

UNDERSTANDING ADHD

WHAT IS ADHD?

- ➡ ADHD is **A**ttention **D**eficit **H**yperactivity **D**isorder.
- ➡ It is a condition affecting a part of the brain that controls movement and behaviour.
- ➡ It is a long-term challenge that makes it hard for children to concentrate and control their impulses. This affects how they learn and interact with others and can have a big impact on the whole family's daily life.
- ➡ ADHD is **NOT**
 - ❌ Poor parenting
 - ❌ A negative label
 - ❌ Same in all children
 - ❌ Child being difficult or naughty

WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS FOR ADHD?

The risk factors for ADHD are well-established, but the exact causes remain unclear.

GENETIC

- ✔ passed down from parents to children



ENVIRONMENTAL

- ✔ born early (premature)
- ✔ low birth weight
- ✔ exposed to drugs or alcohol before birth

FACTS

- ➡  **One** in 20 children in Australia have ADHD.
- ➡ It is more common in boys than girls.

SIGNS OF ADHD

- ✓ daydream a lot
- ✓ talk too much
- ✓ have trouble taking turns
- ✓ forget or lose things a lot
- ✓ make careless mistakes or take unnecessary risks
- ✓ have difficulty getting along with others
- ✓ squirm or fidget
- ✓ have a hard time resisting temptation

SYMPTOMS OF ADHD

INATTENTION

- ✓ difficulty concentrating
- ✓ moving from one task to another without completion
- ✓ forgetting instructions

IMPULSIVITY

- ✓ acting without thinking
- ✓ talking over the top of others
- ✓ losing control of emotions easily
- ✓ being accident prone

OVERACTIVITY

- ✓ constant fidgeting and restlessness

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

A diagnosis of ADHD must be made by a trained and experienced health professional. If you are concerned about your child, see your GP initially. They can arrange a referral to a paediatrician or a child psychologist, who will be able to assess your child.



The Children's Health and Wellbeing Local is jointly funded by the Victorian Government and the Australian Government through the Head to Health Kids Initiative.

HOW TO HELP?

- ✓ Keep instructions brief and clear. Ask the child to repeat the instruction to make sure they understand it.
- ✓ Highlight important points in written information using asterisks (*), capital letters or bold text.
- ✓ Keep the work area as uncluttered as possible.
- ✓ Sit the child near the front of the classroom.
- ✓ Provide one-to-one instruction as often as possible.
- ✓ A class buddy, who gets along well with the child, can be helpful to reinforce instructions and directions.
- ✓ Schedule the most important learning to take place during the child's best concentration time(s). This is usually in the morning.
- ✓ Give the child a checklist for what they need to do.
- ✓ Keep choices to a minimum.
- ✓ Build rest breaks into activities, e.g. a five-minute break for each 30 minutes of activity.
- ✓ Allow use of a non-disruptive fidget toy which can be kept at the child's desk.
- ✓ Have a fixed routine and keep classroom activities well organised and predictable.
- ✓ Set achievable goals and encourage the child to take part in activities where they will experience success.
- ✓ Acknowledge the child's achievements by congratulating them verbally and in written ways, such as notes or certificates.
- ✓ Encourage the child to join activities where 'supervised socialisation' is available, such as Scouts or sporting groups.

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to know more



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