

# ADHD

- Students with ADHD generally show weak attentiveness (ADD or attention deficit disorder), sometimes linked with marked hyperactivity and impulsiveness (ADHD). These traits affect learning, school performance, behaviour, social relationships and personal safety (theirs and others’).
- Girls with ADHD tend to have the mainly inattentive form of the condition, which means they are quiet and dreamy, and can sometimes go unnoticed. It is therefore possible that ADHD could be underdiagnosed in girls. Disruptive behaviour tends to occur more commonly in boys.
- Symptoms usually become noticeable before the age of seven, with a diagnosis often being made between whilst the child is at primary school.
- Children with ADHD can find it difficult to get to sleep at night.
- It is believed that around a third of children with ADHD also have learning difficulties, such as [dyslexia](#) (difficulty reading and spelling words).

## Difficulties associated with inattentiveness:

- ✓ Difficulty organising themselves
- ✓ A short attention span
- ✓ Easily distracted and unable to concentrate
- ✓ Making careless mistakes in schoolwork
- ✓ Losing personal belongings
- ✓ Frequently changing activities and quickly becoming bored with tasks
- ✓ The ability to listen to instructions tends to be weak, and ADHD students tend to not take in verbal information well.



## Difficulties associated with hyperactivity:

- ✓ Constantly fidgeting and being unable to sit still
- ✓ Being unable to settle to tasks and begin activities
- ✓ Excessive talking.

## Difficulties associated with impulsivity:

- Being unable to wait for their turn
- Interrupting
- Limited sense of danger and a tendency to act without thinking



## Symptoms in University students and adults

At age 25, an estimated 15% of people diagnosed with childhood ADHD still have a full range of symptoms, and 65% may show the following qualities:-

- ✓ Poor organisational skills, and continually starting new tasks before finishing old ones
- ✓ Inability to focus or prioritise work
- ✓ Forgetfulness
- ✓ Difficulty structuring work, like essays and assignments
- ✓ Carelessness and lack of attention to detail
- ✓ Continually losing or misplacing things
- ✓ Physical restlessness
- ✓ Difficulty keeping quiet and speaking out of turn
- ✓ Often interrupting others and poor social timing when talking to others
- ✓ Irritability and a quick temper
- ✓ Risk-taking, often with little or no regard for personal safety or the safety of others
- ✓ Inability to deal with stress

## Some simple ideas to try

- Use planners, calendars, reminder lists etc to prioritise work and to improve self-organisation
- Try using Mind Maps to note key points for a project
- Use a timer to improve focus on an activity for a limited period (works with homework!)
- Teach avoidance of danger in everyday routines to raise awareness
- Make behaviour expectations explicit and clear, and link them to rewards and sanctions
- Encourage relaxation, especially coming up to bedtime
- Encourage physical exercise to use up excess energy, and it can be helpful to walk to school or have some physical activity early in the day (before school)
- Ask students to give eye contact and to listen (use their name) when giving information and /or instructions
- To obtain a full diagnosis of ADHD, which is a medical diagnosis, advice should be sought from a clinician or multiprofessional team experienced in this area.

