	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Kept hands to himself/herself:	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

SCALE: Good = 2 FAIR = 1 Poor = 0

	complete pgs. 44-45 in workbook	None	Practice words for week	None	Read pgs. 103-109
Homework grade:	<u>D</u>	-	-	-	<u>D</u>
Test grade:	-	-	-	<u>C</u>	-

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Home report card for: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Played nicely with  
other children:



Obedied class rules:



Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	MATH	READING	SPELLING	ENGLISH	SOC. STUDIES
On-task during class:					
Followed instructions:					
Kept hands to himself/herself:					

SCALE: Good = 2 FAIR = 1 Poor = 0

Homework					
Homework grade:					
Test grade:					

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Required Reading

Every parent of a child with ADHD and/or learning disabilities should have these books close at hand.

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### ***The Survival Guide for School Success***

BY RON SHUMSKY, PSY.D., SUSAN ISLASCOX, M.A., and ROB BELL, M.ED. • Free Spirit Publishing

Once kids reach middle school, teachers expect more independence—and responsibilities start to add up. For children with ADHD or LD, this can be when they start to flounder, as more demands are placed on their already weak executive functions. This book combats the middle-school slump by turning your child's brain into a high-powered smartphone, complete with "apps" (or strategies) to pay attention, get organized, and more.

### ***The Complete Guide to Special Education***

BY LINDA WILMSHURST, PH.D., and ALAN BRUE, PH.D. • Jossey-Bass

This complete resource outlines the IEP process step-by-step, from the initial testing to annual checkups. It includes valuable worksheets, checklists, and sample forms for parents or teachers to use, making the special education process easier for everyone involved and ensuring children get the best help possible. The newly revised second edition includes up-to-date coverage on testing procedures, autism spectrum disorder, and more.

### ***Nowhere to Hide***

BY JEROME J. SCHULTZ, PH.D. • Jossey-Bass

*Nowhere to Hide: Why Kids with ADHD and LD Hate School and What We Can Do About It* is a groundbreaking look at the stress-fueled environment of today's school system, and the particularly toxic effect it has on children with ADHD or LD. Schultz uses his experience as a neuropsychologist and educator to provide parents with practical, applicable strategies to take stress out of schooling, and help your child love learning again.

#### **ADHD LIBRARY**

***For more recommended reading, visit***  
<http://additu.de/book>

## CHAPTER 4 Glossary and Additional Resources

### ***The ADHD Book of Lists***

BY SANDRA F. RIEF • Wiley

Written for parents, as well as for teachers, counselors, and other school personnel, this book is replete with tips, strategies, and interventions to help ADD youngsters succeed at school. The list format makes the material accessible, and the special binding lets the book lie flat when open, so that check- lists, forms, and other tools can be easily photocopied.

### ***Otto Learns About His Medicine***

BY MATTHEW GALVIN • Magination Press; for ages 4-8

All children are a bit apprehensive about doctors. To put your child at ease, read him the story of Otto, a fidgety young car. The author likens a hyper-active child to a car in need of a tune-up. Otto can't remember important information, and he can't focus long enough to learn how to drive. The tune-up metaphor offers a non-threatening way for children to learn about medical check-ups, and they'll see how medication can help them "run" better.

### ***Learning to Slow Down and Pay Attention***

BY KATHLEEN G. NADEAU, PH.D., and ELLEN B. DIXON, PH.D. • Magination Press; for ages 9-12

This ADHD workbook, written in an entertaining style that kids will love, addresses issues that will hit home—such as making friends, doing homework, and staying focused. Psychologists Kathleen Nadeau and Ellen Dixon provide checklists to help young readers identify the problems they'd like to solve, and include plenty of activity pages to support the process of positive change.

## Additional Resources

Consult these reliable sources for further information about ADHD and learning disabilities.

### Recommended Websites

#### **Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)**

» <http://chadd.org/>

CHADD offers local support services to parents, teachers, and other professionals. Its Website features an online community, an ADHD directory, and information about your child's legal rights at school.

#### **The Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA)**

» <http://www.copaa.org/>

COPAA helps parents secure high-quality educational services for children with disabilities. Search its Website for member attorneys and advocates in your area.

#### **LD OnLine**

» <http://www.ldonline.org/>

Parents, teachers, and kids will find a wealth of information about learning disabilities. The site features FAQs, expert advice, and several forums.

#### **Learning Disabilities Association of America**

» <http://ldaamerica.org/>

The LDA site offers a four-hour special education training course for parents, plus advice on a range of topics, from finding tutors to helping a child choose a career.

*continued next page »*

### **FREE ADHD Newsletters from ADDitude**

**Sign up to receive critical news and information about ADHD diagnosis and treatment, plus strategies for school, parenting, and living better with ADHD:**

<http://additu.de/email>

#### **Adult ADHD and LD**

Expert advice on managing your household, time, money, career, and relationships.

#### **Parenting Children with ADHD or LD**

Behavior and discipline, time management, disorganization, making friends, and more critical strategies for parents.

#### **ADHD and LD at School**

How to get classroom accommodations, finish homework, work with teachers, find the right schools, and much more.

#### **Treating ADHD**

Treatment options including medications, food, supplements, brain training, mindfulness, and other alternative therapies.

## CHAPTER 4 Glossary and Additional Resources

### Understood

>> <https://www.understood.org/en>

One in five children suffer from learning or attention issues. Understood is a collaboration of 15 nonprofit organizations working to support these children—and their parents—throughout their school years and beyond.

### Wrightslaw

>> <http://wrightslaw.com/>

This website focuses on special education law and advocacy for children with disabilities. It offers thousands of articles and cases, breaking news, and a newsletter.

## FREE ADDitude Downloadable Booklets & Tipsheets

### 10 Solutions to Disorganization at School

Does your child forget her books? Are her desk, locker, and backpack in disarray? How to get organized.

### 40 Winning Accommodations for ADHD/LD Children

How to pinpoint your child's problems in the classroom and select the best accommodations to help him succeed.

### Letter to Your ADHD Child's Teacher

Sample letters to introduce your child to his new teacher.

### 50 Smart Discipline Tips for Your ADHD Child

50 best discipline techniques from ADHD parenting experts.

### ADHD Time Assessment Chart

A way to track exactly where your time goes and how to spend it more wisely.

### Never Be Late Again

Time management tips for adults with ADHD.

### 25 Things to Love About ADHD

Why you should be proud of your attention deficit.