

Behavior Management for ADD/ADHD

12 key points to guide leaders in dealing with children with ADD / ADHD.

Overview of Techniques
(Based on CHADD paper)

1. Eye contact is essential when talking to ADD and ADHD children.
2. Explain carefully. Give specific, step-by-step directions.
3. Eliminate or reduce external stimuli.
4. Check for understanding by asking the child to repeat the directions to you.
5. Give directions slowly. Repeat if necessary. Give only a few directions at a time.
6. Organization is essential. ADD and ADHD children need lists, charts, and assignments charts.
7. Be cognizant that ADD and ADHD may never "go away."
8. ADHD children often misunderstand what is said.
9. If the child is taking medication, the medication will probably have worn off by late afternoon. Often such children are not medicated late in the day lest the medication interfere with sleep patterns.
10. Give short time-outs: one minute per year of age or less.
11. For younger children, give small amounts of work. The amount of time spent on restricted work is the child's responsibility, in terms of what he can handle. Time restriction is not recommended.
12. Reward positive behaviors. Immediate reinforcement (hourly, daily, weekly) is better than long-term. One technique may be positive only for a short time (a few weeks or months, depending upon the child's age). Alternating between two or more systems may be more successful.