

Medication:

Medications have been shown to be effective in increasing attention levels and reducing the impulsive and hyperactive behavior. Each child responds differently to medication and careful monitoring should be done by a physician in collaboration with parents, preschool teachers and daycare providers.

Types of Medication
Methylphenidate (Ritalin)
Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine)
Pemoline (Cylert)

For additional information:

Parent Educator Partnership (PEP)
Grant Wood Area Education Agency
4401 Sixth Street SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
(319) 399-6702 or 1-800-332-8488 ext. 702

C.H.A.D.D. (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder)
National Headquarters
Suite 308
499 NW 70th Avenue
Plantation, FL 33317
(305) 487-3700
Cedar Rapids Chapter
(319) 373-0255
Jones County Alliance Group (319) 489-2361
Marion Alliance Group (319) 373-0263

ADD Warehouse
300 NW 70th Avenue
Plantation, FL 33317
1-800-233-9273

• **1-2-3 Magic** (book and video)
Thomas Phelan, Child Management Inc.

• **Sourcebook for Children with Attention Deficit Disorder**
Clare B. Jones, 1991.
Communication Skill Builders

• **Raising Your Spirited Child**
Mary Sheedy Kurcinka,
1991. HarperCollins

If you think your child is ADHD you could contact:

Your pediatrician
Abbe Center For Community Mental Health (319) 398-3562
ADHD Clinic of Eastern Iowa (319) 396-9957
Integra Health Family Development Center (319) 368-5684
Mercy Child Guidance (319) 398-6575
University of Iowa Hospital Clinics (319) 356-1616

IS MY PRESCHOOL CHILD HYPERACTIVE?

Many parents wonder whether their son or daughter is hyperactive. Due to the fact that normally developing pre-schoolers are highly active, self-centered, and often unpredictable, it is difficult to determine what is normal developmental behavior and what are symptoms of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

- 3 subtypes of ADHD:**
- ADHD, Combined Type.
 - ADHD, Predominantly Inattentive Type.
 - ADHD Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type.

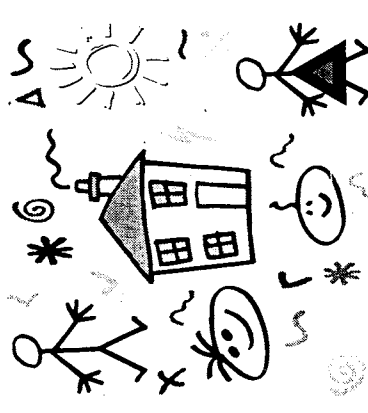
The main features of ADHD include:

inattention - difficulty concentration on tasks, particularly routine tasks
distractibility - easily pulled off task/ attention is disrupted
impulsivity - act before thinking
hyperactivity - excessive activity

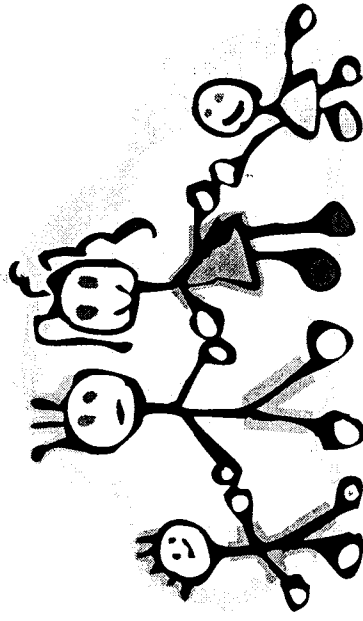
Specific behaviors may include: failure to give close attention to details; does not follow through on directions; does not finish things; difficulty organizing; avoidance of tasks which take sustained mental effort; often loses things; distracted by extraneous stimuli; often forgetful in daily activities; always on the go; fidgets with hands or feet; squirmy; difficulty remaining seated; runs about or climbs excessively; talks excessively; interrupts conversations or other children's play/games; difficulty waiting or delaying gratification; and, appears to be a risk taker.

What is ADHD?

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one of the most prevalent childhood developmental disorders. It is a neurobiologically based developmental disability. Evidence suggests that the disorder is genetically transmitted. Boys tend to be diagnosed more frequently than girls. Girls may be less likely to be identified as they may have an attention deficit but display less disturbing hyperactive behaviors.



All children may exhibit inattentive, impulsive or overly active behaviors. Children with ADHD exhibit these behaviors considerably more often than other children of the same developmental age.



Developed by:
Barb Brainard and De Wagner,
Early Childhood School Psychologists
Grant Wood Area Education Agency.

Personality

The child's personality traits must also be taken into consideration. Children approach their environment differently based on their personality make up. These traits may include sensitivity, energy level, persistence, and intensity. Children who are very persistent will have difficulty transitioning from one activity to the next. A highly sensitive child will be very distracted by noises, lights or textures (like seams in their socks). Children differ according to their activity level. Some children are in constant motion while others are content to sit quietly.

Attention

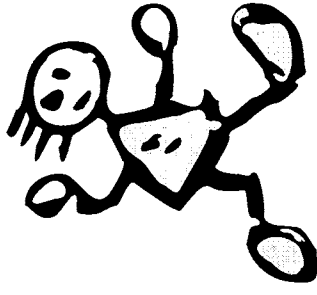
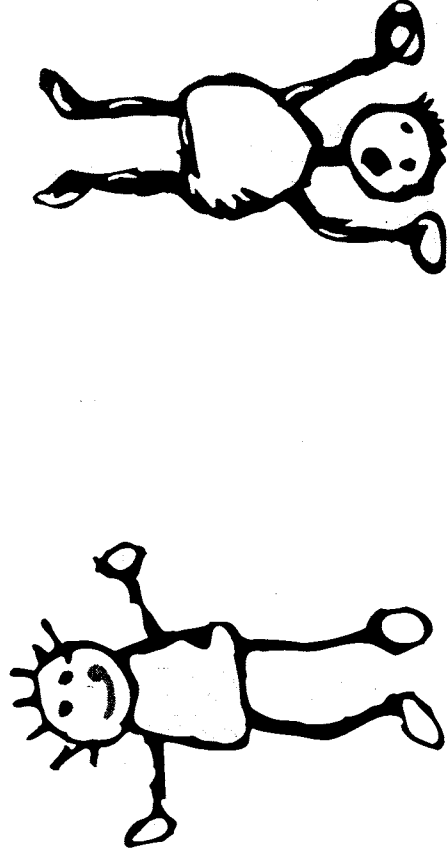
Attention levels will vary from child to child depending on their developmental age. Use the following scale as a guideline:

- 2 year old: 3-5 minutes
- 3 year old: 5-10 minutes
- 4 year old: 10-13 minutes
- 5 year old: 13-18 minutes

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of ADHD is not as simple as reading a symptom list. Diagnosis entails a comprehensive evaluation by a trained professional (pediatrician, child psychologist, child psychiatrist, pediatric neurologist). The behaviors must be present for a period of at least 6 months. Additionally, the behaviors must occur in all environments (home, day care, preschool).

The trained professional must first rule out other medical or emotional problems which may be causing the hyperactivity or inattention. Other conditions which may cause these behaviors include: undetected hearing loss, impaired vision, depression, anxiety, stressful circumstances, boredom or not adequately stimulated, lack of social skills, learning disability, pet mal seizures, and overwhelmed parent(s).



How is ADHD Treated?

Without proper identification and management the child with ADHD can suffer from poor peer relationships, low self-esteem, academic underachievement, low frustration tolerance, temper outbursts, depression, and disorganization. However, with proper treatment, children with ADHD can be happy, productive and successful individuals. Treatment should first include gaining an understanding about ADHD and its effects on the child and the family. Behavior management and often times medication are also critical components of the treatment. However, medication is typically not recommended for children under the ages of 4-5 years.

Interventions:

The goal of any intervention is to increase appropriate behavior and decrease inappropriate behavior. If you pay attention to a behavior (good or bad), it will increase. Therefore, the focus should be on encouraging positive and desirable behaviors.

- Just like adults children like to feel successful, therefore you need to build in opportunities for success. Help the child to recognize and develop their strengths.

- Children with ADHD have a much higher need for a structured and consistent environment. Predictable routines such as a daily schedule help provide children with a sense of security. Picture schedules can be especially beneficial for younger children.

- Children with ADHD have difficulty with changes in their routine. Prepare them in advance of transitions or of a change which may occur in their daily routine.

- Give the child something to do when they have to wait. For example, you could sing a song, give them something to draw on, play a simple turn taking game, etc.

- Assign special jobs so your child feels that they are an important part of the family.

- When giving directions or instructions remember to keep them simple and clear. Be specific and give only one command at a time. Children with ADHD often get distracted and forget the instructions especially if given more than one at a time.

- For big tasks instructions should be broken down into smaller chunks. For example, instead of saying, "clean up your room" tell the child to pick up the blocks, then praise him when he finishes. Then give a second instruction as, "put your animals in the bucket", again praising completion of the task, etc.

- Make tasks interesting. Using the previous example, rather than saying, "put your animals in the bucket", say, "oh, let's see how fast we can put the animals in the bucket".

- A child with ADHD needs frequent opportunities for physical activities. Provide activities throughout the day such as swimming, running, movement games.

- Consequences should be delivered immediately with lots of praise and rewards - notice the child being good.

- Teach sharing and turn-taking: play simple turn-taking games ("my turn", "your turn")

- Teach social skills including the recognition of basic emotions such as happy, sad, mad, and how to problem solve, and how to use words to express themselves or resolve conflict.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, PLAY WITH YOUR CHILD AND HAVE FUN!

