

Exploring

school-age children

Capital District Child Care Council *a tipsheet for parents and caregivers of children ages 5 to 13*

Behavior Management

Reference Guide for help with Common Attention Deficit Disorder Behaviors

Be Direct, Consistent, and Kind

Remember the power of praise and reward. Use a positive attitude and not a punitive one. Establish clear ground rules and keep those rules with appropriate amendments as the child gets older. As the child matures and improves in judgment, give him more leeway.

Listen

Listen actively, this sets a good example and helps the child feel important and valued. Remember, if you do not want a child to tune you out, do not tune the child out.

Consider the Attention Span Of Children with ADD

Often children do not process multiple requests quickly or accurately. Before making a request, be sure you have the child's attention. Most importantly, ask the child to do only that which he can manage. Too many choices are distracting and may not be managed comfortably.

Avoid a Power Struggle Over Repeated Directions

Give instructions one to three times as needed, but say it each time as though it were the first. Speak clearly and slowly, use a gentle touch, make good eye contact, and keep an encouraging expression. After you have given the direction in a simple, clear command, the child can be asked to repeat what was said. When the child complies, thank them for listening. One of the most potent motivations is a verbal response indicating your pride and acceptance of the child's efforts.

Help the Child Organize

Many youngsters with ADD are erratic in their approach to problem solving. They may have great difficulty relating an event in its proper sequence. Routines and schedules help a child accept order and become more predictable. Minimize distractions and provide a place, a time, and the tools for a task's completion.

Difficulty Waiting

Because of the child's impulsivity, fear of forgetting, and/or being forgotten, he will speak and act out of turn. Give him a turn!! Some interruptions may be allowed.

Prevent Problems

Whenever Possible

Keep in mind that children with ADD do not intend to be defiant. It is best to try to prevent problems rather than dealing with them after they occur.

Avoid Fatigue

When children with ADD are tired, their self-control breaks down. Rest, relaxation (cozy corner), and regular routines are particularly needed for this group of children.

Provide Outlets For The Release Of Excess Energy

Because their energy should not be bottled up, children need daily constructive and creative activities that may include running, exercise, sports, art, etc. Provide them with open-ended art experiences. Allow them to explore and create!

Praise or Punishment must be Immediate

The longer the interval between the child's behavior and the time he gets feedback, the less effective the feedback will be. The cardinal rule is to focus on the behavior and not the child.

Keep in Mind What Works - Use it Over And Over

Avoid negative comments. Do not assume that a child understands what you want. Make an effort to explain clearly what is expected so the child can comply.

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