



ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDERS

DEFINITION:

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) can best be explained by highlighting some of the common characteristics of individuals with ADD/ADHD:

- Distractibility
- Difficulty following directions
- Difficulty working independently
- Difficulty focusing and concentrating
- Difficulty organizing school work and other responsibilities
- Avoiding activities that require sustained self-application
- Poor work habits and study skills
- Inconsistent performance in school work
- Difficulty "reading" social situations
- Difficulty with rule-governed situations

ADD/ADHD CAUSES:

Generally suspected causes of ADD/ADHD include:

- neurological
 - brain damage
 - head injury
 - anoxia
- fetal alcohol syndrome
- genetic
- environmental
 - toxins
 - poor nutrition

GENERAL BEHAVIORS ASSOCIATED WITH ADD/ADHD:

- Impulsivity
- Impatience
- Intrusiveness
- High activity level
- Aggressiveness
- Social immaturity
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty handling transitions
- Easily frustrated

MOTOR BEHAVIORS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH ADD/ADHD:

- Poor dynamic balance
- Delayed fine motor development
- Extraneous movements
- Perseveres (tends to continue an activity)
- Arrhythmia patterns
- Poor motor planning
- Misapplied force
- Premature, delayed or inappropriate responses
- Varied performance levels
 - skilled in one activity
 - relatively unskilled in another

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS:

- Use strategies to help the learner focus and maintain attention.
- Follow a routine.
- Plan smooth transitions.
- Alert a learner that a transition is about to occur.
- Develop a behavior management plan which includes:
 - positive reinforcement
 - quick redirection
- Use proximity control.
- Have clear expectations.
- Post and verbalize expectations often.
- Create a relaxed environment.
- Incorporate "down time" into the lesson.
- Decrease distractions in the learning environment.
- Reduce clutter.

RECOMMENDED WEB SITES:

[Child Development Institute](#)

[ADD: Born to Explore](#)

[National Attention Deficit Disorder Association](#)

[ADD Bibliography](#)

Developed by Texas Woman's University Graduate Adapted Physical Education Program in cooperation with Denton ISD (French, 1997).

Information on this sheet contains only suggested guidelines. Each student must be considered individually, and in many cases, a physician's written consent should be obtained.