

ADHD Parent Readiness Education Program (PREP)

CADDAC
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ADHD at Home

- ▷ ADHD Behaviour and Parenting
- ▷ Parents with ADHD
- ▷ Working with Parents on Behavioural Strategies
- ▷ Organizational Strategies

ADHD BEHAVIOUR AND PARENTING



ADHD Behaviour and Parenting

- ▷ Children with ADHD require specialized parenting
- ▷ Most parents parent somewhat inconsistently, but this is not good enough for children with ADHD and ODD
- ▷ Majority of ODD negative behaviour occurs in the home
- ▷ The behaviour is very hard on the parent /child relationship but also the parent's relationship
- ▷ Parenting issues can drive a wedge between parents and even break up marriages
- ▷ Families become isolated due to the child's behaviour



Issues this Causes with Parenting

- ▷ Due to the child's ADHD and ODD behaviour parents can feel very confused and frustrated
- ▷ They often doubt their parenting abilities
- ▷ Friends and extended family blame the parents for the child's behaviour which increases their uncertainty
- ▷ Parents judge each other's parenting and lay blame
- ▷ Feel misunderstood and unsupported by their spouse
- ▷ Conflict over parenting methods arises because there has been little success in the past
- ▷ This further fuels inconsistent parenting

PARENTS WITH ADHD



Parents with ADHD

- ▷ When one spouse has ADHD things become even more difficult
- ▷ This adds to the pattern of inconsistent parenting and increases the blame
- ▷ The undiagnosed and untreated parent will be unable to follow parenting plan
- ▷ Their own emotional dysregulation will cause havoc within the family
- ▷ This is why it is important that all family members with ADHD be assessed and treated

PARENTING CHILDREN WITH ADHD



The Guiding Principals of Parenting a Child With ADHD

Parents must be able to accept the diagnosis and agree with the concept that:

- ▷ ADHD is a medical neurodevelopmental disorder
- ▷ ADHD cannot be trained out of the child!
- ▷ As a parent you cannot “fix” the child, rather you will need to adapt and change how you are interacting with, supporting and advocating for your child



Messages for Parents

- ▶ Although this is a hidden disorder it is no less real
- ▶ Learn as much as you can about ADHD, so you can understand your child
- ▶ Reframe your thinking of the behaviours as being caused by an impairment due to a medical disorder
- ▶ Create a supportive environment by reducing conflict as much as possible and put structures and supports in place to offset impairments
- ▶ Be proactive rather than reactive, try and anticipate times, and situations that trigger behaviours and have a plan in place for when behaviours happen
- ▶ Don't take behaviours, moods, ODD, disrespect personally

ADHD “Bad” Behaviour and Punishment



- ▷ Be aware that some of the things you are asking your child to do may not be in their control
- ▷ Insisting on this can lead to decreased self esteem, anxiety, withdrawal, acting out and depression and loss of motivation
- ▷ Research has shown that before a child with ADHD reaches 12 they have received more than 200,000 negative messages
- ▷ Punishment may help in stopping a behaviour, if it is in the child’s control, but not in increasing a behaviour
- ▷ Punishment may teach a child to lie, if we ask for explanations
- ▷ Punishment may just make them better at avoiding getting caught
- ▷ Kids with ADHD become immune to punishment due to the frequency
- ▷ Escalating punishment as some behavior modification plans advise can lead to abuse



More Messages to Share

- ▷ Have only a few house rules e.g., not hurting others, staying safe, and school work
- ▷ Decide as a team of care givers what these rules will be and make this known to the child
- ▷ Let small things go, at least for now
- ▷ It is important to model the behaviours you want to see
- ▷ Avoid power struggles - pick your battles (CPS)
- ▷ Keep issues in perspective - don't overreact to small things
- ▷ Neither you or the child will be perfect, expect this and practice forgiveness
- ▷ You may need to take a time out yourself if you are feeling overwhelmed



Messages About Interacting with Their Child

- ▷ Think of interactions (consequences) as a bank account – you need to be more heavily loaded on the credit side – more positive interactions – always use positive consequences first
- ▷ When consequences are required, both good and bad, they must be done immediately and consistently
- ▷ Don't engage in arguing - allow the rules to take the blame
- ▷ When speaking with your child make sure you are telling and not asking your child to do something
- ▷ Make sure you have their attention - eye contact and touching
- ▷ Don't continually lecture or nag your child
- ▷ Do listen to their perspective of a situation - you can obtain insight into their thinking and children with ADHD are not always at fault
- ▷ Keep your perspective and sense of humor



Monitoring of Children with ADHD

- ▷ Because self monitoring is a deficit these children will require much closer monitoring than other children
- ▷ They will drift off task or into unwanted behaviour more easily
- ▷ Since their sense of time is impaired they will easily lose track of time
- ▷ They will need to report their progress to an adult more frequently
- ▷ Working alongside other children can be a visual cue or a distraction depending on the circumstance



Organization Strategies

- ▷ Have routines for morning and bedtime
- ▷ Work before play
- ▷ Have a consistent time and place to do homework
- ▷ Break larger task and assignments into more manageable chunks
- ▷ Set due dates or times for these chunks to be done – the closer an assignment and completion the better
- ▷ Colour code folders, books, tools etc.
- ▷ Family calendar –colour coded per child
- ▷ Have a consistent place to keep belonging
- ▷ Model organizational strategies



Problem Solving Strategies

- ▶ Model and practice problem solving skills by working through them with the child - think out loud
- ▶ Encourage your children to help you brainstorm around a problem
- ▶ CPS can be a way to practice problem solving skills with a child
- ▶ Include empathy and understanding for other's thinking feelings and situations when problem solving



Externalizing Reminders

- ▶ Since self regulation, attention, sequencing, EF etc. are impaired, external reminders and cues are required
- ▶ Restate expectations and rules before and during an activity – have the child state them to you, repeat them or read them out loud
- ▶ Visual externalize reminders and steps - post pictures of steps or wanted behaviour in highly visual locations - lists on back of bedroom door, mirror, front door – child can use these as visual cues
- ▶ Break down tasks into smaller chunks



External Reminders Continued

- ▷ List steps to things that have a sequence
- ▷ Have the child speak to themselves while working
- ▷ Use a timer
- ▷ Checklists for older children
- ▷ Electronic and visual reminders
- ▷ Use timers to keep them on track when doing work



Examples of External Reminders

Brain storming by the group of reminders they have used to assist their children



External Motivation

- ▷ Issues with self motivation are inherent with ADHD – more external motivators will be required
- ▷ Rewards need to be externalized – internal rewards are insufficient
- ▷ Rewards should be very frequent and as immediate as necessary – more so than with other children
- ▷ Be creative and change rewards frequently



Externalizing Rewards

- ▷ Specific, frequent, consistent and immediate praise when steps to tasks accomplished – will increase desired behaviour
- ▷ State the behaviour you want to see rather than what you don't want them to do
- ▷ Goals should be small and able to be consistently met at the beginning
- ▷ This does not teach the skill but reinforces it
- ▷ Reward use of the skill through token system or self monitoring (older children)
- ▷ Behavioural contracts can be developed for older children – “If – When” statements



Token Reward System

- ▷ When the child displays the desired behaviour a token is given immediately and consistently
- ▷ Focus system on no more than 3 behaviours at a time, possibly a behaviour they are doing well with, one they need improvement on and one they are struggling with
- ▷ Obtaining the reward for the tokens needs to be fairly immediate - end of the day maximum
- ▷ Never take away tokens for unwanted behaviour once earned – different views on this – possibly give opportunity to earn back
- ▷ Reward after good behaviour rather than bribe before
- ▷ Different children in a family can receive tokens for different accomplished tasks



Problems that Can Occur with Token Systems

- ▷ If task or behaviour is too difficult to accomplish child will become disinterested and unmotivated
- ▷ Child should be involved in choosing rewards and the number of tokens required so they are interested in reward
- ▷ If the child already has too many privileges they may lose interest
- ▷ Keep reward system positive – do not remove tokens?
- ▷ Children with ADHD become bored, frustrated and confused quickly – keep rewards interesting, change frequently, and make sure that they are actually able to earn several tokens a day, keep the system simple and praise control of frustration when they do not earn tokens
- ▷ Do not loose track of tokens earned!



Behavioural Contracts

- ▷ For children old enough to understand the concept
- ▷ Child and adult identify targeted behaviour
- ▷ Limit to one or two behaviours
- ▷ State what you want the behaviour to be
- ▷ Set the goal to be achievable
- ▷ Reward for achieving goal should be given soon after
- ▷ The child should have input into choosing rewards
- ▷ Rewards can be anything from more one on one time, computer time, reading time, something child enjoys
- ▷ The difficulty of the goal can be gradually increased



Creating a Home Care Plan

Steps to Creating an ADHD Home Care Plan

1. Decide on behaviours you wish to encourage.
2. Decide on ways you can positively and consistently reinforce these.
3. Assess whether the child has the ability to consistently do the things that they are having difficulties with. If not, reduce expectations or try breaking them into more manageable chunks.
4. Review which EF, SR and ER impairments might be contributing to unwanted behaviour – How might these skills be taught, modeled and practiced?



Creating a Home Care Plan Continued

5. Review a list of accommodations and strategies which might be helpful in assisting the child with any impairments and decide on which to implement first.
6. Which external reminders might be useful? Develop these and implement in a staggered fashion.
7. Decide if you wish to try external reinforcements and which you wish to implement. Sometimes the CPS approach may be a good fit.
8. Agree on a specific plan and how it will be implemented. Divide the implementation into stages.



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