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Information for Kids

Lots of kids have trouble sitting still, paying attention and remembering directions. Sometimes, you want to pay attention and try hard to sit still, but you can't. A big part of the reason why you can't do these things, even when you want to, might be a difficulty called Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, ADHD for short.

Kids with ADHD often have a terrible time with homework and class work. They have trouble concentrating and finishing things. They get bored quickly and it's hard to stick with things that are not interesting to them.

Children with ADHD sometimes have a harder time controlling themselves. They just can't wait. They may act without thinking about what will happen later - then they are sorry.

How does ADHD happen? Kids with ADHD have a great brain. It's just that the parts that help with attention and controlling themselves and sitting still are not working so well.

Children with ADHD can learn, pay attention and control themselves. However, they may have to work harder and may have some special ways to help themselves do those things.

There are certain medications that sometimes help kids with ADHD. These medications can help kids stay calm, remember things, and keep their minds on what they are doing.

The medicine *doesn't make* them do things but *lets* them do things they'd like to do, for example, pay attention, get their work done and control themselves better.

Almost all medications have side effects. These are things that happen that nobody likes about the medication. With the usual medication for ADHD, the main side effects are that you may not be as sleepy or hungry. Not all children have these side effects, but if they do, they often go away after about two weeks.

If you feel funny or weird or different, you need to let your parents or teacher know. All medication has to be taken special ways at certain times. So, it will be important to follow the doctor's directions.

In order to get the help you need, you will work as part of a team with your doctor, the school and your parents. You are a unique and very special person. There is *plenty* you can do to help yourself and your team will work with you to find out what works best for you.



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Study Tips for Younger Students

Get organized.

- Be sure everything has a place and put everything in its place.
- Clear storage boxes and zipper pouches can help keep your school supplies organized. Labels on your containers are another way to help you remember what's inside.
- Clear your desk or work area of everything except what you must have in order to do your assignment.
- Always put the largest items on the bottom of your school bag or desk and smallest on top. It will be easier to find your things.

Be prepared.

- Always have what you need for class with you. At the beginning of the school year, make a list of everything you'll need for each class. Your teacher and parents can help you with this.
- If you cover your books, write the subject on the front and spine of the cover so you don't have to open each book to find the right one.

Plan ahead.

- Take only what you need for class with you. Don't carry extras.
- Always write needed school supplies on the bottom of your assignment sheet under "Things to Remember".
- Keep track of your supplies so you don't run out. When you sharpen your last pencil, start your last clean notepad or load the last stack of paper in the printer, let someone know so they can add it to the shopping list.



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Study Tips for Older Students

1. Schedule for regular study time each day. This discourages putting homework off and letting it pile up.
2. Be sure you understand each assignment before you leave class. Know the purpose, what to do, and how to do it. If you don't understand, ask. It is easier to remember if you keep a special assignment section in your notebook.
3. You can save time spent searching through your book bag and supplies by color-coding your notebooks with a different color for each subject.
4. Practice predicting how much time you need to complete each assignment. By timing your assignments, you are more likely to concentrate and less likely to become bored.
5. Discover your best times to study and plan around them. Do you study better at night or in the morning?
6. Set a "stopping time" for study sessions. This will encourage hard work in anticipation of being through by a set time. Sometimes trying to "beat the clock" may help you concentrate harder.
7. Time yourself to see how long it takes to read five pages of your textbook. This helps you estimate how long it takes to complete reading assignments. Because a textbook is loaded with information, you may have read some sections more than once. Allow time to think about what you read.
8. Pay attention to charts and diagrams. They can help you understand the written sections.

9. When a reading assignment is made, you can expect to have a discussion of the material or a quiz in class. Write down the main ideas and review your notes just before class.
10. Every time you study, spend 10 minutes reviewing previous assignments. These “refresher shots” are the secret for long-term memory. This habit of frequent review also results in less time needed to study for a major test.
11. Take a 5-minute break for every 40 minutes you study. This refreshes your mind so you can concentrate better and finish faster.
12. Don’t cram for hours the night before a major test. Instead, schedule half hour study sessions over a period of days before the test.
13. Learning is not done all at once. It takes time for new ideas to come together with previous learning from lectures, readings and lab experiments. You have to continuously make the connections and associations in your own mind. Putting it all together is easier if you schedule daily time to read, think, reflect, and review.

Taken in part from *A Guidebook for Teaching Study Skills and Motivation*,
Second Edition by Bernice Jensen Bragstad and Sharyn Mueller Stumpf.
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ADHD Book List*

Parent's Books

Reiff, Michael (2011). *ADHD: What every parent needs to know*. AAP

Barkley, Russel A. (2000). *Taking charge of ADHD: The complete authoritative guide for parents*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Children's Books

Fox, Janet S. (2006). *Get organized without losing it (laugh and learn)*.
Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

Nadeau, Kathleen G., Dixon, Ellen B. (2004). *Learning to slow down & pay attention: A book for kids about ADHD*. Washington, DC: Imagination Press.

Quinn, Patricia O., Stern, Judith M. (2009). *Putting on the brakes: Understanding and taking control of your ADD or ADHD*. Washington, DC: Imagination Press.

Taylor, John. (2006). *The survival guide for kids with ADD and ADHD*.
Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

*Books recommended by Trena Sutcliffe, MD, FAAP, Developmental Pediatrics,
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