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## WHAT IS ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)?

- ADHD is medical condition that makes it hard for children and adolescents to pay attention, stay focused and control their behaviors
- ADHD influences your child's ability to organize and remember things
- Often children and adolescents with ADHD feel restless, lost, overloaded with information, impatient (it's hard to wait), feel more picked on by parents and teachers, and unpopular
- These behaviors make it challenging for children and adolescents to function at school and home as well as make it hard to get along with other kids

### Symptoms of ADHD

- Trouble paying attention
- Trouble focusing on one thing at a time
- Trouble keeping still
- Trouble thinking before acting
- Trouble keeping track of things
- Trouble learning in school



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## WHO EXPERIENCES ADHD?

- Approximately 11% of U.S. children ages 4-17 are diagnosed with ADHD
- Boys are diagnosed with ADHD more than twice the rate of girls
- As your child becomes a teen and an adult, trouble thinking before acting, keeping track of things, and focusing on one thing at a time often continues, while his/her/their ability to keep still typically improves

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### RESOURCES & RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

*Learning to Slow Down and Pay Attention* by Nadeau and Ellen Dixon

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd.shtml>

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*Defiant Children* by Russell Barkley

*Parenting Hyperactive Preschoolers* by Elizabeth Harvey, Sharonne Herbert, & Rebecca Stowe

*Putting on the Breaks: Understand and Taking Control of Your ADD or ADHD* by Patricia Quinn and Judith Stern

*Taking Charge of ADHD* by Russell Barkley

*Your Defiant Child* by Russell Barkley and Christine Benton

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## TIPS FOR PARENTS

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- **Catching your child being good.** Notice the things you like about your child's behavior and express your appreciation of the good behavior.
- **Reward your child's good behavior and ignore negative behavior.** If your child is behaving, give positive attention to it, while you ignore misbehavior. Note: Do not ignore dangerous behavior.
- **Use clear commands.** Be clear, specific, and tell your child what to do (for example, "turn off the video games now," "walk please" (instead of saying don't run). Use one command at a time, multiple steps can be difficult for the child to follow.
- **Use consequences and rewards.** Make sure consequences and rewards are used immediately, are things your child cares about, and are things your child can follow through on each time. To decrease or increase a behavior, you want to connect the consequence or reward with the behavior as soon as possible. Rewards can be simple, like choosing dessert at dinner. Consequences should be short, like removing video games for 1 hour or 1 day.
- **Identifying and labeling emotions.** Children are born with the ability to express emotion, but not the ability to know how to appropriately express them. Teach your child about emotion and ways to express emotion by commenting on your child's, yours, and others' emotions (for example, "I am very sad today," "you are mad, and it is not ok to hit others").
- **Developing routines.** Help your child develop strategies to organize himself/herself/themselves. These might include a written daily schedule, a homework notebook, etc.
- **Give frequent breaks.** When your child is doing a difficult task, such as homework, build in frequent, short (5 minutes) breaks to help concentration.
- **Find treatment for your child.** Your child may benefit from parent training, therapy/counseling and/or medications. Talk with your child's doctor to decide what will work best for your family.