

# Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in the classroom



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ADHD stand for attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity. According to Smith and Tyler (2010) “ attention deficit hyperactivity is a condition of hyperactivity, impulsivity, inattention; included in other health impairments.”(Smith and Tyler, 2010) ADHD is often to referred as attention deficit disorder (ADD). Amongst school-age children attention deficit hyperactivity disorder has been recognized as the most common disorder. ADHD has many symptoms but the main core symptoms are inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. A student’s academic success is often dependent on his/her ability to maintain a task, pay attention to the teacher and follow classroom expectations with minimal distraction. There are several ways of dealing with ADHD in the classroom that can make learning effective for these students. In order for teachers to understand ADHD they must a have knowledge about what it is and how to deal with children that has this type of disorder.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to research the effects of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in the classroom and if there is a way to control children in the classroom that has ADHD.

### Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed: What is ADHD; what effect does ADHD have in the classroom; what are the symptoms of ADHD; how can ADHD be controlled; how to teach students with ADHD; and is ADHD a learning disability?

## Definitions

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a condition in which a person not only has great difficulty concentrating for more than a few moments but also is inattentive, impulsive, and overactive. (Berger, 2009)

Learning Disability (LD) is a disability of unexpected underachievement typically involving reading that is resistant to treatment. (Smith and Tyler, 2010)

Inattention is the inability to pay attention or focus. (Smith and Tyler, 2010)

Hyperactivity is an impaired ability to sit or concentrate for long periods of time. (Smith and Tyler, 2010)

Impulsivity is an impaired ability to control one's own behavior. (Smith and Tyler, 2010)

## Literature Review

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is a labeled given to students that have a serve problem with attention and impulsiveness. Male children are the ones usually diagnosed with ADHD. ADHD usually effect boys more often than girls. The behavior problems usually develop by the time the kids start school. ADHD is hard to diagnose.

“ ADHD impacts each child's brain differently, so each case can look quite different in the classroom. Children with ADHD exhibit a range of symptoms:

some seem to bounce off the walls, some daydream constantly, and others just can't seem to follow the rules.”(Block and Smith, 2010)

According to Spencer (as cited in Rowe, 2010) “ ADHD affects approximately 5% of the elementary to high school-aged population. Once thought to be something that children outgrow, it is now estimated that approximately 50% of those children diagnosed with ADHD would continue to experience symptoms of the disorder into adulthood.”(Rowe, 2010)

“ ADHD is not a learning disability. ADHD is an associated disorder that can interfere with the individual's availability for learning. ADHD does not impact on the brain's ability to learn.” Silver (1990) According to Zimmerman & Schunk (as cited in Harris, 2005) “ self-regulatory abilities can improve a student's academic performance and are a critical factor in child development and learning.”(Harris, 2005)

According to Schlozman and Schlozman “ working with children that has ADHD is a challenge for all teachers. The problems that children with ADHD experience may lead to chaos for the child, teacher and other students in the classroom.”(Schlozman and Schlozman, 2000)

## Findings

ADHD students have trouble studying for long periods of time. ADHD students tend to be disorganized and forgetful. ADHD students need structure to support their learning and social performance. Teachers can help in many ways by making several classroom adjustments for children with ADHD. Teachers should keep distractions to a minimum. Teachers

should make assignments interesting. When possible, teachers should seat these children away from displays and at desks instead of at group tables. Teachers can reduce impulsivity by removing as many distractions as possible and verbally reminding students not to follow their first impulse. Graphic organizers and study guides are ways to help students become organized.

## Symptoms

ADHD has three core domain problems. The three core problems are inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity.

“ Children with ADHD are often inattentive in the classroom. This may be manifested by not being able to follow rules or directions, not listening to the teacher and being distracted by external stimuli in the classroom. This affects children with ADHD in that they are often singled out by the teacher for problems with inattention. They may not be able to complete assignments in a timely fashion and may feel inferior to their classmates. These children may also suffer poor grades as a result”. (Nichols, 2010)

“ Children with ADHD are hyperactive. They may not being able to sit still at their desks, frequently getting up and wandering about the classroom, asking to leave the classroom to go to the nurse or the bathroom and/or acting out in various ways that distract other students. Teachers can become frustrated with this behavior, and consequently, students with ADHD are often in trouble. The hyperactive behavior can negatively affect school performance and learning”. (Nichols, 2010)

“ Children with ADHD are impulsive and, due to their condition, may act without forethought. They frequently blurt out in class, make noises, laugh at inappropriate times and interrupt others. Because of these actions that occur through no fault of their own, ADHD children may require separation from the group, which can negatively affect their socialization and friendships with peers”. (Nichols, 2010)

## Control

Some of the symptoms of ADHD are often controlled with medication. If medication does not help control children with ADHD other methods are available to assist in controlling them, such as psychotherapy. Students with ADHD are often medicated to help control them. Children with ADHD are not acting willfully. Children with ADHD are not interrupting the class or being disobedient because they are bad, they are acting this way because of a disorder they have. If you keep this in mind, it will be a lot easier to respond to the child in a positive, supportive way. With patience, compassion, and plenty of support, teachers and parents can manage a child with ADHD.

## Conclusion

No two children with ADHD are alike and therefore no single curriculum or educational program will be best for all children. Children, adolescents, and adults diagnosed with ADHD often find it very difficult to succeed in school. “ Individuals with ADHD struggle with various combinations of hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inattentiveness.” (Smith and Tyler, 2010) The behaviors that come from these symptoms make it challenging for students with ADHD to interact with the typical school setting in the same way that their non-  
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ADHD peers. According to the guide by the US Department of Education there is

“ a series of instructional strategies that have proven to be successful in educating children with ADHD. However, it should be emphasized again that these techniques are also highly useful for all children. The three main components of a successful strategy for educating children with ADHD are academic instruction, behavioral interventions, and classroom accommodations. By incorporating techniques from these three areas into their everyday instructional and classroom management practices, teachers will be empowered to improve both the academic performance and the behavior of their students with ADHD. In doing so, teachers will create an enhanced learning environment for all students”. (US DOE)

### Implications

From research I have found that it is important to find ways to keep children with ADHD interested and involved in the classroom in order for them to be successful. Teachers are not fully trained or equipped to handle students with ADHD.