



## Information sheet for teachers

# Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Students with ADHD have different levels of attention and concentration. They may lose focus quickly or get easily distracted during tasks or conversations. Others may not pay close attention to detail and so can make 'careless' mistakes. They may be forgetful and appear disorganised. Some students may also be hyperactive and impulsive. They may fidget, appear restless or move around the classroom when they are expected to sit still. They may talk a lot, interrupt others, and find it uncomfortable to play quietly or wait their turn.

## Strengths

### Students with ADHD can be:

- Creative
- Confident
- Eager
- Excited
- Helpful

### They may need help with:

- Rules, instructions, tasks
- Reading, writing, learning
- Assignments and homework
- Planning and organisation
- Managing emotions
- Friendships
- Positive self-image

*Tip: Use AllPlay Learn's Strengths and abilities communication checklist to know more about your students*

*Individualise strategies and link them to a child's interests, strengths and supports!*



## Evidence-based strategies



### Consider how you communicate

- Get full attention before speaking
- Be clear and direct
- Simplify instructions and learning
  - Break down tasks and instructions
  - Provide written/visual handouts
- Check for understanding frequently
- Vary teaching formats
  - Hands-on learning
  - Visual demonstrations



### Tailor activities to be as inclusive as possible

- Alternate activities
  - By concentration or interest levels
- Provide choices
- Match teaching to interests and abilities
- Help them
  - Use prompts, demonstrations
  - Also teach students to ask for help
- Give time and opportunities to practise
- Work collaboratively
  - In groups or with buddies



### Modify the environment

- Minimise potential distractions
- Consider seating
  - Near you or peers modelling positive behaviours
  - Give short seat breaks



### Structure classes

- Set clear classroom rules
- Create a consistent daily routine
  - Use a visual schedule with a timer/clock

*Tip: See AllPlay Learn's Class schedule*



### Teach academic skills

- Teach organisation strategies
  - Colour-coded folders, planners, checklists
  - Tasks, notes, books, key dates
- Ask parents for support



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### Provide feedback

- Give praise and correction
- Use a reward system
  - Monitor progress with a visual chart
  - Offer reward choices
- Redirect rather than reprimand
- Use a home-school communication system
  - Frequent and open communication
  - Home-school consistency



### Support students to self-manage

- Set simple and clear goals
  - Positive achievable behaviours
- Teach self-instruction skills
  - Problem-solving skills to develop persistence
- Teach students how to self-monitor

*Tip: Use AllPlay Learn's Problem-solving guide + Self-monitoring form to support students with step-by-step instructions*

## Best-practice tips



- **Get student feedback**
- **Teach social skills**
  - How to listen, make conversation, give and accept praise/opinions, etc
- **Do basic relaxation exercises together**
  - Watch Elsternwick Primary School's story: Breathing and Relaxation

## Other co-occurring conditions

- Anxiety
- Autism
- Oppositional defiant disorder
- Specific learning disorder (reading, writing, or mathematics)

## Other considerations

- **Safety**
  - Use prompts and cues to stop or calm down students
- **Excursions/camps**
  - Explain new structures, routines, rules, and expectations
  - Use buddies as positive reminders
- **Behaviour**
  - Challenging behaviours may be communicating an unmet need or want
  - Managing emotions
- **Friendships**
- **Homework**
  - Set homework within student's abilities
  - Guide students to use a planner
  - Seek family support
- **Classroom transitions**
  - Managing time between lessons
- **Transitions**
  - Practise organisation, homework, time- and self-management skills

## Relevant Resources

- Peer information activity book - ADHD
- AllPlay Learn Stories:
  - Going on an excursion
  - Waiting my turn
  - How to be organised
- AllPlay Learn's evidence-based strategies for:
  - Behaviour
  - Emotions
  - Learning and memory
  - Planning and organisation
  - Processing speed
  - Social skills
  - Thinking/cognition
  - Transitions