

## **How to Help your Child with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) at Home** **A Guide for Parents**

ADHD is characterised by behaviours such as a strong capacity for creative thinking, spontaneity, high energy, and an engaging way of interacting with others. Parenting children with ADHD offers a journey filled with opportunities to discover and nurture these strengths. By embracing their distinctive traits, you can find strategies to support your child in a way that makes the journey both fulfilling and rewarding.

### **1. Set up clear and specific rules of behaviour for everyone in the family.**

Rules, as well as consequences for breaking them, and rewards for appropriate behaviour can be written down and displayed in a prominent place. **Consistency is very important**– if a rule is broken, the consequence should follow every time. If the child behaves properly, reward him immediately and often. Be firm on setting limits, but give plenty of love and hugs too!



### **2. Set up specific time periods for waking, bedtime, play, homework, meals and TV.**

Consistent routines help children feel secure and focused. When a variation in schedule is necessary, providing clear explanations and reminding them gently, in advance, can help them adapt smoothly to the change. Make a daily timetable using pictures for young children who cannot read.

### **3. Give instructions as simply and clearly as possible.**

Make eye contact. Get your child to repeat the instructions back to you and praise him when he responds correctly. Do not give more than one or two instructions at one time. If the task is difficult, break it into smaller parts.

### **4. Provide them with their own “special” quiet spot**

without distractions where your child can focus on academic or quiet activities. Position the desk in a way that helps minimise distractions, such as facing a blank wall. Reduce sensory input by turning off the TV and radio to support their ability to concentrate. Understanding that your child may be more aware of sensory details like sounds, smells, or colours allows you to create an environment that encourages their focus and helps them shine.

### **5. Make a to-do list which is clearly displayed.**

Use a clock or timer while doing small duties in order to give your child a sense of passing time. Provide supervision by being physically near the child.

## 6. Teach your child the **STOP-THINK-ACT-REVIEW** strategy.

Before they do something, they should STOP, THINK about what they're doing and the consequences, decide how to ACT, and finally, REVIEW their action and its results.

## 7. Support your child in discovering positive and effective ways to express their needs and desires.

Sometimes, behaviors can be a form of communication, so teaching clear and constructive verbal communication skills can be empowering. Consider what your child is trying to achieve with their behavior, and guide them in exploring alternative approaches to reach their goals. This not only helps them communicate better but also builds their confidence in navigating different situations.



## 8. Repeated messages, directions, requests, etc. are unsuccessful disciplinary methods and lead to parental frustration.

To stop this ineffective process, try the following: **Say what you need to say, but say it once briefly, clearly, completely, firmly, calmly.** Follow through with a logical consequence. Act. Don't nag. Set up specific time periods for waking, bedtime, play, homework, meals and TV.

## 9. Develop your child's self-esteem by:

- Setting realistic goals which he can achieve and providing positive feedback.
- Recognising achievement and effort.
- Giving the child choices within the limits you have set to help develop his initiative and give a sense of personal control.
- Discussing positive experiences such as her birth or something she did well.
- Starting a 'pride' folder of pictures, certificates, photos of special occasions, etc. that your child is proud of.
- Encourage your child to develop any special talent e.g. in sports, art, karate, etc.. • Using praise that describes the behaviour of your child which has made you happy, e.g. "I see all the clothes in place – this cupboard looks so neat!"

Parenting a child with ADHD offers many rewarding moments and countless opportunities to celebrate their unique strengths and abilities. Make sure that you get enough rest and sleep yourself so that your energy levels are high to keep up with your child!

