

Look after yourself

Having some time for yourself is vital. Don't leave it until you are too worn out to benefit from a rest. If your child has sleep difficulties, your sleep will also be disturbed, so try to have rest when your child is at school.

If you find it hard to keep your cool, consider attending an anger management course to gain some useful strategies to help you stay in control. It may even assist you in helping your child to manage their feelings.

Look for the positives

Many children with ADHD grow up to be very successful adults because they channel their extra energy well. If they enjoy an activity, they will often be highly motivated to persevere and become highly skilled.

They may also have sharp observational skills and good long-term memories. It's very important for children with ADHD to know they are loved no matter what, and to find activities in which they can succeed.



Helping you to be an even better mum or dad



For more information and tips on family life, visit cff.org.uk

You might like to:

- Attend a local *Time Out for Parents - Children with Special Needs: ADHD* course cff.org.uk/courses
- Read the *Top Tips - Raising children with Special Needs* leaflet cff.org.uk/shop
- Visit the *Additional Needs* section on our website and sign up to receive the *Additional Needs Support* newsletter cff.org.uk/additionalneeds

 **positiveparenting**

Care for the Family seeks to promote strong family relationships and help those who face family difficulties.

 cff.org.uk

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Top Tips For Parents

Raising Children with ADHD



ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, a behaviour disorder that will often become obvious in early childhood. A child with ADHD will be inattentive, hyperactive and impulsive.

It can be exhausting, frustrating but also very rewarding to parent a child with ADHD. Here are some tips to help you as you care for them.

Work with your child

As the parent of a child with ADHD, you can either make no allowances and be critical of them or you can accept their condition and help them to feel like a valued member of your family.

Children with ADHD often have very low self-esteem and they need parents to be 'on their side'. There is a lot you can do to help your child meet their daily challenges and channel their energy into positive areas.

Understand their behaviour

It's important to remember that your child is a child first, and someone with ADHD second. Like all other children they want attention, feel the need to push boundaries and want their own way. Help to prevent misbehaviour by having routines and giving consistent rules and clear instructions.

Help them to manage hyperactivity

Hyperactivity is a high level of movement, restlessness or fidgeting. It can help to have a regular programme of physical activities which will either energise or calm your child depending on the time of day. Reward good behaviour. Rewards should be instant, meaningful and frequent.

Help them manage impulsive behaviours

A child who has ADHD can be very impulsive, for example, they often say or do the first thing which comes into their head and they find it hard to wait for their turn. To manage this it can help to plan ahead (for example, taking toys and books when going somewhere). It can also be useful to break tasks into small time blocks. To help your child learn from mistakes, it's important to give them consequences and ensure that you follow through with what you've said.

Let tantrums run their course

You may be able to stop an angry outburst while it is escalating, but once it has reached a full blown tantrum it needs to run its course. Put your child in a safe place and allow them to calm down alone. Wait until they are quiet before attempting to comfort them or discuss what has happened.

Other people's reactions

Other people's reactions and lack of understanding towards your child with ADHD can be very difficult to deal with and make you feel defensive. Remember that your relationship with your child is the most important thing. Don't struggle alone. Look for a local support group where you can meet with other parents facing similar issues and share ideas or contact Care for the Family's befriending service on 029 2081 0800.

Parents often feel ruled by other people's 'shoulds' and 'oughts'. Forget what other people think. Concentrate on dealing with the difficult behaviours which you feel are most important. The rest can wait.

Work with the school

At school, children with ADHD may need specific educational support and plans to help with their daily classwork and homework.

They may also need their confidence building and help to develop their social skills. Good communication between home, school and any other professionals involved is vital to ensure that your child achieves their best potential.

