

As the parent of a child who has ADHD, the information below is what I want you to know about ADHD so you can help my child, who is so much more than ADHD, learn and thrive at school. Please share your successes and questions with me so we can work together with my child to unlock his potential. Thank you, a Children's Mercy Parent

A Few Typical ADHD Symptoms

- **Impaired response inhibition, impulse control**, or the capacity to delay gratification. This is often noted in the individual's inability to stop and think before acting.
- Individuals with ADHD in many cases are noted to be **excessively fidgety, restless, and "on the go."**
- **Poor sustained attention or persistence of effort to tasks.** This problem often arises when the individual is assigned boring, tedious, protracted, or repetitive activities that lack intrinsic appeal to the person.

Less Commonly Understood Symptoms of ADHD

- Remembering to do things or **working memory.** Working memory refers to the capacity to hold information in mind that will be used to guide one's actions, either now, or at a later time.
- **Difficulties with regulation of emotions**, motivation, and arousal. It is not that the emotions they experience are inappropriate, but that those with ADHD are more likely to publicly manifest the emotions they experience than would someone else. They seem less able to "internalize" their feelings, to keep them to themselves, and even to moderate them when they do so as others might do. Consequently, they are likely to appear to others as less emotionally mature, more reactive with their feelings, and more hot-headed, quick-tempered, and easily frustrated by events.
- Children with ADHD are likely to overestimate their competence in certain daily activities, demonstrating a **positive illusory bias.**
- Children with ADHD generally have a **developmental lag** of 30 percent, which means that parents and teachers should assume that these kids have an emotional age 30 percent below their actual age.
- Time management is challenging for children with ADHD. This is referred as **time blindness.** They tend to live in "time present"—or NOW. "Time past" rarely enters their thinking, which is why "cause and effect" is not a useful disciplining tool with children who have ADHD.

A few interventions that might be helpful

- **Increased praise**, approval, and appreciation of his good behavior and work performance
- Some teachers have used **nonverbal, confidential cues**, for example, explaining that when a paper clip is dropped near his desk, it's a cue to pay attention.
- **Mild, private, direct reprimand**—personalize it (go to child, make eye contact, touch on arm or shoulder, make brief corrective statement).
- We can help the child manage his symptoms by **providing him motivation** and consequences in the immediate present.

References and additional reading:

- <http://www.russellbarkley.org/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/index.html>
- <https://www.aap.org/en-us/pubserv/adhd2/Pages/default.aspx>
- https://chadd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ATTN_10_15_BeatingTimeBlindness.pdf

