

Tips for Teachers with ADHD Students

Children with inattention:

- Seat student near teacher or good role model
- Minimize distractions; seat at his/her own desk
- Place child at front of room
- Break assignments into short segments, use a timer
- Assist student in setting short-term goals
- Work within child's attention span; change type of work frequently
- Give clear, concise instructions
- Cue student to stay on task, (*i.e.* private signal - hand on shoulder)
- Help student organize time
- Use both written and oral instructions
- Shorten homework assignments and avoid long repetitive tasks helps

Improve compliance with appropriate behavior:

- Praise compliant behavior
- Give frequent, immediate, consistent feedback
- Avoid calling on them when their attention is drifting
- Help student with self-monitoring of behavior
- Set up behavior contract
- Have specific rules and clear consequences
- Use teacher attention to reinforce positive behavior
- Set regular one on one meetings to discuss child's behavior
- Increase immediacy of rewards and consequences
- Use time-outs for misbehavior
- Supervise closely during transition times
- Call only when hand is raised in appropriate manner
- Seat student near good role model
- Acknowledge positive behaviors
- Students do well with predictability and routine, but often have high levels of creativity, so routine should not be so rigid as to stifle inventiveness
- Can benefit from doing errands for teacher to allow for diversion of excess energy

Children who have excessive motor activity:

- Allow student to stand at times while working
- Provide short break between assignments
- Give extra time to complete tasks
- Remind student to check over work if performance is rushed or careless

Children with socialization issues:

- Praise appropriate behavior
- Provide small group social skills training
- Assign special responsibilities to student in presence of other students
- Set up social behavior goals with student; include rewards
- Prompt appropriate social behavior with private signal

Children who seem to have emotional instability at times or become easily frustrated:

- Provide reassurance and encouragement
- Send positive notes home
- Watch for signs of stress and provide encouragement or reduce work load to avoid temper outburst
- Reinforce frequently when signs of frustration are noticed
- Provide training in anger control

- Conference frequently with parents to learn about student interests and achievements outside school
- Look for opportunities for student to have leadership role in class
- Review instructions and assignments to make sure student comprehends what is being asked

Academic Skills

If reading is weak:

- Select text with less on a page
- Avoid oral reading
- Provide additional reading time
- Use "previewing strategies"
- During reading, students should learn to identify main ideas and supporting details
- Teach scanning skills
- Help develop outlining and summarizing skills - cycle of read, underline, summarize

If oral expression is weak:

- Substitute display for oral report
- Accept all oral responses
- Encourage to tell about new ideas or experiences
- Pick topics easy for the student to talk about

If written language is weak:

- Accept displays and oral projects in place of written reports
- Accept use of computer and recorded work
- Do not penalize poor handwriting if visual-motor deficits are present
- Encourage learning of keyboarding skills
- Use tests with multiple choice and fill in questions
- Don't assign large quantity of written work

If math is weak:

- Allow use of calculator
- Use graph paper to space numbers
- Provide immediate correction and feedback via modeling of how to compute the correct answer

General skills:

- Teach methods of self-assessment: how to proofread what they've written as if they were the teacher; or self-test to check mastery or retention of what they've read.
- Colored pencils may help motivate.
- Help student develop skills in maintaining a neat and accessible notebook
- Specific instruction about maintaining an assignment pad and checking back for understanding about expectations
- Help students get assignments and books home and back to school by establishing a routine and a predetermined place to keep books and bags
- Teach test taking skills - how to allocate time, answer easy questions first and learn to relax

Organization Planning:

- Ask for parental help in encouraging organization
- Clearly give organization rules - show and tell
- Encourage student to have notebook with dividers and folders for work; color coding may help
- Have student use assignment book or clearly mark section of notebook
- Routinely check assignment book for accuracy, understanding and completeness
- Send daily/weekly progress reports home
- Use colors and shapes to help student organize
- Try more visual learning - instead of memorizing, ask student to make a movie in their head and replay it
- Regularly check desk and notebooks for neatness