



My Name is NOT spelled: ADHD!

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Definition and Characteristics

by Sara Pollaro

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is a Disruptive Behavior Disorder:

Characterized by the presence of a set of chronic and impairing behavior patterns that display abnormal levels of hyperactivity, impulsivity inattention, or their combination.

- ADHD was first described by Heinrich Hoffman in 1845.
- ADHD has been scientifically studied for more than 50 years.
- By the late 1960's the condition characterized by excessive movement was first called hyperactivity.



Major ADHD Characteristics

Hyperactivity

How a child moves and includes-

- Difficulty staying seated
- Fidgeting and bouncing while seated
- Talking excessively
- Seeming to be in constant motion
- Climbing on things and jumping off things inappropriately
- Running inappropriately.

Impulsivity

How a child behaves and includes-

- Having great difficulty waiting for turns
- Interrupting children's play activities
- Interrupting conversations
- Blurting out answers to questions not directed at them
- Acting recklessly without thinking of the consequences anger.

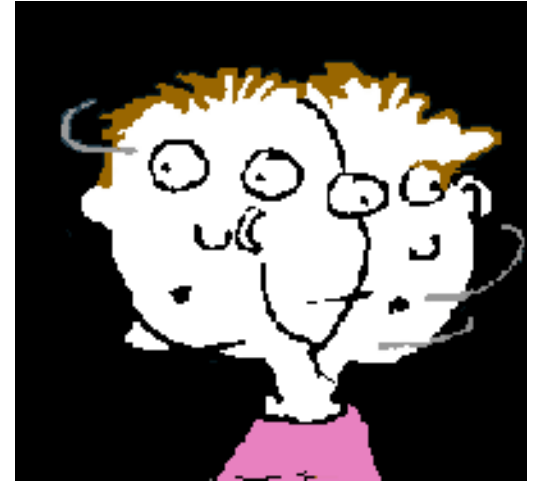
Inattention

How a child concentrates and includes-

- Being easily distracted
- Not appearing to listen when being spoken to
- Having difficulty following directions or finishing tasks
- Having difficulty staying organized, often misplacing their things.



Interpreting ADHD Characteristics



- Characteristics of ADHD are extreme behaviors that cannot be ignored.
- These behaviors have a negative effect on a child's home life, education and social life.
- Characteristics of ADHD are behaviors that have been demonstrated for years>
- The behaviors cannot be explained away by situations, such as a divorce, a family move or a new baby.
- Characteristics of ADHD are not considered to be 'typical' age appropriate behavior.
- ADHD characteristics are typically present in an ADHD child before the child reaches the age of seven.

What causes it?

Causes of the disability

- ADHD is a medical disorder, and it can be caused by a number of factors that affect how the brain develops and functions.



Exposure to Toxic Substances as a Cause of ADHD

- Mothers who smoked tobacco products or used alcohol during their pregnancy increase the chances of ADHD in their children. Lead exposure during the first three years of life is also a cause of ADHD.

Injury to the Brain from Trauma, Brain Tumors, Strokes or Disease

- Brain injury can be the result of trauma, brain tumor, stroke or disease. Such circumstances can result in a diagnosis of ADHD.

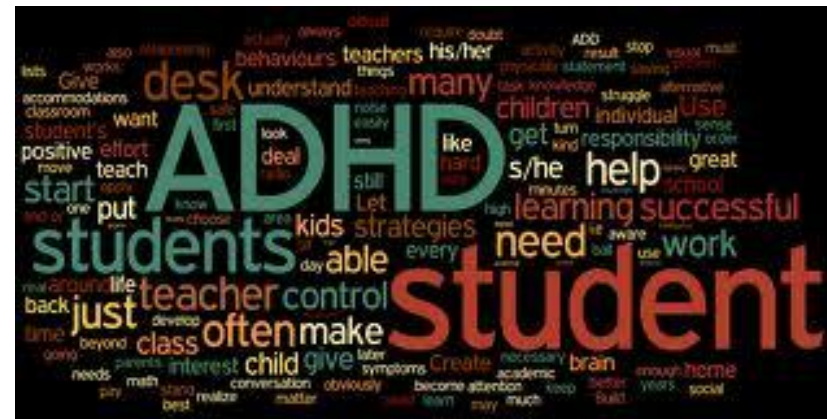
Identification and Placement

- Most people don't worry about, or even think about ADHD until the child's behavior starts to interfere with school, home and social life.
- These problems are often associated with behavioral/emotional and social interaction problems.
- Parents should be advised of special interventions that can help the child in the home and general education settings.
- Once a diagnosis of ADHD is attained, an assessment of what is best for the child can be made concerning placement and goal setting.



Educational Approaches

- Federal and state regulations regarding special education apply to eligible children with ADHD.
- That is, any child suspected of having ADHD and requiring specially designed instruction must be evaluated to determine the child's eligibility and need for special education services.
- If the student is suspected of having a disability and possible need for special education and related services, IDEA procedures must be implemented.
- If the student's behavior has improved, interventions should be continued, and the student's progress should be monitored.
- If the student's behavior has not improved, the need for further evaluation should be determined.



References

Child Development Guide: Recognizing ADHD Characteristics

<http://www.child-development-guide.com/adhd-characteristics.html>

ADHD: Identification, Treatment, and Educational Interventions

<http://www.slc.sevier.org/idtxed.htm>