



Recommended Practices for ADHD Students

Research endorses the following types of behavior modification for use with ADHD children:

- 1) Children with ADHD perform best with clear expectations and immediate feedback.
- 2) Positive reinforcement forms the basis of the plan, and ranges from frequent positive feedback (praise) to token rewards where specified behavior earns treats and privileges.
- 3) Negative feedback includes short, immediate reprimands and redirection to effectively reduce undesirable behaviors.
- 4) Response cost, combines positive reinforcement (earning tokens that can be exchanged for privileges or rewards) and punishment (deducting tokens for undesirable behavior), to increase on-task behavior and work completion.
- 5) Correspondence training rewards children for matching their intentions to their actions. They promise to complete a task, do it, then report it.

Modifying Test Delivery. Children with ADHD have problems with executive function and written language. They better demonstrate knowledge through oral testing, performance testing, or alternative demonstrations of accomplishment. Provide extra time to complete tests and quiet testing areas away from distractions.

Tailoring Homework. Modify or shorten assignments. Even older students may need help managing time and keeping track of assignments, textbooks, and instructional materials. Use daily assignment sheets that parents can monitor, and possibly, an extra set of textbooks at home. Provide assistance in planning and executing long-term assignments.

One-on-One Tutorials. Class-wide peer tutoring pairs students for drill-and-practice activities and has proven effective for children with ADHD. It provides them the immediate feedback they need, and reduces demands on teachers' time.

Curriculum. Curricula must be interesting, challenging, collaborative, and meaningful. It must connect to real-life experiences and teach through real-life applications. It must entail choices, teach responsibility, and allow opportunities for initiative and creative effort. The task must be rewarding itself, since ADHD students "function in the realm of the immediate" and may not work for delayed rewards, like grades. When these requirements are met, the student is internally motivated and the need to control student interest and behavior diminishes.

Instructional Methods. Research endorses the following methods: lesson preview, direct instruction, link new knowledge to prior knowledge and personal experiences, check for understanding, and prepare for transition to next activity.

Children with ADHD are "learn by doing, trial and error learners" who will work to get something stimulating, active, and novel. They will also work "to get out of or away from what is repetitious and boring. This is why adding stimulation to instruction improves performance. Build novelty, interest, verbal response and motor activities into academic tasks.

Successful programs for children with ADHD integrate the following three components:

- 1) **Accommodations:** what you can do to make learning easier for students with ADHD.
- 2) **Instruction:** the methods you use in teaching.
- 3) **Intervention:** How you head off behaviors that disrupt concentration or distract other students.

Your most effective tool, however, in helping a student with ADHD is a positive attitude. Make the student your partner by saying, "Let's figure out ways together to help you get your work done." Assure the student that you'll be looking for good behavior and quality work and when you see it, reinforce it with immediate and sincere praise. Finally, look for ways to motivate a student with ADHD by offering rewards on a point or token system.

