

Everyday Tips for Parenting a Child with ADHD

Ideas for Helping Your Child at Home

Provide structure.

Keep a similar schedule every day, from morning until lights out. Include time for homework, activities, and so on. Write down any changes to the schedule in advance.

Have a place for everything.

And keep everything in its place: clothing, books, etc.

Organize their calendar.

Write down upcoming homework assignments and tests. Plan out steps and key dates for longer-term projects.

Post a chart of household chores.

Check off items as they're completed.

Be clear and consistent with your child.

Children, with or without ADHD, need rules they can follow.

Praise good behavior.

Children with ADHD often expect criticism. Reward them when they follow the rules.

Respond when rules are broken.

Children want to be independent and try new things. If they break the rules, stay calm and be matter-of-fact in your response. Keeping your cool can be challenging, so step away to collect yourself when you need to.

Try a tutor or coach.

A tutor may be able to help your child with a wide array of practical activities.

Ideas for Helping Your Child at School

Take advantage of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 504 (for short) provides things like a recorder for note-taking, a quiet place to work, and access to a computer in school for written work.

Read the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

IDEA has a provision called the Individualized Education Program (IEP). It's a comprehensive plan for addressing your child's specific learning needs.

Ideas for Managing Hyperactivity

Provide a stress ball.

A small toy or other object that your child can squeeze or play with discreetly in his or her seat may be helpful.

Limit screen time.

Instead of sitting with a computer or tablet, or in front of the television, encourage your child to engage in a physical activity.

Encourage sports.

Playing a sport—or at least running around before and after school—can help a child with ADHD. Make sure your child never misses recess or a P.E. class.

Offer errands.

Even if it's only walking across the room to sharpen pencils or put dishes away, ask your child with ADHD to run an errand or complete a task for you.

Ideas for Creating a Workspace for Your Child

Provide necessary materials.

Ensure your child has all the necessary materials to do homework (paper, calculator, pencils, etc.) available in their workspace.

Color-code folders.

Use color coding to help remind your child what goes where. A folder designated for completed homework that travels back and forth to home and school can be helpful for some students.

Remove distractions.

Keep pets in another room, and set up a workplace that faces away from windows or a television.

Use a timer.

Help your child know the difference between work time and break time with a timer. Schedule 5-10 minute breaks during homework to allow your child a chance to move around.