

Exploring ADHD in Children

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The Fallacies and The Truth



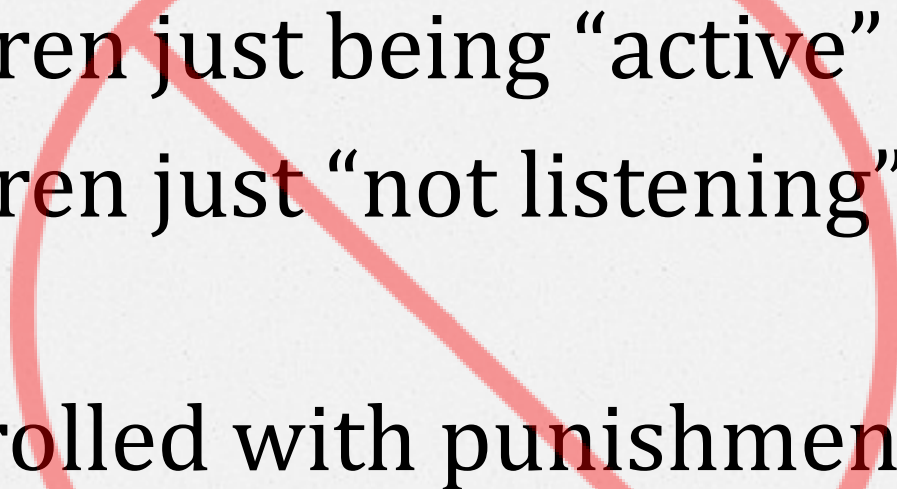
- “Boys will be boys.”
- They just need some discipline!
- Sugar/ candy is the problem.
- Caffeine is the problem.
- Parenting is the problem.

What is ADHD?

- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is **a medical disorder** - one of the most common childhood **brain disorders** and can continue through adolescence and adulthood.



What ADHD is not

- Children just being “active” or “boys”
 - Children just “not listening” or “being bad”
 - Controlled with punishment
- 

Causes of ADHD



What do we know? Not much.....

A genetic link?



A nutrition and food link?



An environmental link?



Other issues that can cause ADHD symptoms

- Undetected seizures that could be associated with other medical conditions
- Middle ear infection that is causing hearing problems
- Undetected hearing or vision problems
- Anxiety or depression, or other mental health problems.

How is ADHD diagnosed?



ADHD in Young Children

The American Academy of Pediatrics' guidelines say children under age 6 cannot be diagnosed with ADHD...but

ADHD in Young Children

ADHD is now the most common mental health disorder diagnosed in the preschool years.



ADHD in Young Children – **Warning Signs**

Toddlers with ADHD have behavior issues that go beyond the normal challenges of early childhood.

- Nearly always restless -- wants to constantly kick or jiggle feet or twist around in his/her seat. Insists that he/she "must" get up after being seated for more than a few minutes

ADHD in Young Children – **Warning Signs**

Some experts believe that structural imbalances in the brain are linked to ADHD, which could explain why some very young children may be

- slow to walk
- have balance problems early on.
- cannot hop on one foot by age four



ADHD in Young Children – **Warning Signs**

- Makes more noise than other children of the same age
- Warms up too quickly to strangers
- Will resist sitting still for most things, even meals.



ADHD at Birth?

Research tells us that:

- Newborns with APGAR scores between 1 and 4 had a 75% higher risk of developing ADHD than babies with scores of 9 to 10.
- The risk of ADHD was 63% higher with scores of 5 to 6.

What does ADHD look like at school?

- Inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity are the key behaviors that impact ADHD in school.
- To be diagnosed with the disorder, a child must have symptoms for 6 or more months **and to a degree that is greater than other children of the same age.**



Inattention

What is inattention – and how does it impact the classroom?

Hyperactivity



What is hyperactivity- and how does it impact the classroom?

Impulsivity



What is impulsivity – and how does it impact the classroom ?

Language Deficits

Slow processing of information; reads, writes, and responds slowly; recalls facts slowly. Children with ADHD will have issues with:

- Listening and Reading Comprehension:
- Spoken Language (oral expression):
- Written Language:



Poor Organizational Skills and Memory

- Disorganized- loses homework; difficulty getting started on tasks; difficulty knowing what steps should be taken first; difficulty organizing thoughts, sequencing ideas, writing essays, and planning ahead.
- Impaired Sense of Time:
- Forgetful

Poor Fine Motor Coordination

- Handwriting is poor, small, difficult to read;
- Writes slowly;
- Avoids writing and homework because it is difficult;
- Prefers to print rather than write cursive;
- Produces less written work.





Weak Executive Functioning

Sometimes very bright students with attention deficits do poorly in school. The latest research findings focus on the role weak executive functioning plays in school failure

High IQ alone is not enough for students to succeed in school!

Why is it important to act

The teenage years can be tough for kids. But for teens with ADHD it is especially hard!



Risky behavior is very common in kids and adults with ADHD.

Treatment of ADHD

It is generally believed that children with ADHD benefit most from a multidisciplinary approach that comes at the problem in many ways simultaneously

Medical

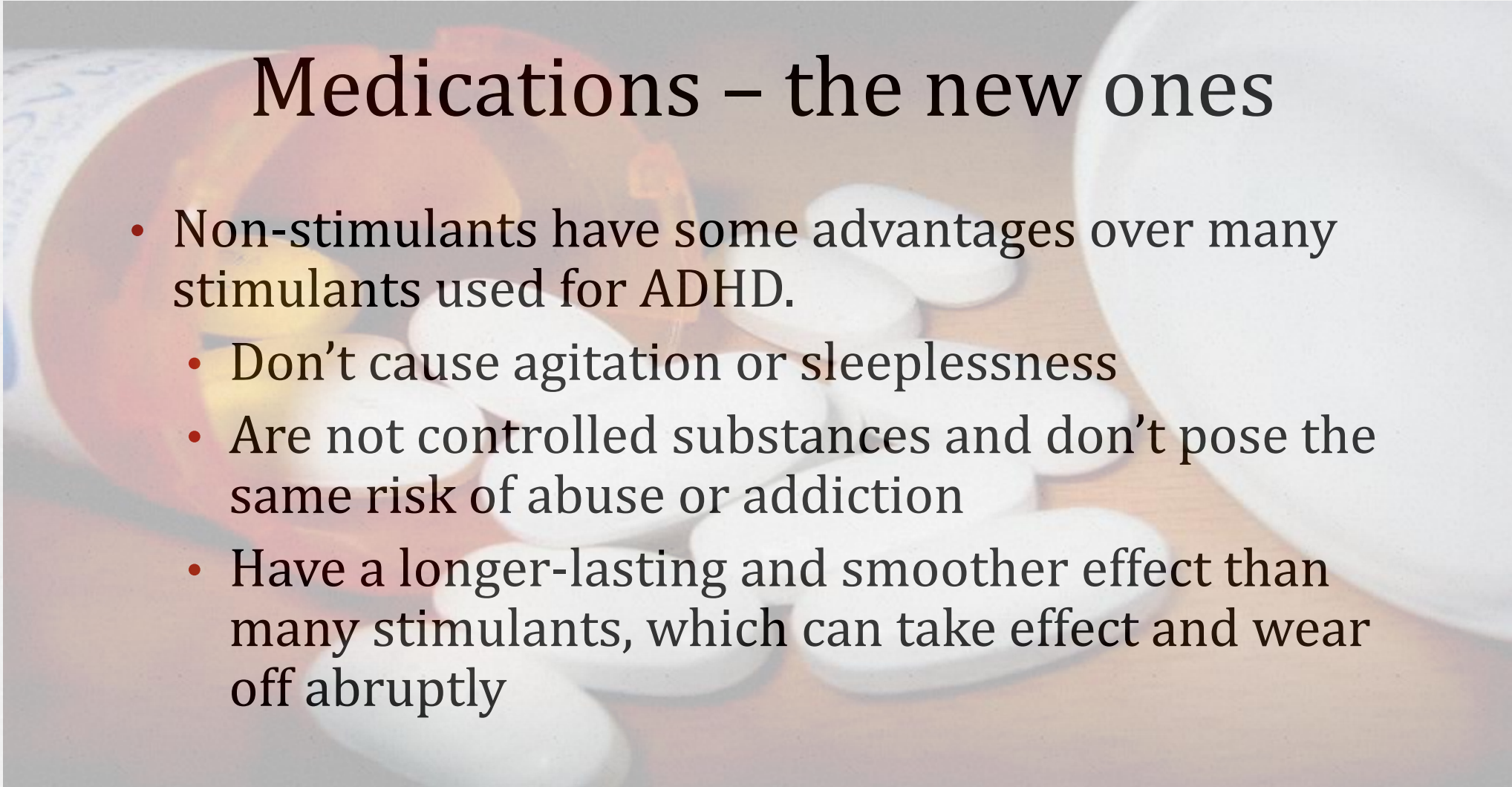
Educational

Behavioral



Medications – the old ones

- Medications for ADHD have changed over the years for the better.
- Stimulants such as Ritalin, Adderal and Vyvance are still the most common type of medication used for treating ADHD.



Medications – the new ones

- Non-stimulants have some advantages over many stimulants used for ADHD.
 - Don't cause agitation or sleeplessness
 - Are not controlled substances and don't pose the same risk of abuse or addiction
 - Have a longer-lasting and smoother effect than many stimulants, which can take effect and wear off abruptly

Medications – the new ones

- There are three new long-acting non-stimulants have been approved by the FDA for treating ADHD:
 - Strattera is used for both children and adults.
 - Intuniv is approved for ADHD in children ages 6 to 17.
 - Kapvay is approved for ADHD in children ages 6 to 17.

IDEA and ADHD

Do children with ADHD qualify for Special Education under IDEA?

Sometimes.....**YES**

Sometimes....**NO**



What about a 504?

Section 504 says that a child's disability must adversely affect a major life function.

Going to school is a major life function!

What Schools Can Do

- Let them move!
- Activities need to be short and focused, with many opportunities for small successes
- Teach them to monitor and manage their symptoms.

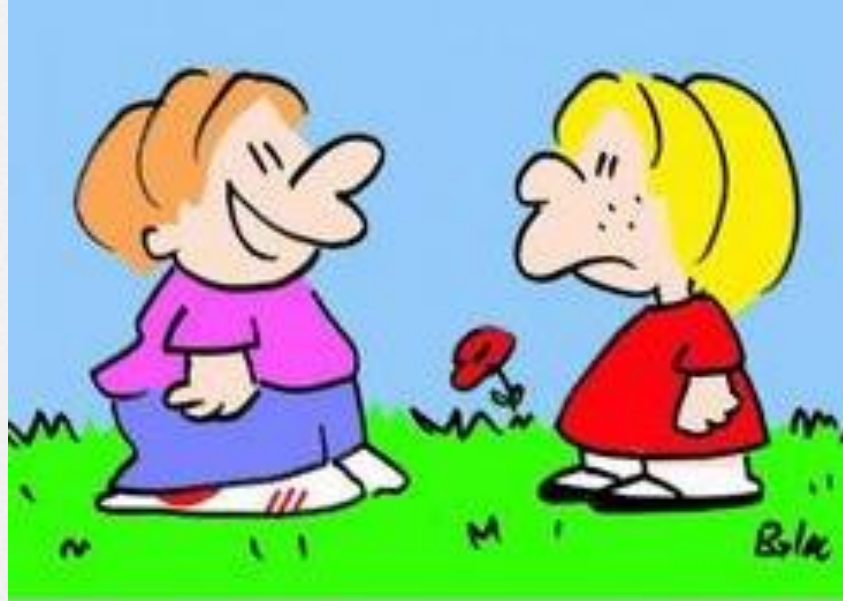


What Schools Can Do



- Teach kids what to do instead of what not to do.
- Make directions clear and reasonable.

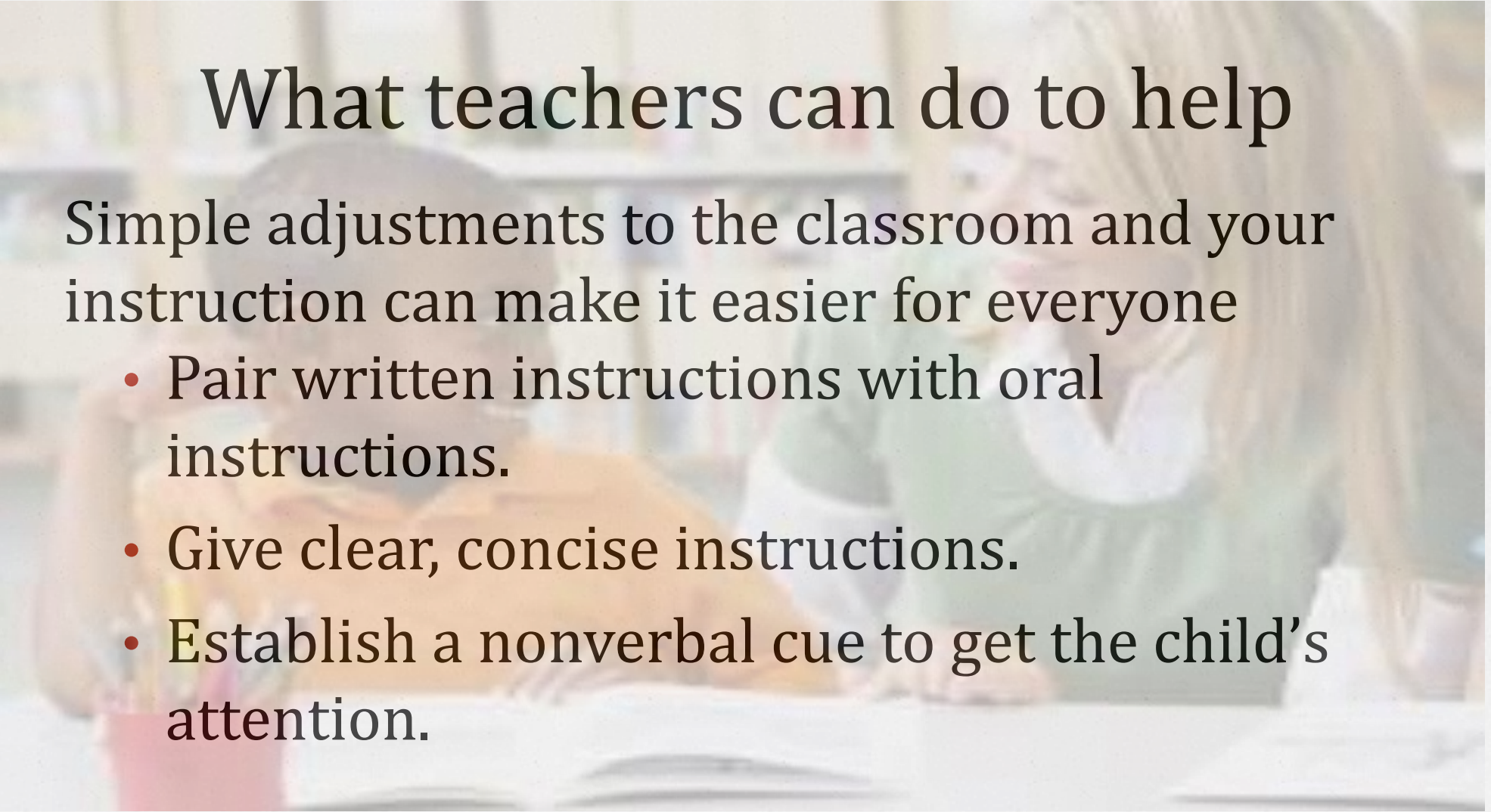
Behavioral Interventions



"The Principal suspended me —
School is the only place in the
world where you can get time
off for *bad* behavior."

Top 10 Positive Behavior Tips!

- 1) Remember five positives to one negative*
- 2) Set the stage for success, reward the effort*
- 3) Give clear, specific directions*
- 4) Stay calm, use a calm voice - Nagging gets you nowhere!*
- 5) Set reasonable limits – Avoid using “always” or “never”*
- 6) Be CONSISTENT! “Yes means Yes and No means No”*
- 7) Set the example – Actions speak louder than words*
- 8) Proactively anticipate situations*
- 9) Have patience – A little goes a long way*
- 10) Have fun and enjoy the ride!*



What teachers can do to help

Simple adjustments to the classroom and your instruction can make it easier for everyone

- Pair written instructions with oral instructions.
- Give clear, concise instructions.
- Establish a nonverbal cue to get the child's attention.

What teachers can do to help

Preschoolers (Age 5 and Younger)

Organize the day. Have a routine, and use photos/visual schedules to teach that routine

Let the child know if the schedule is changing



What teachers can do to help

Children Ages 6-12

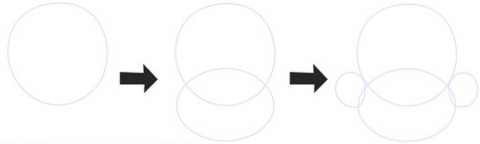
Explain and instruct. Give clear instructions for tasks.

Make your expectations reasonable - If an assignment is hard or lengthy, break it down into steps that can be done one at a time.

Steps to follow

When drawing each animal in this book

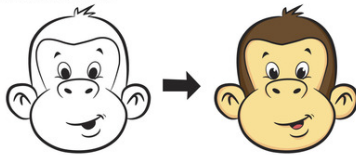
1. When starting out, sketch a shape (or shapes) that will be the base for the character you are drawing. Sketch these base lines **very lightly**, because later you will erase them. These erasable lines will be represented as light blue lines throughout the book.



2. After lightly drawing the shapes that are the base for your character, you are now ready to draw the actual lines (over the sketched base lines) that will bring the character to life!



3. After drawing your final lines go ahead and erase the base lines you sketched in lightly to make the shapes. Now your character is completed! Add some color in, if you wish, and you'll add even more life to your character.



What teachers can do to help



Teens

Involve them – teach them to be in charge of their own behavior

Discipline in private – be aware of their peer

Be predictable

Growing up with ADHD

- Having ADHD is not the end of the world and many successful adults have ADHD and had it as children.
- Medication may not be necessary, but the right medicine may help. Work with parents and doctors to understand the child and what you can all do to help them navigate their own bodies and experiences.

Contact me!

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