

# → PARENTING ADD / ADHD

## THE PARENT SURVIVAL GUIDE

Help Your Child Thrive

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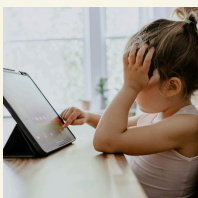




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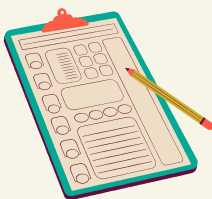
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The Parenting Survival Guide

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# Understanding ADHD/ADD



## What are ADHD and ADD?

- **ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder):** A neurodevelopmental condition that affects focus, impulsivity, and activity levels.
- **ADD (Attention-Deficit Disorder):** An outdated term now considered part of ADHD, often used to describe individuals with inattention but without hyperactivity.

### Key Features

1. **Inattention:** Trouble focusing, following instructions, or staying organized.
2. **Hyperactivity:** Excessive energy, fidgeting, or an inability to sit still.
3. **Impulsivity:** Acting without thinking, interrupting, or struggling with self-control.

## Symptoms of ADHD/ADD in Kids

### Inattention Symptoms

- Difficulty paying attention to details or making careless mistakes.
- Easily distracted by sights, sounds, or thoughts.
- Trouble following through with tasks or instructions.
- Forgetfulness (e.g., homework, personal items).

### Hyperactivity Symptoms

- Constantly moving or fidgeting, even when expected to stay still.
- Running or climbing at inappropriate times.
- Excessive talking or making noise.

### Impulsivity Symptoms

- Interrupting others frequently.
- Difficulty waiting for their turn.
- Emotional outbursts or quick frustration.

# SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

## Students Protected Under Section 504

SECTION 504 COVERS QUALIFIED STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ATTEND SCHOOLS RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. TO BE PROTECTED UNDER SECTION 504, A STUDENT MUST BE DETERMINED TO: (1) HAVE A PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENT THAT SUBSTANTIALLY LIMITS ONE OR MORE MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITIES; OR (2) HAVE A RECORD OF SUCH AN IMPAIRMENT; OR (3) BE REGARDED AS HAVING SUCH AN IMPAIRMENT. SECTION 504 REQUIRES THAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS PROVIDE A FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE) TO QUALIFIED STUDENTS IN THEIR JURISDICTIONS WHO HAVE A PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENT THAT SUBSTANTIALLY LIMITS ONE OR MORE MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITIES. FOR MORE DETAILS, PLEASE REFER TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SECTION 504 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS DOCUMENT. (TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY).

### What is a 504 Plan?

- Purpose: Ensures equal access to education by providing accommodations.
- Examples:
  - Extra time on tests.
  - Pre-written notes of lectures.
  - Preferential seating.
  - Movement breaks.
  - Verbal Tests
- Eligibility: For children with ADHD/ADD who don't require specialized instruction but need accommodations.

### How to Advocate for Your Child

1. Understand Your Rights: Familiarize yourself with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Request an Evaluation: Submit a written request to your child's school to assess for 504 or IEP eligibility.
3. Document Everything: Keep records of evaluations, meetings, and communications with school staff.
4. Prepare for Meetings: Know your child's needs and suggest specific accommodations.
5. Follow Up: Regularly review your child's plan to ensure it's effective.



# SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

## Students Protected Under IEP

THIS PLAN IS CALLED THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP). AN IEP DESCRIBES THE SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION, SUPPORTS, AND SERVICES THAT YOUR CHILD WILL RECEIVE, BASED ON HIS OR HER INDIVIDUAL NEEDS. IN TEXAS, THE IEP IS DEVELOPED BY AN ADMISSION, REVIEW, AND DISMISSAL (ARD) COMMITTEE. (SPEDTEX.ORG).

### WHAT IS AN IEP (INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM)?

**PURPOSE:** OFFERS SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION THROUGH ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS TAILORED TO YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

ONE-ON-ONE INSTRUCTION.  
BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLANS.  
SPEECH OR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY.

**ELIGIBILITY:** FOR CHILDREN WHO QUALIFY UNDER IDEA (INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT).

### **Accommodations and Modifications**

- Are not the same thing
- **Accommodation:** change that can help a student work around their disability
- Provides equal access to learning
- **Modifications:** changes in what a student is expected to learn
- Connected to instruction and assessment.





## REMEDIES FOR ADD/ADHD

### Lifestyle Changes

- **Routine:** Consistent daily schedules help reduce distractions.
- **Diet:** Incorporate omega-3 fatty acids (e.g., fish, walnuts), whole grains, and proteins to support brain health.
- **Sleep:** Ensure 8-10 hours of sleep with calming bedtime routines.
- **Exercise:** Activities like martial arts, swimming, or running improve focus and release energy.

### Therapeutic Interventions

- **Behavioral Therapy:** Teaches kids self-control and social skills.
- **Parent Training:** Helps parents manage challenging behaviors effectively.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** Helps older children manage emotions and thought patterns.

### Medications

- **Stimulants (e.g., Adderall, Ritalin):** Improve focus and reduce impulsivity.
- **Non-stimulants (e.g., Strattera):** Useful for kids who don't tolerate stimulants.

Always consult with a pediatrician or psychiatrist before starting any treatment.

## DIFFUSING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS: RESPONSES FOR PARENTS

### 1. Validate Emotions

- "I can see you're upset. Let's figure this out together."
- "It's okay to feel frustrated. How can I help?"

### 2. Set Clear Boundaries

- "We can talk about this calmly, or we'll need a break to cool down."
- "I understand you're upset, but hitting is not okay. Let's use words instead."

### 3. Offer Two Choices

- "Do you want to start with math homework or reading?"
- "Would you like to take a five-minute break or try again now?"

### 4. Redirect Behavior

- "I see you're full of energy. Let's do 10 jumping jacks before finishing homework."
- "Instead of yelling, let's take a deep breath and talk calmly."

### 5. Use Positive Reinforcement

- "Thank you for staying calm and using your words. That was great self-control."
- "You did a great job focusing on your homework! I'm proud of you."

### 6. Empathize Without Enabling

- "I know sitting still can be hard. Let's try for one more minute, and then we'll take a break."
- "I get that it's frustrating. We'll work together to find a solution."

# HELP FOR ADHD / ADD ↑

# CHEATSHEET



### UNDERSTAND ADHD BASICS

- What it is: ADHD affects attention, impulse control, and activity levels.
- It's not laziness: Kids with ADHD often struggle with brain wiring differences, not motivation.
- Strengths matter: ADHD brains can be creative, resourceful, and energetic.



### STRUCTURE IS YOUR BEST FRIEND

- **Create predictable routines:** Consistent schedules reduce anxiety, improve focus and create good habits.
- **Visual schedules:** Use charts, checklists, or timers to guide daily tasks.
- **Break tasks into steps:** Give clear, small instructions one step at a time.



### ENCOURAGE POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

- Catch them being good: Praise effort and specific achievements.
- Example: "You worked hard to finish your homework! Great job staying focused."
- Reward systems: Offer short-term rewards (e.g., stickers, points) to encourage good behavior.



### TEACH TIME MANAGEMENT

- Use timers: Try a visual timer for homework or chores.
- Chunk time: Work for 10-15 minutes, then take a 5-minute break.
- Set realistic expectations: Allow extra time for transitions and tasks.



### MANAGE EMOTIONAL REGULATION

- Help them name feelings: Use phrases like, "You seem frustrated. Let's talk about it."
- Teach coping skills: Practice deep breathing, counting to 10, or using a stress ball.
- Stay calm: Model calm reactions to help them regulate their own emotions.

### MORE TIPS:

#### SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

CONSISTENT RULES: CLEARLY DEFINE RULES AND CONSEQUENCES IN ADVANCE.

FOLLOW THROUGH: BE FAIR BUT FIRM WHEN ENFORCING BOUNDARIES.

AVOID POWER STRUGGLES: PICK YOUR BATTLES AND STAY CALM DURING CONFLICTS.

#### ADDRESS HEALTH NEEDS

ENCOURAGE SLEEP: ESTABLISH A CALMING BEDTIME ROUTINE.

LIMIT SUGAR AND CAFFEINE: THESE CAN AMPLIFY HYPERACTIVITY.

PROMOTE EXERCISE: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BURNS ENERGY AND IMPROVES FOCUS.

#### SUPPORT THEIR SELF-ESTEEM

FOCUS ON STRENGTHS: CELEBRATE CREATIVITY, KINDNESS, OR HUMOR.

AVOID COMPARISONS: EACH CHILD DEVELOPS AT THEIR OWN PACE.

TEACH SELF-ADVOCACY: ENCOURAGE THEM TO SHARE WHAT THEY NEED WITH OTHERS.



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## MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

- **Meditation:** Practice 5-10 minutes of focused breathing or mindfulness to train sustained attention.
- **Body Scans:** Guide them to focus on each part of their body to improve awareness and concentration.
- **Yoga:** Improves focus and reduces anxiety.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tighten each muscle and loosen, going through the entire body starting from head to toes. At each loosen, direct child to imagine stress leave their body.



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## PHYSICAL EXERCISE

- **Cross-body Movements:** Activities like skipping, jumping jacks, or dancing improve brain-body coordination.
- **Balance Exercises:** Try standing on one foot or using a balance board to boost concentration.
- **Martial Arts:** Builds focus, discipline, and memory through repeated sequences.



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## FOCUS AND MEMORY BUILDING

- **Puzzles:** Jigsaw puzzles or Sudoku enhance sustained focus and problem-solving skills.
- **Maze Games:** Simple mazes require attention to detail and planning.
- **Timed Challenges:** Use a timer for tasks like sorting objects by color or completing a drawing.
- **Matching Games:** Use memory cards or digital apps like Lumosity to challenge recall.
- **Story Recall:** Read a short story and ask the child to retell it.
- **Simon Says:** Great for attention to detail and following multi-step instructions.
- **object finding games:** great for increasing attention to detail

# ACTIVITIES TO MANAGE SYMPTOMS

