

How to Support Children with Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder

Education Bureau 2015

Introduction

Parents always wish to provide their children with the best living and learning environment in order to nurture them to achieve success in future. With early identification and support, children with special educational needs (SEN) may adapt to everyday life and the learning environment, and develop their potentials.

What is Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)?

AD/HD refers to a disorder affecting children's attention, hyperactivity and impulse control, which make these children behave significantly different from those of their age. Such differences hinder their learning as well as their social and family life. Common symptoms include the following:

- Having difficulty sustaining attention and with short attention span;
- Being easily distracted by extraneous stimuli;
- Having difficulty organizing tasks and activities;
- Often making careless mistakes;
- Not being able to stay seated in class;
- Often fidgeting with hands or feet;
- Being impulsive and often acting without thinking about the consequences; and
- Often blurting out answers to questions.

Roles of Parents

I Suspect that My Child may have AD/HD...

- Initiate contact with his/her teachers, the student guidance personnel or the social worker of the school. Schools can then give appropriate assessment and guidance services.

My Child is Assessed to have AD/HD...

- Provide the school with the SEN information of your child promptly and proactively; including forwarding his/ her psychiatric report to the school for arrangement of appropriate support services;
- Maintain communication with the school's student support team, class teacher and subject teachers to understand your child's learning in school; and discuss appropriate support strategies with them when necessary; and

May consider the following strategies when giving guidance to your child:

Communication

- Maintain eye contact when talking to your child; and

- Give clear and specific instructions, one at a time or ask your child to repeat the instructions.

Behavioural Management

- Manage your child's behaviours immediately and consistently, as well as giving reasonable positive or negative feedback;
- Help your child set specific and measurable targets to correct improper behaviours progressively; and
- Use "visual cues" to remind your child of easily forgotten things or rules.

Emotional Management

- Avoid confrontations with your child when he/she throws a tantrum and let him/her calm down before reasoning with him/her; and
- Teach your child how to manage his/her emotions, e.g. take deep breaths, do relaxation exercises, etc.

Learning

- Draw up a realistic timetable with your child to allow learning and other activities to take place alternately;
- Arrange a fixed place for your child to do homework and place his/her belongings. Keep the desk tidy and use simple stationery to reduce distractions for your child; and
- Help your child break down his/her homework into smaller units and let him/her finish them one at a time.

Arrangement of Follow-up Consultation

- Take your child for follow-up consultations with psychiatrist as scheduled, make sure he/she takes medication as prescribed and observe his/ her progress after taking medication.

For further information on supporting children with SEN, parents may refer to the "Parent Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education" on the Education Bureau (EDB) website (please see the back page for the website).

Support Services and Strategies

In general, students with AD/HD receive education in ordinary schools. Schools will provide the following support in accordance with the needs of the students:

Quality Teaching

- Provide a well-structured learning environment, e.g. arrange a seat which is free from distractions for the student, arrange a fixed place for the student to put his/her belongings, etc.; and
- Regarding teaching strategies, e.g. break down tasks into small steps, highlight main points, provide graphic organizers, "visual cues", etc.

Group Training

Provide school-based group training programmes, e.g. by making use of the “Development of Executive Skills” (DOES) Resource Package developed by EDB to enhance students’ abilities in self-management or arrange other training on conflict management, problem solving or learning skills.

Individual Guidance

- Reinforce student’s positive behaviours by giving behavioural guidance, appropriate rewards and specific feedback; and
- Arrange individual coaching for the student and help him/her set targets on learning, social life and emotion control to systematically enhance the student’s self-management ability.

Intensive Support

Provide intensive support for students with severe difficulties when necessary, e.g.

- Draw up an Individual Education Plan and conduct review and follow-up actions regularly.
- Refer the students to the Adjustment Unit run by EDB for intensive training; and
- Deploy teaching assistants for more intensive support.

Home - School Cooperation

Schools, parents and professionals (including doctors, educational psychologists and social workers) should maintain close collaboration and communication, so as to understand matters concerning the student’s medical follow-up and medications, as well as his/her needs in different stages of development, and discuss appropriate and consistent support strategies to facilitate the development of the student.

Useful Websites and Telephone Numbers for Enquiry

Education Bureau

<http://www.edb.gov.hk>

Hong Kong Regional Education Office (Tel: 2863 4646)

Kowloon Regional Education Office (Tel: 3698 4108)

New Territories East Regional Education Office (Tel: 2639 4876)

New Territories West Regional Education Office (Tel: 2437 7272)

General Enquiries on Special Education (Tel: 3698 3957)

Educational Psychology Service Section

- Hong Kong (Tel: 3695 0486)
- Kowloon (Tel: 3698 4321)

- New Territories East (Tel: 3547 2228)
- New Territories West (Tel: 2437 7270)

Special Education Resource Centre (Tel: 3698 3900)

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/special/resources/serc/index.html>

Parent Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/special/resources/serc/download/ieparentguide.pdf>

Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education

http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/special/support/wsa/ie%20guide_en.pdf

Department of Health

- Child Assessment Service (Tel: 2246 6659)

<http://www.dhcas.gov.hk/eindex.html>

- Student Health Service (Tel: 2349 4212)

<http://www.studenthealth.gov.hk/eindex.html>

Social Welfare Department

<http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index>

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

<http://hkcss.org.hk/e>

OneClick

<http://oneclick.hku.hk/en>