

Impact adhd and autism on education



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

How does ADHD and/or autism impact on the pupil, other pupils, teachers and the whole school?

Introduction and Overview

First, is to define ADHD and Autism: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a disorder that tampers with major parts of the brain that is related the control of a person's attention, activity and emotions which make them appear hyper or weird. ADHD can also be considered as the poor functioning and poor communication between different areas of the brain. Autism mainly appears during the first 3 years of the child's development and growth. It's in relation to routines and repetition of behaviors which range from mild to severe. It doesn't mean that autism is a damage or disease.

Jaffe-Gill et al (2008) postulate that the symptoms of ADHD will show if the section of the brain which controls hyperactivity, is not fully developed or not coordinating well with the rest of the brain and therefore it is not that the child is not able to control his behavior. Autism is not purely a genetic disorder which cannot be treated but certain reactions on the genes which are indeed affected by the external environmental factors. Autism is treatable as the important part that should be understood is, if the reactions can be flipped on, they can be as well be flipped off.

Secondly, ADHD and Autism affect children and the signs and symptoms expose themselves in many different forms. The three major areas which most of the symptoms are categorized in are; in attention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. It becomes clinical when the impulsiveness and hyperactivity go beyond the social norms. The child may have difficulty in paying attention,

may be fidgety, gets easily distracted, may not be able to sit still, may have difficulty in doing homework, chores around the house, or may be disorganized.

Consequently, the hyperactive-impulsive type ADHD symptoms include; being always 'on the go', struggles to wait in line, always fidgeting or squirming, running or climbing in excess, Struggles to remain seated, Blurts out answer before hearing question, talks too much, Struggles with interrupting or intruding and lastly they cannot play quietly. The last of the ADHD types is the combined type. This is the common of the three and it is a combination of the inattentive type and the hyperactive-impulsive type. Before a parent or teacher gets to establish an ADHD case, they may feel that the child is acting out or seeking attention. Without medication or/and behavioural therapy a child struggles to control his or her behaviour.

Other signs of ADHD are shown when the child gets so disruptive or fidgety in class that interferes with the teacher as she tries to teach the other students, the student blurt out answers in class, the student find sit hard to wait for his turn in the line, the child also becomes so hyperactive that he cannot sit through a session for instance, the church service or watching a movie. With autism the three core areas that are involved or show the signs of the disorder include; social-not socially interacting with the environment and just being by themselves, communication which is manifested by the age of 3 when a delay in speech is eminent, and repetitive movements or limited interest.

Fact file on ADHD**There are various facts about Autism and ADHD:**

On ADHD, it affects between 5 to 10% of the school going children and affects more boys than girls about 3 to 4 times more, another fact is that 50 to 60 % of the children will continue to experience the symptoms throughout to adulthood, the ones which need pediatric prescriptions are about 78%. Many cases of ADHD are reported worldwide, especially those that affect children below the age of 3 years (Fuller, 2008). This is the year that is said to be when Autism and ADHD manifest and begin to show up prominently.

On Autism; 1 in every 150 children are diagnosed with autism while 1 in every 94 boys has the disorder. It is further evident that each day, about 67 children are diagnosed with the Autism disorder and a new case is reported every 20 minutes. In comparison to AIDS, diabetes, & cancer, it is further true according to statistics that more children will be diagnosed with autism this shows that it is the most rapidly growing acute developmental disability in the U. S. boys are expected to have autism four times more. There is neither cure nor medical detection for autism.

Since ADHD and Autism affect the school going children, and they spend at least eight hours everyday in school, the teachers and students are more likely to observe the change in behaviors in the students and hence a big impact will be felt within the school and its environment. This document will look at the impacts of autism on pupil, on other pupils, on teachers and on the whole school.

Impact of Autism on Pupil

Children with severe speech difficulties finding it difficult to communicate may become very frustrated. They may be reluctant to communicate or may refuse to do so at all. If required to communicate, they may show signs of intense stress or anxiety. The child may have low self esteem and may feel rejected by peers (and may in fact be rejected by some). In such circumstances, it may become difficult to recognize that.

Without support, the child may develop behavioral, emotional and social difficulties. This appears to be supported by evidence of communication problems among population such as children in care and pupils in school.

Because of their dependence on structure, major problems can arise for children with autism outside lesson times. Although breaks from lessons are designed to provide normal children with the opportunities they need to relax and to interact with their peers, for a child with autism such period can be extremely stressful, children who are able to behave quite acceptably when involved in guided and structured activities frequently appear much more 'odd' or unusual at times of free play.

Stereotyped and ritualistic behaviors may become more apparent and exposure to teasing or bullying is much more of a risk, especially because staff supervision at such times is greatly reduced. Break times are designed to reduce the pressure from the children not increase and therefore by allowing the children with autism to go for the break will just increase the amount of pressure in them thus it would be good if they are not allowed to go but instead relax in class by themselves without any disturbance.

School meals can be another source of difficulty and it is clear from personal accounts that having to tolerate the noise and smells of meals in a crowded school canteen can be almost akin to torture for individuals with autism.

Been forced into close proximity with other students, or made to eat food of particular textures or mixed together on the plate (many individuals cannot bear separate items of food touching each other) can be extremely stressful.

Clare Sainsbury writes: (the potential of making mistakes (and the anxiety caused by fear of making mistakes) is enormous. One of my most vivid memories of secondary schools is been hauled out of the lunch queue by one of the dinner ladies shouting angrily, and made to stand to one side; she refused to tell me why. Only after I had burst into tears was I allowed back.... nobody ever explained what I had done wrong.... and to this day I still have no idea.)

A quiet corner in which to eat, being allowed to eat slightly earlier or later than other pupils, or being permitted to bring sandwiches are among the simple solutions that can transform a nightmare into a practicable tolerant activity. If the principal problem is lack of knowledge of what to do when the basic rules can be explained simply - and discreetly- beforehand. Games and extracurricular lessons are also frequent causes of stress for pupils with autism, who may lack the motor coordination, the ability to follow rapid instructions or unwritten rules and the social reciprocity required in order to contribute to these activities in any useful way.

Competitive sports are a particular problem and are probably best avoided altogether, both for the sake of the person with autism and the rest of the

class. However, physical fitness can be improved by encouraging activities that improve body awareness and coordination such as yoga, swimming, golf, walking or gymnastics if sensitively taught.

Impact of Autism on Other Pupils

The impact of Autism on other pupils can be as a result of the reaction of the children affected by Autism (Autistics). Due to the hyperactivity, in them, the other pupils will develop fear in them as they will seem as a threat to them. For instance, if a child is the kind who throws things around when annoyed, will make his classmates scream, run away, there may be accidents in that a child can be hit by the furniture or the object thrown around.

Autistics are also known to be bright and understand things so fast, besides their self esteem was lowered by other students, they can also lower other pupils self esteem in academics especially. This is so because the weaker ones will be teased by them and feel threatened instead. In many cases, if the teacher does not realize this early enough, she may have ea tendency of rushing through the syllabus since of the assumption that if one or two pupils have understood what is been taught, the rest will learn from them.

For some children this lack of understanding may result in a refreshing acceptance of the child with autism for the person they are. However, some children may be fearful and this may result in ostracizing, bullying, or mocking the children with autism (Kinsley, 2008). These attitudes create a matrix of difficulties for the child with the disorder which exacerbates their already significant impairments in forming peer relationships.

Impact of Autism on Teachers

According to Folin and Lian (2008), a teacher's attitude towards pupils with Autism is directly related to the knowledge and understanding of the condition. Consequently, there is a need to develop systems and means by which knowledge and understanding about Autism are share with other colleagues. Understandably, we are in competition with multitude of other demands on professionals and, therefore, need to promote information, in an accessible and manageable form which is tailored to the context they are working in. the depth of knowledge required might lie on a continuum from awareness to expertise by the role they perform.

Colleagues whose only contact with pupils with autism is during break times or assemblies will need a different level of understanding to those colleagues who may share the same teaching space. Similarly, these colleagues' needs will differ again from the people primarily responsible for the teaching of youngsters with Autism. Responding to this continuum of professional development need, the training portfolio may include: Informal approaches, inset days, outreach, accredited courses, and resources.

Each of these depends upon practitioners within the field promoting the cause of pupils with the disorder in a positive and proactive manner.

Impact of Autism on the Whole School

A major impact in the whole school would be losing children due to parents transferring their children to other schools because of various reasons such bullying. There has been case from various schools of major bullying taking place within the school; educators and society are concerned about the violent attacks in the schools (Schultz, n. d.). It is imperative that there

should be a school-wide bullying prevention programs. This program will be specially tailored to address all issues that come along with the ADHD and Autism pupils.

Bullying is pervasive, in the schools and adults ought to be at the forefront in bullying. This is basically because a lot of pupils will lose out especially if they are bullied until it affects their academics. It is further recommended that the right academic modification as well as academic adaptation is incorporated into the school program. The law generally requires that every child should be provided with proper and a safe learning environment. Every school should thus have the facilities for special education of the children with Autism. Compliance to these standards should be ensured on a constant basis.

Conclusion

ADHD and Autism are disorders that affect parts of the brain. They are not purely genetic and can be controlled. Measures should be taken to create a good environment for both the children that need special attention and the other children and also the school environment. ADHD and Autism therefore affects the children's ability to learn. This in itself means that there are various learning activities that the students with Autism will have to miss out on, thus impacting negatively on their performance in class. Whenever the class performance deeps, the school's overall performance will also dip in a similar fashion.

To sum it up, the pupil with ADHD and Autism will learn slowly thus impeding their ability to keep up to pace with the rest. Their performance will also be

negative with minimal or negative advancement. Similarly, the other pupils will find it difficult to be taught at the same pace as the pupil with ADHD and Autism (Sprinkle, 2004). When their learning is affected, they will have to also exhibit withdraw signs as well as lose interest in the subject being taught. On the other hand, the teachers will find it very strenuous so that they will develop an attitude that will affect their teaching patterns. Eventually this translates into poor school performance and loss of reputation as a result. Therefore, the school will suffer from adverse publicity from the critics. Likewise, the school will be compelled to expend large sums of money in setting up a unit specially meant for the ADHD and Autism pupils.

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