

What Can Be Done At Home?



Being the parent of a child with ADHD can be tiring and trying. **Taking care of yourself will help your child.** Parent training (**COPE – Parenting Education**) and support groups (CHADD) made up of other families who are dealing with ADHD can be a great source of help. Learn stress-management techniques to help you respond calmly to your child. Seek counseling if you feel overwhelmed or hopeless.

There are steps you can take to help your child succeed in controlling his behavior. These tips can be applied to everyday life in your house and can make a big difference for your child and family:

- **Keep your child on a daily schedule.** Try to keep the time that your child wakes up, eats, bathes, leaves for school and goes to sleep the same each day.
- **Cut down on distractions.** Loud music, computer games and television can be over-stimulating to your child. Make it a rule to keep the TV or music off during mealtime and while your child is doing homework. Whenever possible, avoid taking your child to places that may be too stimulating, like busy shopping malls.
- **Organize your house.** If your child has specific and logical places to keep his schoolwork, toys and clothes, he is less likely to lose them. Save a spot near the front door for his school backpack so he can grab it on the way out the door.
- **Reward positive behavior.** Offer kind words, hugs or small prizes for reaching goals in a timely manner or good behavior. Praise and reward your child's efforts to pay attention.
- **Set small, reachable goals.** Aim for slow progress rather than instant results. Be sure that your child understands that he can take small steps toward learning to control himself.
- **Help your child stay "on task."** Use charts and checklists to track progress with homework or chores. Keep instructions brief. Offer frequent, friendly reminders.
- **Limit choices.** Help your child learn to make good decisions by giving your child only two or three options at a time.
- **Find activities at which your child can succeed.** All children need to experience success to feel good about themselves.
- **Use calm discipline.** Use consequences such as time-out, removing the child from the situation, or distraction. Sometimes it is best to simply ignore the behavior. Physical punishment, such as spanking or slapping, is *not* helpful. Discuss your child's behavior with him when both of you are calm.