

Notes from Andrew Greenfield's presentation
to 2013 *Teacher's Christian Fellowship* Day Conference.

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

Implications for students and Management Strategies for Teachers.

What is ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a medical condition characterised by a persistent pattern of inattention, hyperactivity and/or impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in people of the same age group.

There are 3 main types of ADHD:

1. Predominantly inattentive ADHD
2. Predominantly hyperactive/impulsive ADHD and
3. Combined ADHD.

There can be varying degrees within each subtype – mild, moderate, severe and profound.

Symptoms must have persisted for at least 6 months and exhibited across various settings e.g. home and school.

Diagnosis

- * ADHD frequently overlaps with other conditions as Conduct Disorder, Anxiety, ODD which can make diagnosis difficult.
- * ADHD can be diagnosed by Paediatricians, Psychiatrists, Child/Educational Psychologists.
- * Reports from the child's home and school should be undertaken.
- * ADHD is more common in boys than girls.
- * ADHD is hereditary.

Measurement

Psychologists use:

- * Rating scales (behaviour/concentration) by parents and teachers.
- * Observation of the child's behaviour.
- * Cognitive tests (IQ test) investigating strengths and weaknesses.
- * Assessment of possible Learning Difficulties.
- * Neuropsychological test: Evoked Potential, EEG, qEEG.
- * Information regarding family history, birth, developmental milestones.
- * Continuous Performance Tasks (CPT).

Treatments

- * Medication.
- * Training for parents, caregivers, teachers.
- * Strategies for children and adolescents.
- * Cognitive and/or Behaviour Management programs for the child.

Social/Academic Implications

- * Poor Working Memory – forgetful, poor sustained attention, easily distracted, misinterprets information.
- * Poor use of Hindsight – repeats same mistakes, does not learn from past experiences.
- * Poor use of Forethought – cannot anticipate future events, poor planning and organisation, problems in initiating, persisting with and completing tasks aimed at the future.
- * Poor use of Inner Voice – keeps breaking the rules, poor self-control, lack of responsibility, difficulty making choices, problems checking, regulating and modifying behaviour.
- * Poor problem solving.
- * Can't separate emotions from fact – over emotional, overacts, not objective.
- * Impulsive Behaviour – speech, decisions, cannot delay gratification.

Strengths & Weakness of Children with ADHD

Strengths

- * Verbal Expression.
- * Visual gestalt – ability to see the 'big picture' quickly.
- * Long-term memory.
- * Intense emotions.
- * Enthusiastic, curious.
- * Active.
- * Generalisation of ideas.

Weaknesses

- * Listening.
- * Poor planning and organisation.
- * Visual detail.
- * Short-term /working memory.
- * Bored easily.
- * Impatient.
- * Written expression of ideas.

Three Principles of Instruction

- * Brevity.
- * Variety.
- * Structure/Routine.

Classroom Environment

- * Seat close to the teacher.
- * Seat among well-focused peers.
- * Use role model/buddy.
- * Keep work place uncluttered.

Workload

- * Divide tasks into manageable parts.
- * Give short assignments.
- * Allow extra time.
- * Give assignments one at a time.
- * Reduce homework.
- * Provide breaks, allow students to move around.

Instructions

- * Be clear and concise.
- * Specify consistent expectations and consequences.
- * Use private cues/signals.
- * Give multisensory instructions.
- * Have direct eye contact.

Skills & Strategies

- * Set short-term goals.
- * Use contracts.
- * Teach self-monitoring.
- * Teach problem solving.
- * Teach think before you respond and act.
- * Use extra class assistance.

Incentives & Consequences

- * Increase immediacy.
- * Reward effort and accept fewer correct responses.
- * Provide regular feedback.
- * Give positive reinforcement.
- * Use a variety of rewards that students' value.
- * Ignore minor negative behaviour.

Teaching Methods

- * Use hands-on materials, computers and visual aids.
- * Use modelling, demonstration and guidance practice.
- * Accommodate writing, language and learning difficulties.

Summary

- * ADD/ADHD is a complex condition that affects different people in different ways.
- * A student's strengths/weaknesses and learning style should be the main focus.
- * A full comprehensive assessment should be ascertained before making a diagnosis i.e. by a Child/Educational Psychologist and specialist Developmental Paediatrician.
- * Don't believe everything you read and hear about ADD/ADHD.
- * Support students with ADHD at home and at school.
- * Learn simple behaviour management techniques.

Useful Resources

Booklets

* *Learning Difficulties Coalition NSW (LDC) ADHD Hot Tips for Parents and Professionals – Tool Kit Series.*

Websites

- * www.everdaywithadhd.com.au
- * www.additude.com
- * www.ldc.org.au
- * www.additudemag.com
- * www.cyh.com
- * www.livingwithadhd.com.au
- * www.chadd.org
- * www.add.org
- * www.addwarehouse.com

Books

- * *You and Your ADHD Child* by Ian Wallace: *Practical strategies for coping with everyday problems*, 1996.
- * *ADHD the Facts*, Dr Mark Selikowitz, 2004.
- * *Taking Charge of Adult ADHD*: Russell A Barkley PhD, 2010.
- * *ADHD, 3rd Edition, A Clinical Workbook*, Russell A Barkley & Kevin R Murphy, 2006.

Articles

- * Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder is characterised by a delay in cortical maturation; Shaw, P et al.
www.pnas.org/content/104/49/19649
- * www.medscape.com/resources/adhd