

WHAT IS ADHD?



- ? **Signs**
- ? **Diagnosis**
- ? **What to do**

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder which affects a child's ability to exert age-appropriate self-control. It is characterized by persistent patterns of inattentive, impulsive, and sometimes hyperactive behavior, and is frequently accompanied by emotional regulation challenges. Children with ADHD have little control over these behaviors as they stem from underlying neurological differences. They arise due to an impaired ability to inhibit and regulate attention, behavior and emotions; to reliably recall information in the moment; to plan and problem solve; to self-reflect and self-monitor; and to self-soothe.

ADHD can cause significant functional difficulties throughout the lifespan and in all areas of life, and without appropriate intervention can lead to underachievement and school failure. However, with evidence-based treatment and support, children with ADHD can embrace their strengths and interests, learn to manage their challenges and live a full and rewarding life.

Signs of Inattentive subtype of ADHD

- Children with inattentive symptoms tend to:
- Struggle to focus and concentrate on information or tasks they find boring or tedious
- Experience mind-wandering and tend to be frequently interrupted by unrelated thoughts
- Are easily distracted by external stimuli thereby missing instructions or relevant information
- Have trouble remembering information
- May often forget to bring home assignment books to school or other important learning resources
- Struggle to pay close attention to detail and make careless mistakes
- Fail to finish tasks or to achieve their goals
- Avoid or seem reluctant to engage in task requiring sustained effort.

Signs of impulsive subtype of ADHD

- Children with hyperactive-impulsive symptoms tend to:
- Fidget, tap objects, restlessly wiggle legs and generally move around more than others
- Talk excessively, blurt out answers or interrupt others.
- Children may also make loud noises or narrate their actions respond quickly to situations without anticipating the consequences (i.e. make rash decisions or rush in without waiting to hear all of the instructions)
- Impatiently badger their parent, partner, friends etc. when they want something
- Find boredom intolerable and constantly seek stimulation

ADHD:

DIAGNOSIS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- To be diagnosed with ADHD the symptoms of inattention and/or hyperactivity and impulsivity, the aforementioned symptoms would need to:
- Be excessive for the developmental age of the child, have been present before the age of 12 and must have persisted for longer than 6 months
- Must be seen to be negatively impacting the child's ability to play, learn and participate in social functions meaningfully.

For example, it impacts the child's ability to sit and complete class assignments or listen to the instructor. Another example during play is when the child never seems to follow through with a single play activity leaving toys sprawled all over the floor without sustained focus on any activity.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD HAS ADHD

If you suspect your child might have ADHD, please make an appointment to see a licensed child development expert who can diagnose the disorder, such as a psychiatrist, developmental pediatrician or a licensed psychologist.

Do you know a child who may need a professional assessment due to ADHD symptoms?

We are here to help; Nurture Child Development Clinic is a specialist developmental psychology service for children who struggle with behavior, learning or are experiencing delays in their development.



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