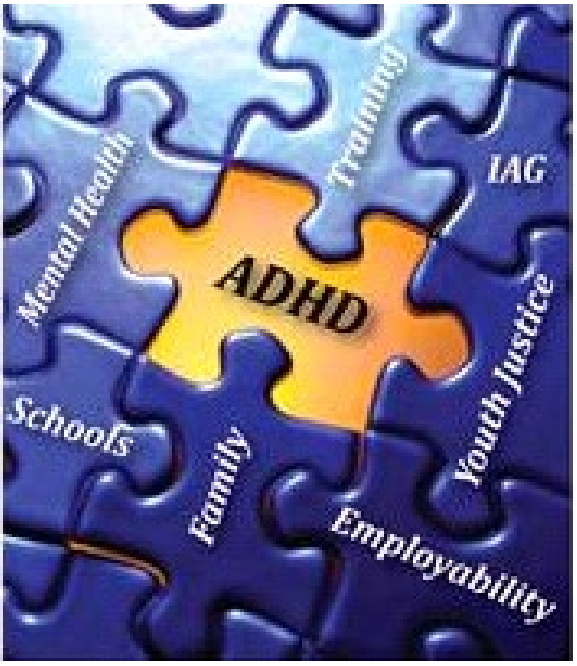


The missing piece of the puzzle…

Understanding and Managing ADHD

The ADHD Foundation invites you to understand and learn about ADHD and develop some practical strategies to work with children.

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The child, the family, the school, and the community working together to make changes

How do I recognise ADHD?

Here are some ways ADHD can present:

Poor organisation – "why do we take so long to get out of the house in the morning?"

Trouble staying on task – "why do you never finish anything? You just don't care. It would be much easier for you to just finish the task".

Poor sense of time – "what have you been doing all lesson? You have spent 30 minutes and have only written the title and date".

Time moves too slowly – "Sir, this game is taking too long to play, let's do something else"

Poor internalisation of rules – "Josh, how may times have I had to tell you that you that you can go out after your tea"

Poor sense of self awareness – ' what were you thinking, did you not ask yourself what would happen if you didn't hand in your homework'?

Poor reading of social cues –" can't you see that the other kid's think what you are doing is inappropriate behaviour"?

Inconsistent work/behaviour – " why did we have such a great day yesterday and today is awful"

Hyper-focusing – "How come you can spend hours on computer games but when I ask you to do your homework on the computer you find this so difficult?"

Frequently overwhelmed –"Mum stop it, I can't stand this talking, just stop talking to me!"

Push away those who want to help – "Dad, go away, stop checking my work, leave me alone, get away"

Children with ADHD can become very critical of themselves. It is instinctive for children to want to learn and to please the adult. When they say " I don't know why I didn't do as I was told", often they genuinely did not 'why'? They know they create difficulties but they do not 'choose' this behaviour but rather act / speak impulsively without thinking about the consequences. If behaviour management isn't approached correctly, the child with ADHD will internalise into their self concept that they are 'Naughty' and will act out according to the identity they have been given by the adult.

Ten Point Observation List on ADHD Behaviour

1. **Eye contact**: Avoidance of eye contact is ADHD/ASD behaviour – they may look as if they are ignoring you but some children find making eye contact really difficult.

2. **Fidgeting:** Not standing or sitting still or fiddling with something while you are talking with them, i.e. pens, books, or something on your desk. This behaviour does not mean they are not taking in what you are saying to them; they will be. If unsure, ask them to repeat back what you have just said to ensure their understanding.

3. **Wandering**: Avoidance of work-ADHD behaviour, possibly they don't know what to do or what you want from them so rather than fail, they just won't do it. "If I don't do it then I can't get it wrong". Sometimes children with ADHD prefer to get told off than to get work wrong and be perceived as 'stupid'. Getting started or completing a task may be due to the inability to direct their focus and not because they just can't be bothered or are lazy.

4. **Inappropriate behaviour**: ADHD children have difficulty with understanding inappropriate behaviour i.e. burping in class and other uncontrollable noises, they see these things as being funny and socially acceptable; we on the other hand see it as being unacceptable. They also tend to make remarks inappropriate to the situation i.e. "Sir, why have you got a hole in your sock?" they say what they see; they have difficulty reading social cues.

5**. Consequences**: Children with ADHD make no connection between behaviour and its consequences. If you point out a behaviour issue to a child they may acknowledge it and be very sorry for what he/she has done, but five minutes later they may do the very same thing again. Lack of executive functioning (analysing, problem solving and understanding sequence of actions and consequences) results in impulsive 'unconsidered' behaviours.

6. **Daydreaming**: is an ADHD characteristic, not paying attention or being distracted by other events outside/inside. It is not that the child is 'not' paying attention: it is more likely the child is paying too much attention to everything and not focusing on just one thing.

7. **Negative self-esteem**: Personal experience of not being able to understand instructions clearly, forget instructions or information, impulsive words and actions all have social consequences. Children with ADHD can easily become frustrated at their own inability to understand and communicate with others. This results in feelings of isolation and exclusion from recognition, praise, reward and affection from adults and peers. This in turn creates anxiety which exacerbates ADHD characteristics. Inevitably this causes behavioural problems for children with ADHD who act out – unable to articulate what they feel. "I can't do that" before they even try (failure of getting it wrong.)

8. **Being the class clown**: trying to make people laugh and cause disruption (possibility due to work avoidance)'I can't do it so the class won't be able to do it either'. OR – I will gain the esteem and friendship of my peers by making them laugh (as I will not be able to gain the esteem and friendship from my teacher so I will behave in a way that meets my instinctive need for relationship and a sense of belonging.

9. **Waiting turns**: Children with ADHD find waiting turns, either in lines or in group work difficult; they act and speak without thinking ('in the head out the mouth') this is the impulsivity of ADHD. They may be clumsy or accident prone; they may break things and accidentally hurt others.

10. **Rule breaking**: Children with ADHD will test out rules and structure: they need to know that they are there. They are not being defiant! They need boundaries and they need to know how far they can go. These children struggle in understanding boundaries as they have poor social observations.

How do we as professionals ‘experience’ children with ADHD?

“He disrupts my lesson”

Children with ADHD are often academically gifted but underachieve as their ADHD impacts on their ‘Attainment’. Key to minimising the risk of disruption of lessons is time resourced induction and relationship building with the teacher. A well planned fun Induction at the start of term and getting the child to tell you about themselves and how their ADHD affects them is critical in establishing the ‘teaching and learning relationship’ between you and the child. It will be easier to understand his behaviour in the context of his ‘intention’ rather than his action: – that is to say the quality of the relationship and the unconditional positive regard will motivate the child to win the approval of the ‘powerful adult’ by responding to the need for approval and praise.

“He prevents other children from learning”

Many schools make use of circle time and this is an ideal forum where children can learn how their behaviour impacts on their peers and help children develop an awareness of consequences but also empathy as they gain awareness of how their actions / behaviour makes another child feel – or indeed a teacher.

Using SEAL and incorporating movement into lessons is key. Recenet research demonstrates that incorporating regular movement activity imbeds learning throughout the entire nervous system and helps to embed the learning across all learning modalities (VAK). Many schools use 5 minutes of ‘dance’ throughout the day. Employing slow deep breathing for three minutes at the start of every lesson will create a ‘physiology of learning’.

In a nutshell – when working with a child’s limited self awareness to effect behaviour change – start with **the biological set point** by teaching them how to change the balance neurotransmitters in their nervous system that makes their biological state conducive to learning.

“I don’t know what’s best – when he is on medication or when it’s worn off. He wont sit still”

Children on ADHD medication will experience noticeable changes in behaviour and cognition depending on the duration impact of the dose and what times of day the medication is given. The teacher must understand the impact of the individual child's medication regime in order to appropriately engage them in learning.

If in doubt contact parents or a psychologist or research the internet to understand the side affects and how medication may be impacting on the child's attainment.

Remember that thousands of years of evolution did not design children to be sat behind desks. We can pathologies children for not being able to do something that is unnatural to them. We can however, enable and facilitate learning that does not exclude children because their physiology makes it more difficult for them behave in a way that in the context of human evolution is sometimes challenging – especially for children with an ADHD biology.

"I just don't have enough time to give" Some children have additional and sometimes complex needs. If you as a professional are struggling with the teaching and learning relationship with a child with ADHD, ask for support from parents, colleagues, educational psychologist and discuss hwo the school might make use of learning support assistants and especially other agencies who may be able to offer support to the child. You are not solely responsible. Collaboration with parents is key in any agreement made with the child around behaviour strategies and learning strategies that suit their learning style and take into account their additional needs.

"**He frustrates me and I find myself getting angry with him".** It is important to be honest with ourselves – sometimes children behave in a way that makes them difficult to teach and difficult to like. When it becomes personal it can cause irreparable damage to a child's learning and achievement. Children – especially those with low self esteem and self confidence will identify the responsible adult / teacher as 'Not liking me'. Children do as adults tell them in order to have their needs met – which is to be nurtured. ***The developmental process in children is relationship driven – not intellect driven.*** It is vital we focus on the behaviour we wish to change and not the 'identity' of the child. It is the behaviours that are inappropriate – not the child themselves. Be careful what language you use; it can cause lasting damage. If a child believes that you do not like them or care about

them they will not attempt to learn or achieve because at that age it is the relationship and the need for nurturing / praise / approval and especially belonging that is the primary motivator for their learning. **No relationship, no learning.**

Using every opportunity for descriptive praise and creating a learning environment where they can experience success is critical. Talk about how you feel with a colleague in a constructive formative way and try not to fall into being critical of individual children.

Understanding that ADHD is not 'bad behaviour' and understanding that children with ADHD live in a constant state of hyper vigilance & anxiety, with greater risk of depression and vast array of comorbid mental health problems may make it easier for you to understand the child's behaviour and have compassion for their difficulty.

Reviewing IEP's and reflexive professional practice is a given. We have a duty of care to all children.

Finally – learn stress management strategies. They improve cognitive function, enhancing learning and they promote pro social behaviour ☺

A LITTLE PEACE OF MIND by Jerry Mills

How can simple words explain, the ceaseless thoughts, the endless pain,
The doubts that you were sometimes sane, while never being sure,
Your thoughts were racing round and round, feet were rarely on the ground, your mind a spring that was over wound and your whole darn life a blur
And though no one ever understood you, how could they when not even you could,
You couldn't slow down, though you wished you could, so you could just unwind,
But a million thoughts would fill your head and distract you from the life you led,
When in fact you'd always wished instead that one day you would find……
A little peace of mind……..

As a kid you went to school but couldn't sit still, soon the teacher had her fill,
So she used her whip to crack your will, and at 6 years old you cried,
But with each New Year what would it bring? Usually the same old thing, Like a puppet tangled in its string you got all tied up inside.
Because while you were always geared to go, the word you always heard was "NO!"
And so you even came to doubt, the things that you might think about,
You'd see yourself as out of place, a loser in the human race,
Until you even lost all hope that you would ever learn to cope,

You couldn't seem to keep your cool, you'd cry inside while playing the fool,
You'd walk alone, behind ahead and soon regret harsh words you'd said
And as the days and weeks and years, fuelled frustrations, festered fears,
Deep within your dark despair, the will to persevere was there…….
So you learned to count the ceiling holes, raced along with restless souls,
While some set sights on dreams and goals, you were running blind,
Until you met a boy who happened to be, diagnosed with ADD and thanks to Michael
*now you see that finally you can find, **a little peace of mind……..***
*Finally I'm learning to find……, **a little peace of mind**……*

Jerry Mills - singer songwriter living with ADHD

Basic Medication Information

Some children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are prescribed medication to help them to focus and concentrate. The first line approach by paediatricians is a stimulant medication. There are many different brands of stimulant medication; the generic term for these medications is methylphenidate hydrochloride.

There are 4 types of medication regularly supplied by the paediatricians they are:

- **Ritalin**
- **Concerta XL**
- **Equasym**
- **Medikinet**

Each medication works differently on each person it is prescribed for.

Ritalin

- It is the most recognised brand of medication for ADHD
- Ritalin comes in fast release only
- It takes between 10 – 30 minutes to take full effect
- It is usually prescribed first to monitor the dosage
- They effect wears off approximately 4 hours after taken
- They come in 5, 10 and 20 mgs

Concerta XL

- Concerta XL is a slow release medication only
- It takes between 20 – 40 minutes to take full effect
- One capsule per day is taken usually with breakfast
- Slow release comes in capsule form 30% is initially released 70% is released throughout the remainder of the day
- The capsule lasts 12 hours
- Capsules come in 18,27 & 36 mgs

Equasym & Equasym XL

- Equasym comes in slow release and fast release
- Fast release is tablet form
- Slow release comes in capsule form 30% is initially released 70% is released throughout the remainder of the day
- Equasym XL lasts 8 hours
- Both the tablets and capsules come in 5, 10 20 & 30mgs

Medikinet and Medikinet XL

- Medikinet comes in slow release and fast release
- Fast release is tablet form
- Slow release comes in capsule form 50% is initially released 50% is released throughout the remainder of the day
- Medikinet XL lasts 8 hours
- Both the tablets and capsules come in 5, 10 20 & 30mgs – (bz[p-p,l mko 40 mgs capsule only)

Stimulant medication is not compatible for all diagnosed with ADHD, there is a non stimulant medication used regularly.

Stratera

- Generic term is atomoxetine hydrochloride
- Considered a second line medication
- Available in capsule form
- Is to be taken whole once or twice a day in the morning
- Comes in 20mgs & 40mgs

Children with ADHD have a difficult enough job coping with everyday situations without the added stress of negative attitudes and difficulties around medication.
Many schools still refuse to support children who are prescribed medication for ADHD and parents are ‘still having’ to go into schools daily to administer their child’s medication.

The impact of this and what is reported by the media has a major impact on children taking this medication. They are seen to be different by their peers, the schools are sometimes not comfortable in giving the very medication the child has to take in order to remain in school and access their education.

Some children have told us that they hate taking their medication because of the 'stigma' this holds. Children and young people get called names such as 'crack head' and 'sniffer' by other children, this then leads to reactive behaviours for which the medication is there to support.

Medication does not have to be an issue for children, with the right support ADHD and medication can live successfully side by side.

Interventions at school

- Knowledge and Understanding of ADHD
- Communication and Partnership working
- School Intervention and Management Strategies
- Behaviour Management Programmes
- Individual coaching approaches
- Medication

Many children with ADHD can be supported effectively in a mainstream classroom by employing some of the ideas and strategies we suggest. These strategies aim at inclusion wherever possible and it is true to say that strategies used for managing children with ADHD will also help in the behaviour management of all children. It is also important to realise that a diagnosis of ADHD does not imply the child's *inability to learn*, however, it is an indication of what help is required to help a child fully access the National Curriculum.

ADHD DOES NOT = CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR IS A RESULT OF UNSUPPORTED AND UNTREATED ADHD.

Classroom Structure

It is important to look at the layout of your classroom when you are 'thinking ADHD', talk to the child and find out how they feel about where they will be sitting and who with. It is unfair to sit a child with ADHD with poor role models as they will follow negative behaviours and will become the scapegoat for the other children.

- Sit children with ADHD by good role models or by buddies who will encourage staying on task and the completion of work. Children will copy positive behaviours and peer encouragement benefits both the child with ADHD and the 'Buddy'.

- Sit the child with ADHD away from distractions such as windows, doors, or at the back of the classroom; this just encourages them to get more distracted.

- Sit away from walking routes and make sure they are not being goaded into reacting e.g. poked in the arm with a pencil by the child behind or tripped up while not paying attention. The child with ADHD will react and usually gets the blame even though they are not always responsible.

- Try to use "traffic lights" whenever possible, for moving around school, on the playground and within the classroom.

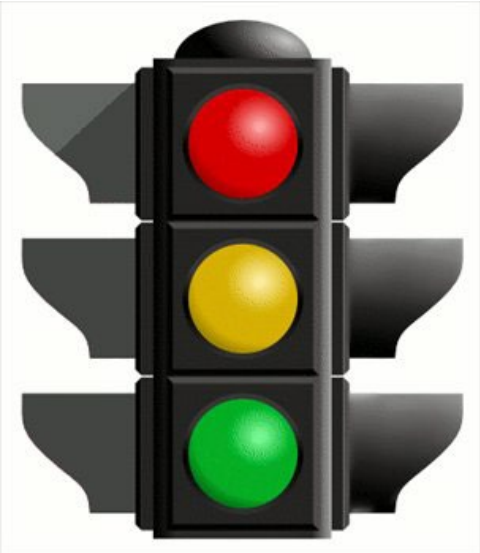
- Identify any triggers for difficult behaviours, unstructured time, change of routine, structure or consistency,

- Clear instructions, settle child with ADHD down with full understanding of task required.

- Manage unstructured play time, children with ADHD will now plan their time, they will just 'let off steam' running into other children and 'spoiling' their games, helping them to plan their play time will help you to manage unstructured time.

- Give constant positive responses to children during play to let them know that this is the good way to enjoy playtime, many children with ADHD do not have the social skills to play with their peers, usually as they have never been taught how to play or have been regularly excluded form developing the social skills they need to fit in and enjoy peer playtime.

- Talk about using traffic lights around school both in the classroom and on the playground. Discuss how they can help everyone **'stop**' and '**think'** before they act, this will reduce impulsive behaviour from all children but will provide structure for children with ADHD.



- Use visual prompts for all children such as making large red apple, large orange and a large green apple, place these visual prompts above the walking space the teacher uses, as he/she walks and stands between these spaces, the children will know when they have to stop and listen (red) when they can get ready to think about answering questions (amber) and when they can put up their hands interact and answer questions (green).

Moving around school:

Give the child with ADHD a **red** card to carry when moving around the school, this encourages them to have to stop and think about where they are going and what they are doing on their journey. When they get to their destination (Hall) they can

receive a green card if they have done a good job, green card = points on reward chart. If they have had strayed from their task, they can have an amber card and then be encouraged to think about how they could have done things differently.

Traffic lights can be placed in the hall, canteen, for lining up on the yard and for quietening down children in the classroom. With a little imagination, there are lots of ways you could use the traffic light system, the important thing is to explain the process effectively and ensure a consistent approach from all staff including welfare staff and volunteers. This will strategy will successfully support the management of impulsivity.

Recommendations for Behaviour Management:

Supervision and Discipline

1. One of the most fundamental and often neglected principles of behaviour management is that you can influence another person unless you have gained their co-operation. It is more than just about a warm and friendly personality. It is about 'sincere' respect for another young individual and your ability to convince them that you have their best interests at heart.

2. The structure of learning activities must allow time for growth – that is learning how to correct mistakes, think and understand.

3. The classroom environment must be 'safe' and non threatening – this is a particular concern who have learning difficulties / additional / complex needs. For them, the very notion of the classroom can be a source of anxiety as they struggle to keep pace with others.

4. Young people need to understand and develop an awareness and concern for other human beings and how their behaviour impacts on others. (This is when a well structured 'induction' at the start of each academic year is **essential.** This can be topped up with termly brief inductions lasting perhaps only half a day as an extended form period for example.

5. If you work in a school then or alternative curriculum setting, then have an evening ‘induction’ for parents so they understand the culture of your institution and ask them to sign a student parent agreement with the school.

6. Young people must be made aware that there are certain rules, that they nor the teacher can change. EG uniform – it is helpful as part of the induction that the reasons for uniform are explained AND discussed by children.

7. Discipline in the classroom is the holy grail of education. Everyone respects a teacher or youth worker who can maintain discipline. However, a pre-occupation with ones own authority can provoke rather than stifle defiance and resistance to discipline.

8. Refrain from ‘nagging’ as it can reinforce the young person’s mistaken concept of how to get attention.

9. Remain calm and don’t argue or get into a debate with the child with ADHD this will just develop into a conflict situation and the child will react. Don’t discuss the problem when you are both emotionally charged. Set time aside to explore this in a way that allows you both to be responsive to a plan for change that leaves no one feeling defeated.

10. Organise and discuss with the child, pre established consequences for poor-behaviour and stick to them. Never assume the child will know or understand the consequences, Consequences of actions need to be explained and followed through, also monitor frequently.

11. Be consistent in the classroom when enforcing rules. This may mean making sure that you are the same with all children who break the rules, don’t be seen to be letting certain children ‘off’ as children will become confused about consequences. However, BE SURE that all children understand the rules and IDEALLY have discussed them and explored there relevance during the induction.

12. Discipline should be appropriate, fair and proportionate. Don’t use ‘threats’ of what you will do ‘If’… Rather explain the consequence and follow through.

13. Close an incident quickly and revive good spirit / good atmosphere. Young people need to know that mistakes once rectified are then forgotten

14. Don't confuse 'orderly with orderliness?. Learning is sometimes a messy process and many teachers like their room neat and tidy at all times. If this is you, maybe you should consider not working with children.

15. Try and understand what is the purpose of the young persons behaviour. All behaviour has a purpose. Often we don't realise what the purpose of some of our behaviour is – even as adults! We can form distorted views of ourselves and our world based on early experience. For example if a young person is 'Avoiding' working because of fear if failure or because they have not understood, or because they know they have made a mistake and don't have the confidence to say so and start again. Human beings often use compensating behaviour – we act in a way that compensates for some real or imagined deficit. Many children with ADHD often excel in the arts and sports – because they need to experience success somewhere in the curriculum! It does not mean they are not intelligent enough to get A's in maths, English and science – it is because their learning style finds these subjects and the way they are generally taught, a little more difficult.

16. Always look for the good in any young person – *if you only look for academic achievement, you may never find it!*

17. Always ENCOURAGE. Don't just praise a completed task or assignment – always encourage, encourage effort, encourage process as well as progress

18. Do not ridicule or criticise. Understand that children with ADHD find keeping control more difficult than other children. Be as generous with praise as you are with challenge.

19. Do not publicly 'remind' children with ADHD to 'take their medication' and don't comment on whether their medication is working or not, this leads to children refusing to take their meds and can lead to name calling, bullying, embarrassment and stigma.

20. Encourage development of social training within the classroom. Don't presume children with ADHD already have the skills needed to be included or that they can easily work together as part of a team.

21. *Never never never* continue to punish a child for something they did last week or last term.

Example of positively worded General School Rules

1. We always should look in the direction we are going when walking down the corridor so we do not bump into others

2. We need to use our quiet voices inside the school building so as not to disturb others

3. When we walk through doors we should always wait our turn sensibly if others are there first

4. We need to try to be considerate and thoughtful to each other at all times for example, putting up our hands when we need attention.

5. If we are upset about something, we need to talk to a teacher or buddy so we can find a solution to our problem.

The purpose of 'positive' rule making is that **'do not'** rules make the assumption that all children will know what they should do without being told. They may **'follow'** the rules but may not know **why** they are following them. All they know is that if they **don't follow them** they are **punished**. We want to encourage positive behaviour from <u>all</u> children not just for the 'rule breakers' who like children with ADHD are impulsive, non thinking risk takers.

It is very important that children with ADHD know and understand what 'behaviours' you want from them. They need praise, support, encouragement and coaching in positive behaviours, not just punishment for their unacceptable behaviours.

These 5 Rules should be reviewed and negotiations can take place leading to new appropriate and relevant rules. Understanding the participation and purpose of rules will encourage children to stick to them.

Use laminated posters and if possible give them to children to take home.

If you assign homework – always do this on the same day each week.

Posters for young people's bedrooms also support them in enabling them to remember what they need to take to school each morning and what days they need to remember their PE kit or home work.

Questions we should ask ourselves in support of ADHD

Do… I use good eye contact and good body messages?

Do… I start each day as a new day?

Do I…give short breaks to prevent stress and frustration?

Do I…give coping strategies when needed, children with ADHD need them?

Do I…get into arguments with children with ADHD in the classroom?

Do I…arrange my classroom to avoid confrontational routes?

Do I…always keep channels open for communication/

Do I…always try for a win win situation?

Do I…give clear directions or instructions?

Do I…expect a child with ADHD to be totally silent?

Do I…expect a child with ADHD to not fidget?

Do I…allow the child with ADHD to make it right and not hold over to tomorrow what has happened today?

Do I…reward only for task completion? What about reward for 'progress'?

Do I…offer opportunities for genuine choices, 'either or' is not always a genuine choice?

Do I… make sure behaviour demands are differentiated?

Do I…give instructions in a clear and non-confusing manner?

Do I…use non-verbal communication, a nod, a thumbs up or a smile to reinforce spoken instructions?

Do I…give a structured environment where there is a dependable routine?

Do I…give lots of 'descriptive praise'?

Do I…use a calming and informative voice so as not to confuse or threaten?

Do I…make changes using small well planned steps?

Do I…reward for self management not just for perfection?

Do I…give the child with ADHD short work periods with short term goals?

Do I…remind children to stop, think and then act?

Do I…anticipate difficulties or do I wait for them to happen?

Do I…Give praise for partial success?

Do I…tell parents of the positive things the child has done that day, not only the negative?

Do I…recognise ‘triggers’ and respond effectively?

Do I…acknowledge ADHD characteristics and look to manage them?

I HAVE GOT ADHD. THIS IS HOW YOU CAN HELP ME

Thom Hartmann has written a book called Hunters and Farmers, he has talked about ADHD people as being hunters. This means that they have short attention spans, but can stay intensely focussed if pursuing an activity that engages them (think of computer games.) They may be impatient, have a poor sense of timing and act without thinking of the consequences. Hartmann argues that you can rethink these characteristics in a positive light. Hunters have to throw themselves into activities, change direction quickly and not waste time on the boring and the humdrum. In contrast, farmers need to be steady and dependable, think through a strategy from start to finish, stick at it and be good team players who look after details, applying the qualities of patience and staying power. We operate in an education system and a world that values the farmer over the hunter. However, without the hunter's input we would not have risk takers, inventors, entrepreneurs or comedians that keep the rest of the world on their toes.

Help me to focus

Look at me, and speak to me clearly.

Give me structure and routine

Let me know in advance if you are going to change things or if things are going to be different.

Don't rush me or I will get confused

Rushing me will only stress me out I will forget the things I need to do, to take or what I need to do next.

If I get stuck please help me

Don't leave me to struggle, I won't always be able to work things out for myself, give me instructions one at a time and let me repeat them back to you.

Tell me when I am getting it right

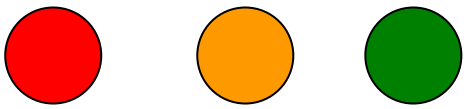
Give me small achievable goals and tell me I am doing well at least 20 times a day, this will let me know I am doing things right.

Ignore me when I am being silly or irritating

I don't do it to upset you; I need you to tell me what you want from me rather than always telling me off for getting things wrong. I will have bad days but I want you to let me have a fresh start every day.

REMIND ME OF THE TRAFFIC LIGHTS

STOP – THINK- ACT



ADHD IS REAL……

Nine year old James, fidgeting in his seat, was having a bad day. His name was already on the board and the lesson was only 10 minutes old. How was he going to survive the next 40 minutes? The lesson was on History and James liked history. He 'liked all the stuff about wars, fighting and castles'. Things in the past seemed so much more interesting than now. The teacher asked a question and James knew the answer. Straight away he burst out of his seat, his hand pumping furiously,

desperate to get the answer out. His teacher ignored him and asked another child for the answer.

James slumped back into his chair, totally exasperated. Billy the child who was asked the question got the answer wrong and so did another child who was asked.
The teacher turned to James and said, "do you know the answer to the question James? You had your hand up"
James, fiddling with his pencil said quickly, what question Miss?
For James, the moment had passed, previously he had the answer, but later he could not even remember the question.
Please don't expect more from children with ADHD than they are capable of….
(Fintan O'Regan, How to teach and manage children with ADHD 2002)

By Charles Swindoll

"*The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company…a church…a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past…we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude…I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you …we are in charge of our attitudes".*

Positive Psychology

This new and popular field of psychology examines what makes people successful. The research tells us that more than qualifications, 'happiness' determines success. The power of our emotional state influences whether we achieve our potential. 'I can IS more important than IQ'.

Many successful people with ADHD such as Mozart, Einstein, Richard Branson, Olympic Swimmer Michael Phelps, and many artists, actors and singers have

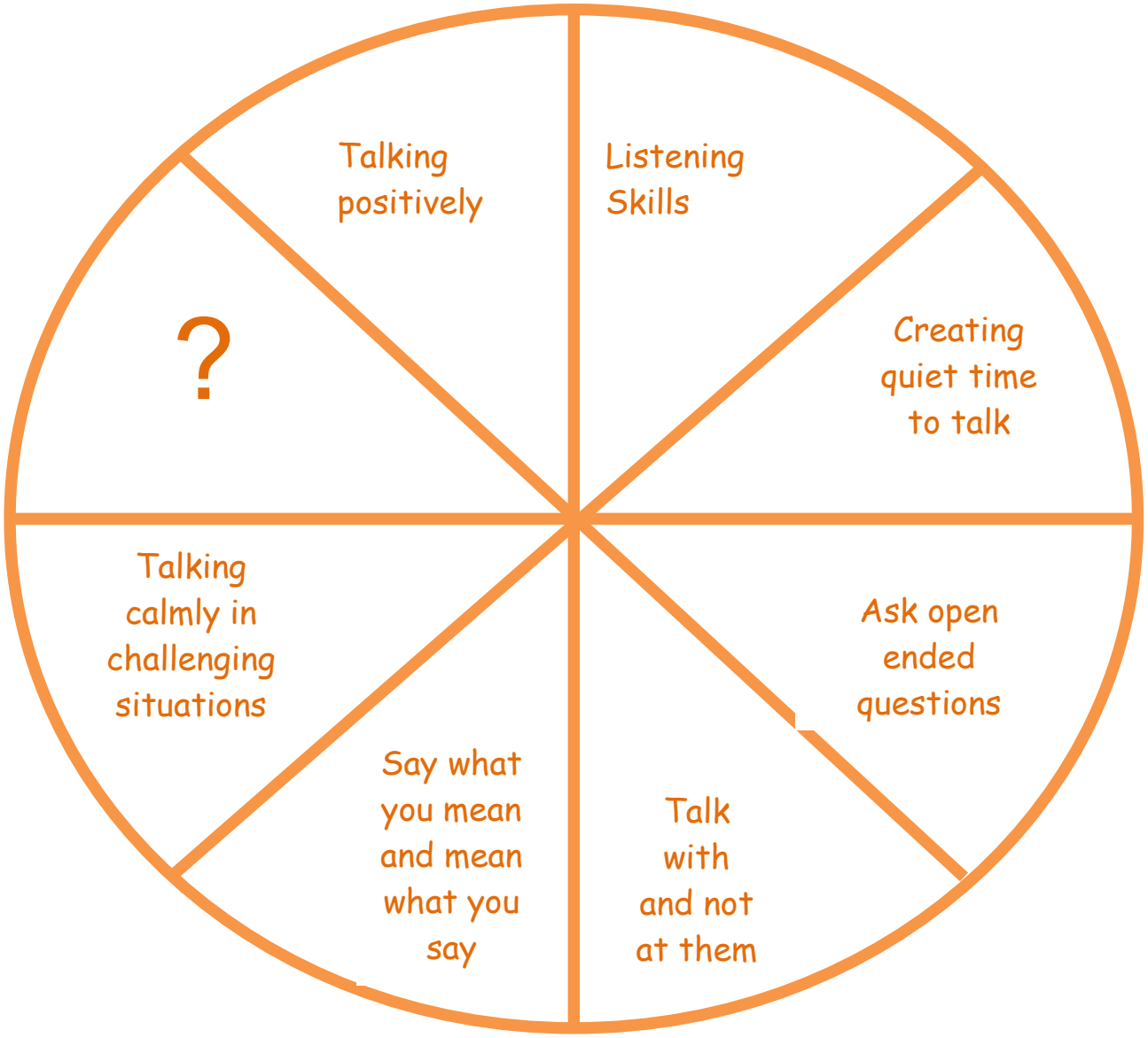
achieved their potential through having belief and a positive attitude. They often ‘compensate’ for their deficits by excelling on one area of life they know they are good at.

If the developmental process in the human species is relationship driven, it begs the question, why is so much of the schooling and socialisation process focussed on the development of intellect? It seems that what we learn about relationships (the genetic imperative in human development), we learn from adults; – its an awesome responsibility, – and the most important one for any child care professional. **FEELINGS INFLUENCE THOUGHTS, WORDS AND ACTIONS. LEARN TO MANAGE THE FEELINGS AND YOU CAN MASTER LEARNING!**

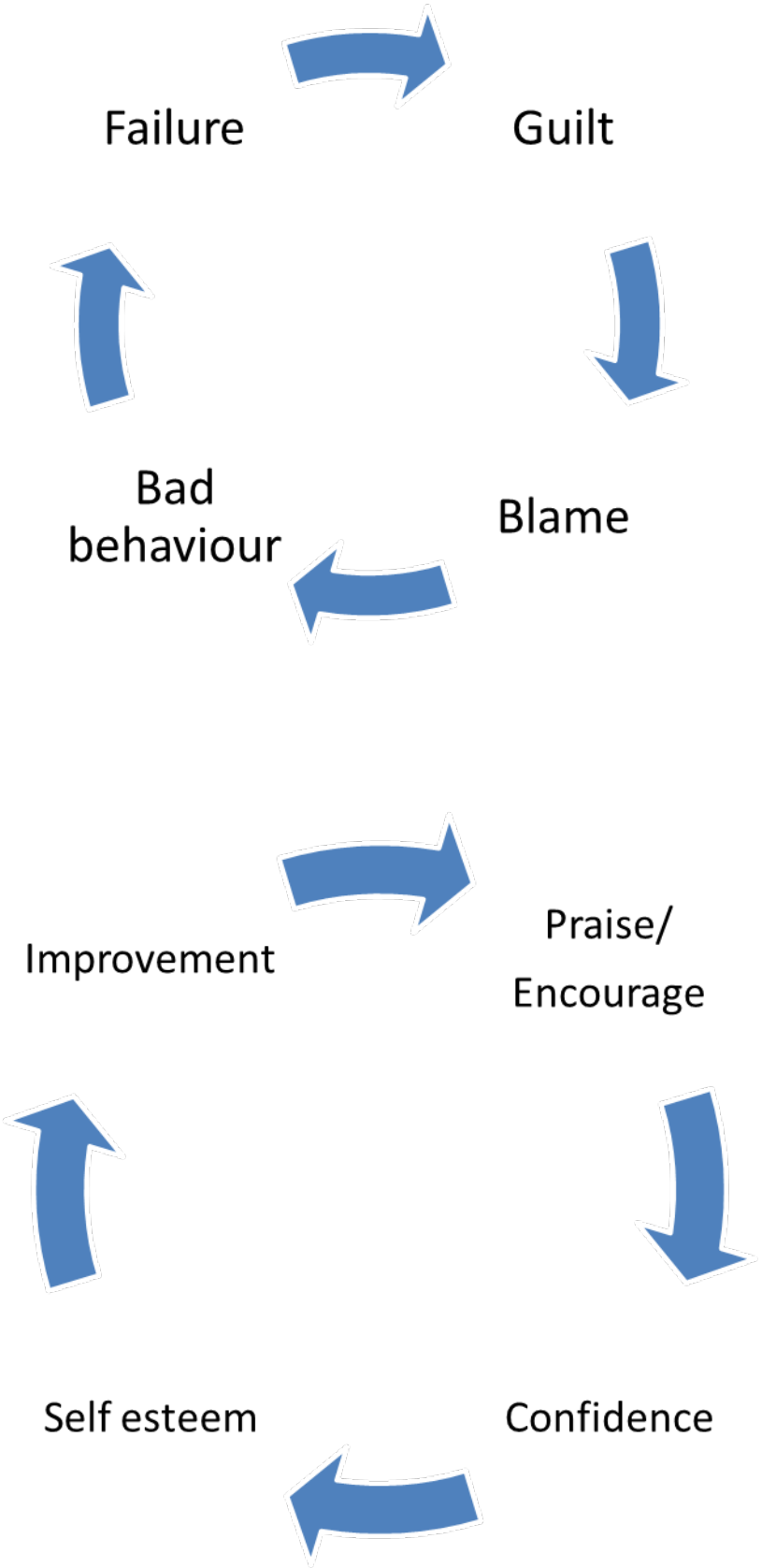
Appendices

Strategies for supporting effective learning with ADHD

1.Orange Strategy Wheel



2. From failure to 'improvement'



3. Earn the Right

Earn the Right is a very powerful, simple strategy. It works according to what behaviours you want to promote and what behaviours you want to reduce.

To look at it you may think that it won't work and that you have tried reward strategies before. We offer you a tool box of strategies that have been proved to be very effective for young people with ADHD and in fact can be used with anybody.

It works by putting a list of behaviours that you want to encourage across the top of the page and list underneath this of behaviours you want to discourage. An example is given below.

Polite/helpful Kind Cooperative making the right choices

Violence swearing aggression

- Explain to the young person what you are going to do and when the positives points outweigh the negative points, you will reward him/her at a time that is convenient to yourself. Don't tell them what you will be doing – as this may put more pressure on you)
- Every time the young person shows positive behaviour , praise them, describing exactly what you like about what they have don, e.g. ' It was very kind of

you to take your books back to the shelf.' This may be simplistic but it is ADHD friendly - most of us take good behaviour for granted. The young person might have difficulty also accepting this praise as he/she is so used to negative comments. Don't give up, this method has worked for many teachers and parents in the past.

- You can have this list in view and use it all the time, eventually it will become second nature but this may take some time.

- When the young person carries out an act from the bottom (negative) line, mark the sheet, with no comments made.

- When the young person does something positive then the mark on the negative line can be crossed out. This way the positive behaviour is never overlooked or goes unnoticed.

- It may take some time to get used to and for the young person to become engaged with it, after all, it is another change.

4. Plan and structure

Anticipate, plan and review – what went well and how could we have done this better?



- **Time plans - Young people with ADHD are often visual learners, lots of writing puts them off. Have fun and make your own gadgets together to help remember what to do. Timetables and charts are very ADHD friendly…**

Order	Tasks to do	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						



Weekly Target Sheet

Name:



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 Target					
Week 2 Target					
Week 3 Target					
Week 4 Target					
Week 5 Target					
Week 6 Target					

Please note that the target cards are a part of the ADHD foundation 6 week course surrounding management and self awareness. We would be most grateful id you could actively monitor the efforts and achievements of the targets the child and the foundation have collectively set in order for us to evaluate the levels of progress

Adults perspectives of ADHD – knowing how it is for the parent

Confused

- Where does this ADHD come from?
- He's so different from other kids
- I'm relieved he's got a diagnosis but where do we go from here?

Unpopular

- I can't take him anywhere – he'll kick off
- He never gets invited to parties/social get-togethers/groups of friends
- He gets on everyone's nerves and can't understand why they get angry

Stressed

- I had one hour's sleep last night and the school rang me to say they can't cope
- The family don't understand. I'm on my own with this problem
- I can't make him understand what he needs to do to get ready

Angry

- Who's fault is it he's like this
- Why does no-one want to understand or help?
- If they're not blaming him they're blaming me

Guilty

- I know he can't help it
- I know I shouldn't be shouting all the time
- I shouldn't be giving him medication
- I should be giving him medication
- Nothing I do seems to work

Anxious

- What will happen when he gets older/leaves school
- It's not safe to let him out
- I'll read everything on the Internet for all the best experts to fix this

Stupid

- Why can't I control/influence his behaviour?
- I feel everyone is looking at me when we are out together
- People only tell me what's wrong with him

Frustrated

- Why doesn't he listen?
- I have to tell him 20 times to do a task
- I wish someone would try to understand

Triggers

You might not think it - but no young person misbehaves 24 hours a day! There are trigger points that influence what will happen. When you get to know and anticipate them it makes it easier to avoid them.

Possible

- Time of day- getting ready for school, coming home from school, mealtimes, expected time to come home at night
- Place – restaurant, doctor's surgery, when you are on the phone
- People – siblings, granny, neighbour, teacher?

Positive and negative attention

Imagine the young person playing quietly from start to finish. Then imagine him moaning or shouting. When should you react?

Normally we react when things go wrong and leave things be when all is quiet. Now, we are recommending that you reverse this. Give attention for everything positive and don't react to.

Negative attention seeking.

You will learn that there is a difference between *reacting* and *responding.*

A reaction is a knee jerk and not thought through – based on your feelings at that moment.

A response is when you consider what you will do, given your knowledge of ADHD and the outcome you want. When you start thinking like this you will notice it has positive spin offs for other relationships – a cranky partner, a miserable colleague!

Slowly, gradually you are beginning to take control

Descriptive praise

1. Notice a behaviour that you want to see more of
2. Make eye contact
3. Smile
4. Move near to young person – be on same level
5. **Tell** young person you are pleased and what he has *done* to please you
6. Praise young person *immediately* after the behaviour
7. Do this 20 times per day
8. Tell someone else about it – in young person's earshot
9. Jot down positive behaviours you have noticed in the week to remind you
10. Use ENCOURAGEMENT as well as praise

This will help your young person understand what is expected of him and do repeat performances! Remember it's the effort the young person puts in (not necessarily the outcome) that requires encouragement and praise.

Always be on the look out for things to praise

- Remember the tiny **But**. "Ah!, Well done for getting out of bed when I asked you ***but*** you haven't cleaned your teeth." A real dampener!
- Praise effort not just accomplishment
- Be specific. Your idea of "good" or "tidy" or "clean" will not be the same as his!
- Praise them for just sitting on the couch if they normally spend time kicking their sister!
- Praise every sociable behaviour –sharing, helping, good manners, overcoming negative ADHD behaviours – waiting in turn, holding back when provoked.
- Praise what they are **not** doing . "You haven't sworn all day. I'm proud that you're learning good manners"
- If they normally flick food, run off, answer back, get in and out of bed, praise them each time they **don't** do it
- If the intention is good but the outcome is not, praise what they are trying to achieve. "That was very observant of you to point out that man dropping litter however not everyone is like you. When he swore at us it shows he's the one with the problem. Next time it might be an idea to come and discuss with me your feelings and ideas rather than shouting them out.
- Greet your young person with a grin not a grimace
- Pass the time of day with them and remind them of their good qualities

Examples of praise

1. Sharing
2. Talking nicely
3. Complying with requests
4. Good eating behaviour at dinner
5. Going to bed after the first request
6. Playing quietly
7. Solving a problem
8. Turning down the television
9. Doing chores
10. Coming home from school on time
11. Getting up promptly in the morning
12. Making it through the night without wetting the bed
13. Making the bed
14. Picking up clothes
15. Putting toys away
16. Walking slowly
17. Doing homework
18. Getting dressed
19. Helping a friend
20. Answering the phone politely
21. Introducing yourself politely
22. Being a good team member
23. Sharing a feeling
24. Listening carefully

You are not overdoing it. Young people with ADHD get blame and criticism. You are just shifting the balance

Rewards

Also known as positive reinforcers of good behaviour.

- Don't fall in to the trap of confusing **things** for rewards. The use of things is best restricted to reward special, difficult or sustained effort by the young person.
- What you consider to be a reward may not be the same as his idea. It's best to vary the rewards so that they don't get stale.
- He needs to *feel* rewarded. Your time is the best reward of all.
- Aim to get the young person to *enjoy* pleasing you, rather than winding you up!
- Make ordinary, normal things into rewards – a chippy dinner, watching a favourite TV programme, helping around the house – "I'll let you wash the dishes if you bring the plates out" may work for a little while but be aware the rewards will also need to be age related

Types of reward

- **Activities –** playing board games/cards with them, swimming, involvement with family activities
- **Privileges –** staying up later, choice of meals, outings
- **Interactive –** hugs, encouragement, praise, smiles

- **Things** – computer games, cd's dvd's items relating to their hobbies (these do not have to be expensive)

Special time - What is it?
A boss free zone**.**10-15 minutes per day when you and your young person enjoy uninterrupted interaction. If the rest of the day has been stressful, at least one piece of time will be positive. It could be anything from a board game, Karaoke, dancing, cooking, painting, reading, talking etc.

Why?

- To enjoy yourselves
- To build affection and trust
- To get closer and learn to value each other more

How?

- Young person takes the lead
- "Show me a game we can do together"
- Join in, smile, do a running commentary – "I'm enjoying this, that looks good, you're doing that so well
- Don't nag, interrupt, give advice or be negative. Don't make it your game, don't instruct
- Explain it is for X mins. Give 5 minute warning toward the end and carry on normal play afterwards if you really want to.
- You may think that your child is too old for this but young people with ADHD function *emotionally*, at a younger level, you may be surprised to find that your child genuinely enjoys you spending time together, but they may be resistant at first.

When?

- Have a regular slot, maybe after tea

What if young person is not interested or disruptive?

- If young person does not want to join in, be friendly and start up the activity on your own – he's likely to want to join in!
- If he disrupts, say "*When* there is less disruption, *then* we can continue."
- Play stops if behaviour is dangerous.

Rules, consequences, active ignoring and dealing with oppositional behaviour.

1. How should rules be expressed?

   Rules should be stated in a positive way. This helps your young person learn what to do and not just what not to do.

2. How can you help your young person remember the rules?

- Write them down in a public area in your home / nursery etc
- Point to the rules if they misbehave
- Tie rules to rewards.
- State clearly the rule and get young person to repeat it back
- Discuss specific, short term consequences for complying and breaking the rules
- **Obey the rules yourself!**

3. Do you need rules for: …….

- Getting up in the morning
- Time of going to bed
- TV
- Fights and arguments
- Swearing
- Tidiness
- When people visit
- School work
- Answering the phone

You cannot enforce a lot of rules all at once. To start with, choose two or three that are **easy to do or important for your family.** Encourage your young person to problem solve or **negotiate policies.**

4. For rule breaking, get young person's attention, say "You've broken the rule about X" and ask them how they could have done it differently.
5. Remind them of consequences. If they co-operate praise them

Consequences

Your aim should be for your young person to learn self control. This can only be achieved if he learns that actions have consequences. Here's an exercise to try:

Negative reaction

- Look at the problem. E.g. young person comes in late from school.
- Reaction – yell at young person
- Then what? – young person runs out
- Who gets pulled in? parents, neighbours, possibly police
- What is the result? More shouting, grounding, anger on all sides
- Final conclusion – no-one is in control, young person is resentful and parent is furious. Result, lose - lose

Positive response

- Look at problem – young person is late from school
- Response – use “I” statement to say “I am worried” and remind him of the rule that states, he/she must tell you where he is going
- Then what? He/she cannot go out that night, but ensure he/she is occupied and not bored, also ensure he does not feel trapped. Encourage him to reflect on his/her actions (when calm) on the consequences his behaviour has.
- Who is involved? Parent and young person
- What is the result? Young person faces immediate consequence for his/her action
- Final conclusion – he/she has to rehearse what he/she will do differently the following day. If he/she complies he/she can go out.

(Adapted from A Roberts - 2001)

Poster or 'Vision Board'

Use this identity / self concept tool either as a poster or a vision board to help develop the self concept and promote pro social behaviours



Childs Name

_____

D.O.B

_____

Eye colour

_____

Hair colour

_____

What special talents do they have?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What I love about my Self?

_____

_____

What I am good at in school/college?

_____

_____

What makes me proud?

_____

_____

My 5 Goals

_____

_____

_____

_____

Active ignoring

Use this for annoying, irritating behaviours – giving cheek, moaning, arguing, pestering, silly noises etc. It cannot be used where health and safety are at stake. Your ADHD young person loves an argument and will have more energy than you to see it through to a conclusion. Imagine the argument as a fire. You can either fan the flames or extinguish the fire. In his book “123 magic “Tom Phelan writes about the **talk, persuade, argue, yell and hit** reactions that make a bad situation worse. It is worth reading his book to look at a useful alternative response to undesired behaviours. Here’s how to use active ignoring:

- Explain once in a short sentence that you will listen when he/she speaks nicely
- Don’t make eye contact or pull a face and certainly don’t laugh or smirk.
- Say nothing. Don’t argue and don’t get involved in drawn out discussions.
- Keep a distance between you and young person
- Busy yourself with something else to help you ignore.
- Stop ignoring when the bad behaviour stops. Don’t make a fuss. Be neutral.
- Do not refer to bad behaviour again
- Don’t prolong this and don’t start it unless you can see it through. If you react half way, young person will learn that if he does it long enough eventually you will cave in and this will reinforce his bad behaviour.
- Eventually the young person will learn that good behaviour wins praise and attention and bad behaviour gets him nowhere at all.

Dealing with oppositional behaviour.

If you have been following all the previous suggestions, your young person’s oppositional behaviour will be decreasing. There will be times however when things get out of hand. Young people with ADHD live in a maelstrom of emotion. Anger is a normal emotion and it is not wrong to feel angry. It is what they do about it that matters.

When your young person is hot with anger they are in no state to listen. ADHD often invites over-control by adults. The young person becomes more rebellious and tries to reclaim control from the adult, resulting in friction. Here's what to do:

- Avoid head on confrontations by using "cool" responses
- Avoid arguing. Allow them a few minutes to let off steam
- Never back the young person into a corner.
- Give them option of going into a pre appointed room to cool off. Call it "the cooler" or "time out" room. It is not a punishment room but a place where young person has the opportunity to regain control.
- Slow down impulsivity by creating space to suggest alternatives
- Aim to achieve a "win-win" result.
- Be part of the same team. "Look. We've got a problem with this. Let's see how we can deal with it differently."
- Young person may feel frightened and panicky afterwards. You could suggest that you give him/her a hug, this will help him/her feel safe.
- Teach your young person to breathe slowly, quietly and steadily. When angry, his breathing will be shallow and disjointed. Teach him relaxation
- Discuss feelings and scenarios – eg by watching multi media /TV together. Talk about how characters manage their feelings and the consequences for themselves and others when they respond in different ways.
- When your young person with ADHD learns how to be "emotionally literate" he will have a head start on his peers in learning to interact with others throughout their lives
- You are a role model for your young person. If you show calm and safe ways of problem solving, your young person will learn from your success. If you as a parent cannot control outbursts, your young person will also pick this up.
- Teach your young person that for every problem there is a solution

Advice for Parents

Do:

- Tackle one thing at a time – forget the sate of his/her room, his/her smelliness, his/her language
- Say what you mean and carry it out, Otherwise don't say it
- Use descriptive praise at every opportunity – thank you for that, I am really proud of you, you have proved me wrong, nice one lad, I have always said you are a helpful/kind/polite/sharing lad. Well done! You were fantastic! Look at you! I am over the moon! It feels great because everything is changing for the better. Etc etc
- Reward his efforts – if he tells you where he is, even if he is not supposed to be out, say, "Thanks for telling me where you are. Remember, you will get your reward / treat when you get in on time."
- Even if he swears tell him/her you are made up he/she has come home!
- Get near him/her and smile, lightly touch him/her on the shoulder
- Keep sentences short – VERY SHORT
- Let him know you are in control even if you don't feel it
- Tell him/her "OK we have got a problem but we can solve it"
- Keep your voice even
- Remember the times when you get it RIGHT

DON'T:

- Tell him/her you can't cope
- Tell them they are useless
- Swear at him/her
- Shout
- Hit
- Change the rules
- Use empty threats
- Plead and beg
- Use emotional language when there is a drama going on
- Set them up to fail "Promise you will never do that again"

Points to consider for parents and carers

- **Remember** this is not about you and your feelings. However desperate you feel. **He/she needs to feel that you are in control – whatever he/she says**. Boundaries are about love, not punishment.
- When he/she is angry, tell him calmly "When you are ready, I am here to listen to you"
- When his/her defences are down and he is crying out for help, give him your full and undivided attention. "OK let's talk"
- Find a quiet place with no interruptions – say "OK son, I am here to listen" You could even write down the points he is making
- Don't interrupt or ask him **why** – because he/she will likely say "**because**" ……. And justify it back to themselves
- Reflect back "You seem very sad / angry / let down about that" or "That must have been very frightening / hurtful / upsetting"
- After something has gone wrong and things have settled, say "OK, how can we have done things differently?"
- At this stage you are helping him clarify things. Keep your voice reassuring and controlled. Accept that what he feels is the truth for them.
- Don't say 'yes but…' you are just a tool to help him solve his problems, it's not how you feel about them
- Jot down three issues and look for solutions, however small
- Watch the soaps on TV and talk about the characters' feelings / reactions.

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