

ADHD Action Plan

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Has someone told you that your child may have an attention deficit or hyperactivity disorder? Here are some important steps to get you going in the right direction.

Get a Diagnosis:

A specific diagnosis is not absolutely necessary, but can be very helpful. The sooner you can get a diagnosis, the sooner you can get services from schools, programs and specialists. Diagnoses should be determined with the help of an experienced professional such as a developmental pediatrician or child psychologist.

A comprehensive assessment is not only thorough, but geared toward defining symptoms, problems and behaviors in a way that facilitates the choice of medical, educational, behavioral, and psychosocial treatments. As a parent you will ultimately act as your child's case manager and, in many cases, treatment provider (e.g., implementing parenting and educational strategies).

Get Organized:

A Day planner can be a key tool in managing the family life of a child with ADHD, Put all of the child's daily activities on a calendar, chart or planner that the child can see and mom can carry along with her.

Get an IEP (Individualized Education Program):

Talk to your school district about services available.

Helpful links and info can be found at:

www.ode.state.or.us/pubs/forms/iep/

www.tacanow.com/iepcheck.htm

The Complete IEP Guide by Attorney Lawrence M. Siegel.

This book clearly illustrates your rights, has examples of letters to write and will define what is possible for your child to receive.

Identifying a community based educational specialist:

Contact tutors and specialists who will be able to identify your child's strengths and weaknesses and provide detailed recommendations for your child. Early intervention leads to success!

Find A Doctor who is experienced in biomedical assessment and treatment:

A doctor is an important step on the autism journey. There are many safe and effective biomedical and natural therapies that can be helpful for your child. Examples include: Essential Fatty Acids, Vitamin therapy, homeopathy, detoxification, diet/nutrition. There is quite a bit of functional testing available to identify your child's specific needs ranging from blood parameters, to food allergies to gut function. Remarkable improvements have been seen in children who receive biomedical treatments.

Books:

Twelve Effective Ways to Help Your ADD/ADHD Child: Drug-Free Alternatives for Attention-Deficit Disorders: by Laura J. Stevens

Limit television

Today's television is filled with violence, drug use, explicit images and endless ads encouraging material possessions and junk food. The average child spends 2–3 hours a day watching television, and many children spend as much as 4–6 hours a day watching this kind of programming. A child with ADHD can be especially vulnerable and impressionable by television and this can manifest as negative behaviors.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following:

- Limit all media use to no more than 1 to 2 hours per day.
- Monitor a child's use of the media.
- Co-view television with your children.

It goes without saying that it is impossible to limit children's viewing if the parents are watching television all day and night. Turning off the TV is the most effective, solution to a host of child psychiatric problems. We encourage you to break free from TV!

Address your child's diet:

The foods your child eats directly effects the ability of your child's brain and body to develop and function properly. Remove additives, preservatives & dyes from all foods. Go organic if you can and eat as many whole, fresh foods as possible. Get some good recipes and experiment with vegetables! Your child will only eat them if he sees you eating (and enjoying) them, so get creative and have fun!

Cookbooks:

The Sneaky Chef by: Missy Chase Lapine

Nourishing Traditions by: Sally Fallon

The Petit Appetit Cookbook: Easy, Organic Recipes to Nurture Your Baby and Toddler by: Lisa Barnes

Many parents have found a **Gluten free/ Casein free (GF/CF) diet** extremely effective in reducing ADHD symptoms. Read about it and give it at least a three-month trial.

www.gfcfdiet.com

Special Diets for Special Kids ONE AND TWO - Lisa Lewis

The Feingold diet has also been found to be helpful for some children. For details on the Feingold diet reference www.feingold.org.

Seek out parenting resources:

There are many wonderful books on how to best parent a child with attention problems.

Books:

Parenting With Fire: Lighting Up the Family with Passion and Inspiration by Rabbi Schmuley Boteach

Parenting with Love and Logic: check out www.loveandlogic.org

Meeting the Challenge: Using Love and Logic to Help Children Develop Attention and Behavior Skills by *Jim Fay, Foster W. Cline, M.D., and Bob Sornson, Ph.D.*

The ADHD Parenting Handbook: Practical Advice for Parents from Parents
by Colleen Alexander-Roberts

Taking Charge of Adhd: The Complete, Authoritative Guide for Parents By: Russell A. Barkley Ph.D.

The Add/Adhd Checklist by: Sandra Rief M.A.

Find Balance:

Keep in mind that advocating for your child is quite like running a marathon. You need to pace yourself and think both short term and long term about every decision you make.

Balance in your life will benefit both you and your child. Remember to cherish your spouse and other children. Also, remember to take time for your self. Keep seeking out the fun and love that comes with being a family. Keep participating in activities that help control stress and lift you up. Encourage your child every day and emphasize all of his or her unique and wonderful qualities.