

ADHD Presentations by Heidi Bernhardt RN

Childhood ADHD

Introduction to ADHD

This presentation will begin with a review of the etiology and epidemiology of ADHD, dispel myths and refocus the understanding of ADHD to that of a neurodevelopmental disorder rather than a behavior disorder. The course will include a look at standard DSM 5 symptoms, the variety of presentations, levels of severity, and how they impair a child's daily functioning. The assessment process used to diagnose ADHD will be reviewed, along with common co-existing.

The Impact of ADHD on Learning

Have you wondered why children with ADHD struggle in the school environment? While ADHD is not a learning disability ADHD can significantly impact a student's ability to learn and impair their academic achievement. Research on general academic outcomes will be reviewed during this presentation as well as the impact of ADHD symptoms on classroom functioning, typical presentations of ADHD symptoms seen in the classroom and some that may be commonly overlooked will be covered. Typical executive functioning impairments and other cognitive deficits will be discussed in detail.

Classroom Implications and Teaching Strategies

This presentation will be an overview of what ADHD students look like in the classroom setting, common learning and executive functioning impairments in students with ADHD and appropriate classroom accommodations and teaching strategies. The CADDAC education impairment/accommodations charts as well as the executive teaching strategies charts will be reviewed.

Emotional, Social and Self-Regulation Difficulties seen in Children with ADHD

Although we tend to focus on attention difficulties when addressing ADHD it is the impairment in self-regulation that causes difficulty for children and adults with ADHD. Social and emotional impairments typically seen in children with ADHD will be reviewed while delving into the underlying impairments in self-regulation that are present. Implementing strategies to assist with social skills and self-regulation will also be discussed.

ADHD and Emotional Regulation and use of the ABC Chart

This presentation will look at the consequences of emotional regulation impairment and why it is so common in those with ADHD. How these impairments differ from mood disorders, steps to emotional regulation and ways to assist children with emotional regulation will be covered. Use of the ABC chart will also be discussed.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD): How to Use Collaborative and Productive Solutions for Better Outcomes

Symptoms of Opposition Defiant Disorder (ODD) are commonly seen in children with ADHD and other neurodevelopmental disorders. What is ODD, is it a real disorder and how do common self and emotional regulation impairments lead to ODD? Can we rethink ODD to gain a better understanding of what is going on? Can the Collaborative Productive Solutions (formerly Collaborative Problem-Solving Approach) started by Dr. Ross Green, lead to better outcomes for children and families dealing with this difficult disorder? All of these questions will be discussed and the concepts of the CPS approach reviewed with additional resources shared.

Childhood ADHD in the Home, Parenting and Behavioural Strategies

ADHD is not due to lazy parenting! In fact, parenting children with ADHD requires far more time and energy and the use of specialized skills. Some guiding principles and general messages to parents/ care givers will be reviewed before we look some specifics of how to interact with and monitor children with ADHD. How we interpret “bad behavior” and how we deal with it will impact not only the child’s functioning but our relationship with that child for years to come. Organizational and problem-solving strategies will be reviewed as well as external reminders, motivators and rewards. Steps to creating a home care plan will be the final topic.

ADHD in Early Childhood

ADHD in early childhood (under six years of age) continues to be under recognized and undertreated. This is of considerable concern because 79% of children with ADHD test impaired in school readiness despite their IQ being equivalent to other children. Early assessment and diagnosis of ADHD allows for the implementation of specialized behavioural strategies, school and home supports and other ADHD treatments; this will help reduce future struggles in elementary school and mitigate the long-term side effects of not treating ADHD.

Learn to recognize indicators of early childhood ADHD, what these children look like in the home and school setting, what is involved in an ADHD assessment and why these children have difficulty with executive functioning and self and emotional regulation. Proven behavioural and social skills strategies will also be discussed.

Early Childhood ADHD: Strategies for ECEs and Teachers

Early childhood educators are in a very unique position that allows them to more easily recognize red flags that may be early signs of ADHD. Their positional also provides them the opportunity to help develop a student's profile allowing for the implementation of appropriate accommodations and teaching strategies. This results in a positive environment for everyone, the student, educator and parents, reducing stress and increasing success.

This presentation will cover ADHD red flags in the classroom setting, issues with school readiness, classroom structure and routines and teaching strategies for all forms of ADHD and executive functioning impairment: inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity, self and emotional dysregulation and social skill impairment.

What You Need to Know When Advocating for Your Child in the School System

(This abstract is an example. It covers advocating in Ontario however this presentation can also be tailored to any other province or territory)

Understanding your Province's Special Education system and how ADHD is recognized within this system is paramount when advocating for your child. This presentation will cover the Ontario Special Education system, exceptionality categories and the recent Ministry of Education Memorandum. Fear of labelling, the psychoeducational testing process and third- party reports, navigating the IPRC process, and understanding and contributing to an IEP will all be covered. The presentation will close with a look at your child's rights and a discussion on how you can be a more effective advocate for your child.