



# Information Sheet: Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder or Attention Deficit Disorder

## What is Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)?

ADHD is a neurodivergence learning difference or difficulty. It is a condition that affects people's behaviour. Learners with ADHD can appear restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act impulsively.

Every person with ADHD may act differently. There are three main types of ADHD, all are the same condition but manifest differently for each person.

### Hyperactive type

Learners who are hyperactive are likely to be constantly rushing around, talking, moving quickly and have difficulty staying on task but hyperfocus on certain interests, impulsivity or risk-taking. Here are some other traits:

- Fidgeting, squirming, or feeling restless.
- Difficulty sitting still.
- Talking constantly and finding it difficult to 'take turns' in conversation.
- Finding it difficult to complete activities quietly.
- Being constantly "on the go". They can multitask with ease and when they get older, they can move from one task to another but still manage to complete them.
- Impatience.
- Struggling with emotional regulation - for example, becoming angry or upset easily.
- Acting without thinking about the consequences of their actions.
- Blurting out answers, or inappropriate comments.

### Inattentive type

Easily distracted or daydreaming, poor concentration, disorganised, struggling to stay on top of workload, clumsy and regularly losing belongings. Here are some more traits:

- Missing details and becoming easily distracted.
- Getting bored quickly and moving from interest to interest.
- Finding it easy to start a task, but struggling to maintain focus, or finish.
- Experiencing difficulty organising thoughts and learning new information.
- Losing or forgetting pencils, papers, or other items needed to complete a task.
- Zoning out, daydreaming, or not listening.
- Appearing as though they are daydreaming and moving slowly.
- Processing information more slowly and less accurately than others.
- Unable to follow directions, in particular verbal instructions.

## Combination type

Some learners may exhibit a combination of both types where traits fall under hyperactive and inattentive.

## How can you support a learner with AD(H)D or similar traits?

- Make sure the learner knows what the plan is for the day, so they know what to expect.
- Break down routines into steps so the learner knows what to do.
- Set clear boundaries to make sure everyone knows what behaviours are expected.
- Reinforce positive behaviour with immediate praise or rewards.
- Give plenty of praise, make sure the learner knows why you are praising them.
- Make sure instructions are specific rather than general, such as “complete questions 3-5 showing the calculation you use next to each one”, rather than “do your maths”.
- Observe if the learner is becoming agitated, distracted or particularly fidgety and give them a short break. Either a brain break, or a chance to release some energy.
- Suggest parents keep a food diary to see if certain foods trigger more extreme behaviours.
- Make reasonable adjustments for learners who have been diagnosed with ADHD or are showing traits.

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