BC Métis FEDERATION

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Child Youth & Family

Fall Online Education & Awareness Series

2024

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)-Agenda December 12th, 2024, 2:00-330pm December Online Series

This workshop will feature an overview of ADHD in children and youth with a bonus Adult ADHD Section.

What is ADHD?

Types of ADHD

ADHD- Throughout Life

ADHD- Behaviours

Tasks

The 5C's of ADHD Parenting

Genetics

10 Actionable Steps-Educational Success

ADHD in Adults

Resources

Children with ADHD Abstract Representation

- An abstract representation to signify child-like curiosity and energy often associated with children diagnosed with ADHD.
- The image can contain vibrant colours in the form of geometrical patterns, moving lines indicating constant energy, sparkling stars indicating quick thought process and random shapes or objects indicative of shifting attention.

What is ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a common neurodevelopmental condition that affects attention, impulse control, executive function, planning, organization, judgment, mood, and emotional reactivity, to name a few. Neuroscience, brain imaging and clinical research tell us a few important things about ADHD.

ADHD is not a behavioral disorder, a mental illness, a learning disability, or a matter of personal discipline. Instead, ADHD is a brain developmental impairment.

Individuals with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (formerly known as ADD, Attention Deficit Disorder) will struggle with a range of regular activities, including:

School performance and academic attainment. – Occupational performance and attendance. – Creating or maintaining social relationships. – Maintaining focus and concentration.

What is ADHD?

It is believed that the cause of ADHD is abnormalities in the functioning of the central nervous system – individual brain structures develop unevenly. It is why ADHD is referred to as a neurodevelopmental disorder.

Researchers found that ADHD has some hereditary basis. In addition, several factors can aggravate symptoms.

These include abnormalities during pregnancy, perinatal hypoxia, head injuries, poisoning, and environmental negligence.

ADHD is characterized by symptoms from three groups: hyperactivity, impulsivity, and attention disorders. The intensity of symptoms may differ among children, with some experiencing more hyperactivity while others struggle more with attention deficits. It's important to note that each child is unique in their experience of ADHD.

Types of ADHD- Combined ADHD -Symptoms

Someone with Combined Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder may have difficulty focusing, trouble organizing tasks by priority, and have difficulty waiting for their turn. They may also portray symptoms of hyperactivity, which may cause them to be consistently restless, fidgety, and unable to sit still.

Types of ADHD-Inattentive ADHD (ADD)-Symptoms

Inattentive Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, formerly known as ADD, as per its name, is characterized by the inability to focus and pay attention. Someone with Inattentive Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder will not experience the same hyperactive and impulsive tendencies commonly found in the other two subtypes. Since children with this subtype don't possess the hyperactive and always-on predispositions, it's more difficult to discover Inattentive ADHD early on.

- Anxiety
- Constant misplacing of items
- Constantly tired
- Daydreaming
- Difficulty Focusing
- Difficulty Listening
- Disorganized
- Easily Distracted
- Frequently forgetful
- Poor attention to detail
- Procrastination

Types of ADHD- Hyperactive and Impulsive ADHD-Symptoms

The Hyperactive and Impulsive Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder subtype is characterized by someone who is always moving around in their seat – unable to sit still, a chatterbox, acting impulsively, and may not always pay full attention to the discussion at hand. Children in this category of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder are described as ‘being run by a motor engine’.

- Fidgeting
- Restlessness
- Unable to play quietly
- Getting up unexpectedly or inappropriately
- Running or climbing inappropriately
- Always “on the go” or characterized as having a motor
- Excessive talking and interrupting or intruding conversations

ADHD Throughout Life:

The disorder has a slow and long-term course, but the symptoms occurring during the condition and the areas of life affected by ADHD change with age.

Two important conclusions emerge from many years of research. The first states that ADHD symptoms disappear in about 30% of patients during adolescence.

It is also important to remember that puberty is turbulent for most young people. Therefore, all impulsive behaviors or outbursts of anger in a teenager diagnosed with ADHD should not be attributed to the severity of the symptoms of the disease itself.

The second conclusion from the research is that ADHD manifests differently in childhood and adulthood.

ADHD in Infancy and Early Childhood

ADHD is usually diagnosed around the age of 7, but signs must have been present before reaching 12 years old.

However, the symptoms may be noticeable earlier.

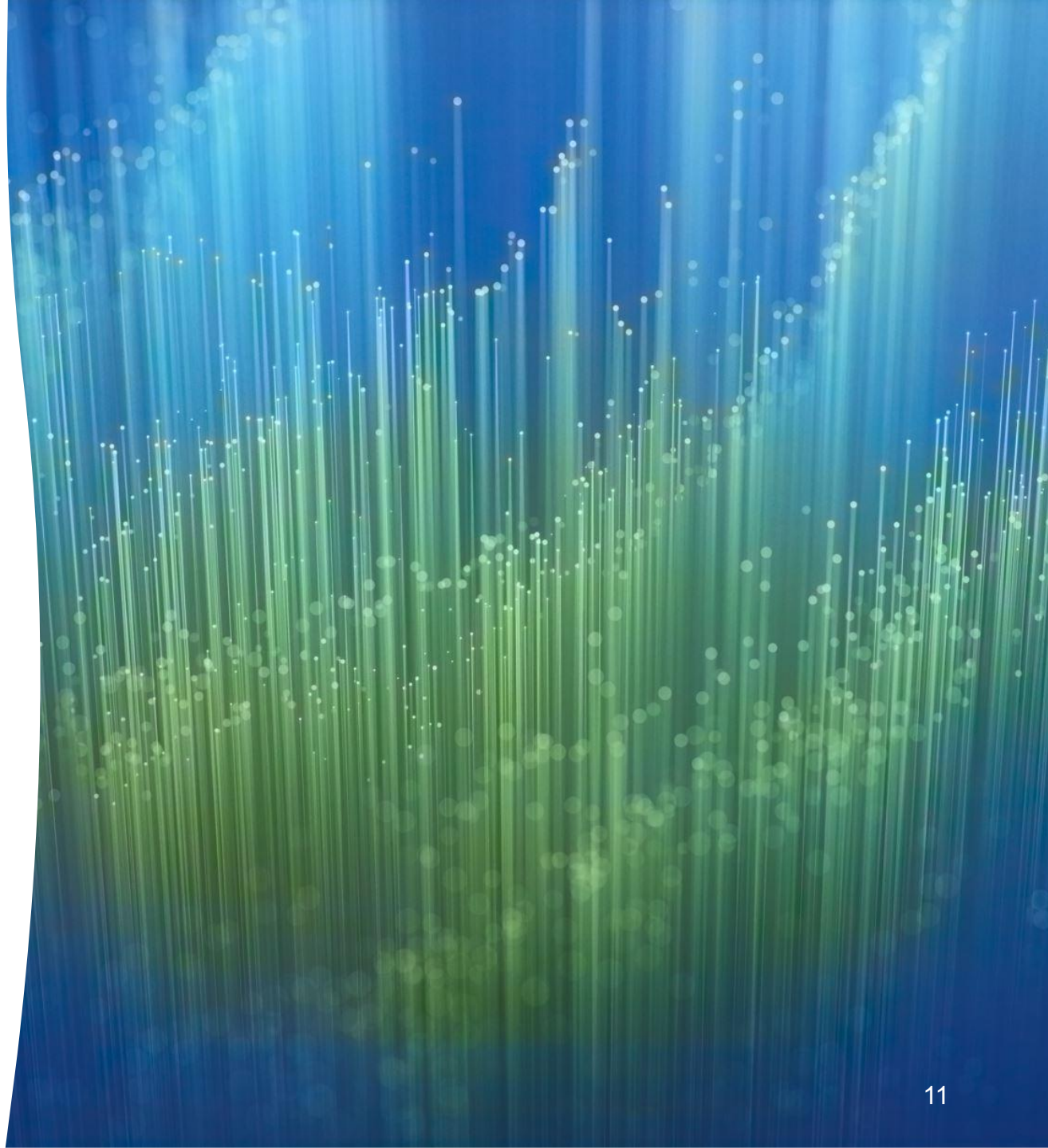
- Excess mobility may attract the parent's attention during the first successful attempts to walk, appetite disorders, and reduced sleep.
- When a child goes to kindergarten, numerous injuries and risky and reckless behaviors join, and the time needed to perform basic activities is extended.

ADHD During the School Period:

Starting school is when ADHD symptoms become most pronounced.

It is related to the emotions accompanying this event, and thus, the symptoms are intensified.

The first signal is the teachers' opinions about the child. Parents often receive information that the child cannot sit still in class, hangs around the classroom, is loud, disturbs other students, and is aggressive toward peers.



Some of the ADHD Child Behaviours:

- Constantly fidgeting in the chair
- Waving arms and legs
- Getting angry quickly
- Teasing and accosting peers
- Often interrupting or disturbing others
- Unintentionally breaking toys
- Unable to concentrate on one activity
- Can't remember the details
- Losing or forgetting things

Tasks

The most difficult task for a child with ADHD

- For kids with ADHD, tasks that are repetitive or boring or require a lot of effort can be acutely challenging, and elicit a lot of resistance, especially if it means stopping something that's pleasurable — like playing a video game.

The 5C's of ADHD Parenting

Self-Control, Compassion, Collaboration, Consistency, and Celebration—and discover how they can foster a nurturing environment for your child's success.

Self- Control

- The first C on the list is self-control, and it's not just for children; it's crucial for parents, too. Parenting a child with ADHD can be emotionally challenging, and remaining composed during challenging moments is essential. You demonstrate self-control models and healthy coping mechanisms for your child to emulate.

- Teach your child simple techniques to manage their impulses and emotions. Breathing exercises, short breaks, or counting to 10 can help them regain focus and self-regulate. You foster a calm and supportive environment by practicing self-control and guiding your child.

Compassion

Compassion is a cornerstone of successful ADHD parenting. Understanding that ADHD is not a choice, but a neurodevelopmental condition is essential.

Approach your child's difficulties with empathy and patience, focusing on their strengths and potential.

Listen actively to your child's concerns and challenges without judgment. Make them feel safe expressing their feelings and frustrations. You create a strong bond with your child by offering compassion and understanding, fostering a sense of security and trust.

Collaboration

Collaboration is key to unlocking your child's full potential. Dr. Saline encourages parents to work hand in hand with educators, therapists, and other professionals involved in their child's care. Collaborating allows for a unified approach to address your child's needs across different environments consistently.

Regularly communicate with your child's teachers and share insights about their strengths and struggles. Collaborate to implement effective strategies both at home and school. A collaborative network ensures everyone is on the same page, providing your child with comprehensive support.

* Link in resources for Dr. Sharon Saline*

Consistency

- Consistency is fundamental in ADHD parenting. Children with ADHD thrive in structured environments with clear expectations.
- Establish predictable routines for daily activities, such as mealtimes, homework, and bedtime. Use visual aids like calendars and charts to help your child understand and follow schedules.
- Consistency also extends to discipline. Set boundaries and rules and apply consequences consistently.
- By maintaining predictability, your child can feel secure and develop self-discipline.

Celebration

- Celebrate every milestone, no matter how small, to motivate your child and boost their self-esteem.
- Saline highlights the importance of acknowledging your child's efforts and achievements.
- Praise them for their perseverance and hard work, even if they don't always meet their goals.
- Foster a positive environment by celebrating your child's unique qualities and accomplishments. Encourage a growth mindset, where effort and progress are celebrated over perfection.

Remember...

“Embrace these C's with love and understanding and you'll empower your child to conquer the challenges of ADHD and reach their full potential. Remember, every step forward is a step towards success, and together, you and your child can overcome any obstacle that comes your way”.

Genetics...

Genetics. ADHD tends to run in families, and, in most cases, it's thought the genes you inherit from your parents are a significant factor in developing the condition.

Research shows that parents and siblings of someone with ADHD are more likely to have ADHD themselves.

You can inherit genes that boost risk for ADHD from your mother, from your father or from both parents.

In a recent Norwegian study, inherited risk was somewhat higher when a child's mother had ADHD compared to their father, but researchers weren't certain why that would be.

Empowering your child with ADHD: 10 actionable steps for their educational success

Understand how ADHD can impact education

Understanding how ADHD can impact a child's learning is the first critical step. ADHD can affect a child's ability to concentrate, manage impulses, follow instructions, and maintain organization–important components of most educational environments.

As a parent, it's crucial to familiarize yourself with the nature of ADHD and its potential influence on education. It can also be helpful to work with a private tutor who is experienced in working with kids who have ADHD. They can help answer questions and provide tailored strategies and support.

Empower your child by acknowledging their strengths

Empower your child by acknowledging their strengths

Children with ADHD are often highly creative, energetic, and capable of out-of-the-box thinking. They might also lag hyperfocus on subjects that genuinely captivate their interest.

By acknowledging and encouraging these strengths, you can empower your child and boost their self-confidence.

Incorporate these talents into their learning process–engage them with educational activities that relate to their interests, and ensure they understand that having ADHD doesn't mean they're deficient and lagging behind their peers.

Adapt your parenting approach

Clear and direct communication, consistency in rules and expectations, immediate consequences (both positive and negative), and an abundance of positive reinforcement can be particularly beneficial.

Explicitly state your expectations and provide helpful reminders to keep your child on track. Implementing a proactive, empathetic, and understanding approach can foster a nurturing and supportive environment, which will naturally flow into your child's academic success and emotional well-being.

Foster strong communication with teachers and school staff

Maintaining an open line of communication with your child's teachers and other school staff is vital when it comes to supporting your child's educational journey.

Regular discussions will give you insights into your child's behavior, academic progress, social interactions, and the effectiveness of the strategies currently in place.

A two-way flow of information will lead to collaborative problem-solving between you and your child’s teachers, resulting in clear learning strategies and creating a more consistent approach between home and school.

Navigating school systems: IEPs, 504 plans, and accommodations

If your child is attending a traditional school, it's essential to familiarize yourself with the educational laws and provisions in place for students with ADHD. Systems like Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 plans can offer services and accommodations to help your child succeed academically. These can include extended time for tests, frequent breaks, or changes in classroom seating.

Consistent communication with the school about the implementation of these plans can ensure that they are adequately tailored to your child's specific needs, providing them with the best possible support.

Always advocate for your child's needs, and don't hesitate to reach out to school staff for assistance if you're unsure about the process.

Homeschooling tip: structuring the learning environment

For parents choosing to homeschool their children with ADHD, creating an ADHD-friendly learning environment is key. A designated, distraction-free space for learning can go a long way in helping your child focus on their tasks.

Keep in mind, too, that some children with ADHD may be kinesthetic learners. So they can benefit greatly from the freedom to move while they learn. Incorporate flexible seating options like standing desks or exercise balls, or ditch the desk model entirely.

The key here is to experiment, observe, and tweak based on what suits your child the best.

Use tools and apps designed for children with ADHD

The world of technology offers an array of digital tools and apps specifically designed to assist children with ADHD. These tools can provide support in a variety of areas, from task and time management to mastering core academic skills.

For example, Trello can help with organizing tasks and deadlines, Headspace can guide them through mindfulness exercises and learning platforms like “Outschool” provide a variety of courses specially designed for neurodiverse learners. They can even join a virtual social club designed for kids with ADHD.

Support your child's physical health

It's well established that physical health is closely linked with mental well-being and learning capacity. Regular physical activity, a balanced diet, adequate sleep, and mindfulness exercises can significantly contribute to improving focus, managing impulses, and enhancing overall well-being.

Also, bear in mind that some children with ADHD might have sensory sensitivities. Things like food textures, clothing fabrics, and physical activities can make a significant difference in their comfort and readiness to learn.

Implement structure and routine

A structured routine can provide a sense of predictability and security, which is often beneficial for children with ADHD. Consistent daily routines, with designated times for learning, relaxation, meals, and physical activity, can provide stability and improve focus.

Visual schedules or checklists can further aid your child in understanding what's expected of them, what's coming next, and in managing their time effectively. A routine doesn't mean there's no room for spontaneity or fun–it simply provides a framework within which your child can explore, learn, and grow.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder-Adults

ADHD in Adults

- It might seem that ADHD is primarily a condition in children and adolescents. However, the symptoms of the disorder persist into adulthood.
- It is not a big deal when ADHD has been diagnosed and treated beforehand.
- Difficulties arise when the patient, an adult, goes to the doctor. Unfortunately, adults with ADHD are often misdiagnosed and treated incorrectly.
- Sometimes, as children, they were not diagnosed or subjected to the wrong treatment for other diseases.

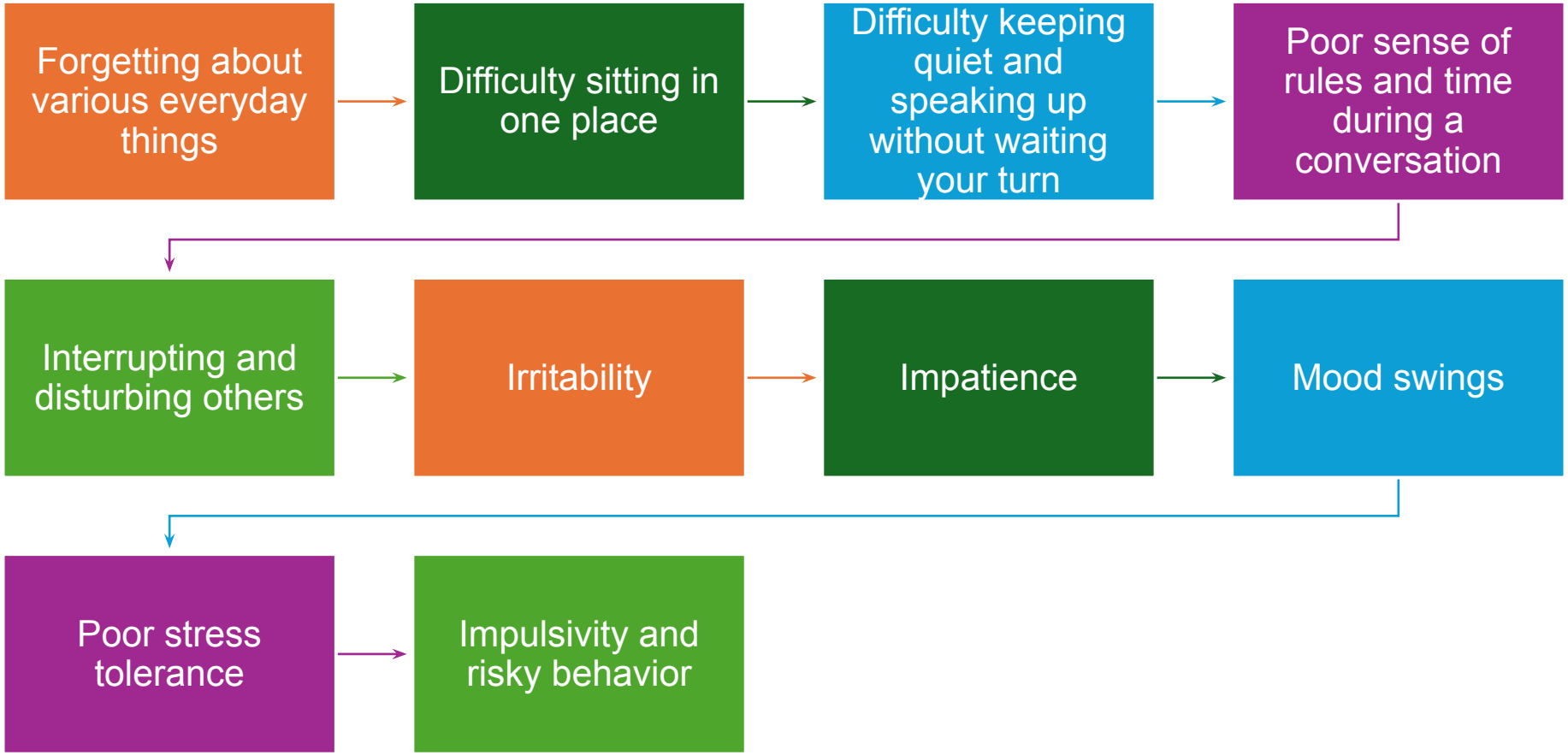
Symptoms of ADHD in Adults

- Symptoms of ADHD are sometimes difficult to distinguish from symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder or depressive disorder.
- For this, you need to have reliable information about the functioning of a person in childhood, and this – for various reasons – is not always obtainable.
- Difficulties in making an accurate diagnosis mean that some adults do not realize they are hyperactive.

List of Symptoms in Adults with ADHD

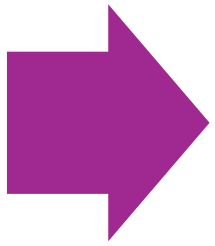
- Inattention to detail
- Lack of concentration
- Difficulty sustaining attention on tasks or activities that are tedious
- Difficulty listening
- Difficulty following instructions
- Starting many activities at once and having trouble finishing them
- Poor organizational skills
- Losing items or leaving them out of place

List for Adults with ADHD



ADHD Diagnosis in Adults

The diagnosis of ADHD in an adult can be made after meeting several conditions. The most straightforward situation is when it is possible to state that the diagnosed symptoms and disorders have already occurred in childhood, and the patient and their relatives confirm this. According to the current requirements, confirmation of this is required to diagnose the condition. However, it also happens that the symptoms of ADHD do not appear until adulthood.



It is believed that the symptoms of the disease may always exist, but their impact on the condition of the patient's functioning appears primarily in significant moments for them, such as changing schools, starting studies, or a new job. This impact on functioning and its disturbances in more than one area is also a critical assessment, apart from symptoms, during the diagnosis of ADHD.

ADHD in Social and Professional Life

- What significantly affects the quality of life of adults with ADHD are difficulties in social functioning.
- It is primarily due to problems with maintaining satisfying and lasting relationships with people.
- Excessive impulsiveness is associated with high intensity of reaction, explosiveness, or increased talkativeness – sometimes difficult to bear for the environment.
- People with ADHD can thus easily antagonize other people.
- ADHD is also often a problem in professional life. It is hard to fulfill your duties well when you cannot organize and plan your work. Constructing and implementing plans is the Achilles heel of people with hyperactivity. Such difficulties lead to “breaking” deadlines or working under pressure. No wonder hyperactive people are often perceived as insubordinate, lazy, and less effective employees. It makes finding and keeping employment much more difficult.

10 3 Rule: Adults

10 3 rule for ADHD?

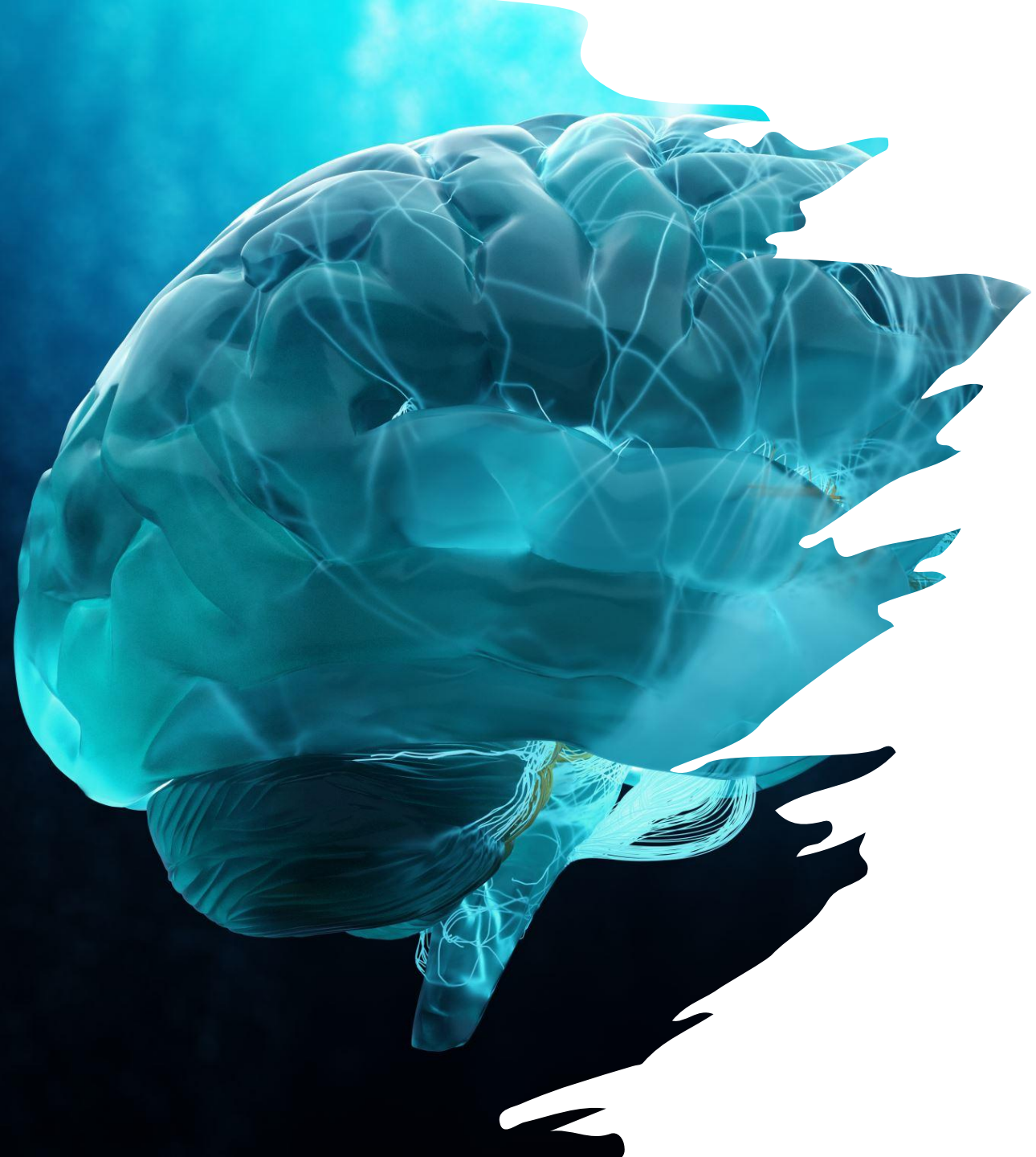
Indeed, more often you need to break tasks down and take frequent breaks.

Stop using the executive function system for a few minutes and give it a chance to refuel its fuel tank.

This is why we talk about the 10 and 3 rule with ADHD children. 10 minutes of work, 3 minutes of break – 10 and 3 – 10 and 3.

What is Brain Dump for Adults with ADHD?

A brain dump is the act of writing down everything that comes to mind on a particular topic. Its proponents describe it to get all your thoughts and ideas down on paper and free up space in your brain.



Benefits of Brain Dumping:

Proponents of brain dumping say that its benefits include:

- Helping you remember what you need to accomplish each day
- Clearing up headspace to learn more information
- Organizing your thoughts
- Improving focus and concentration
- Increasing self-awareness of thoughts and feelings
- may decrease stress

After-learning brain dump

Research shows that writing things down after learning them can help you recall the information later.

Another way to use the brain dump technique is after you've learned new information. This kind of brain dump is known in educational research as retrieval practice.

For example, university students can use this brain dump technique after every class. Whenever you've learned a lot of new information, simply write freestyle about all the new information you've absorbed.

Some people find it more helpful to make an organized list of the information, or to separate a piece of paper into quadrants (to better organize information into categories)

Start of the Day:

Start-of-the-day brain dump

At the beginning of your day, take out your brain dump notebook and start writing with no specific direction in mind.

There are no rules. You can get out all of your thoughts by writing things, such as:

- all of the tasks that you need to accomplish today
- thoughts that are holding you back
- ideas that you're excited about
- worries that are lingering in your mind

Resources: Adults

- **For Primary Care Practitioners**
- CADDRA–Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance E-toolkit forms
- Canadian ADHD Practice Guidelines (CADDRA)
- CHADD: Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
- **For Patients**
- Centre for ADHD Awareness (CADDAC): Support for people with ADHD.

- https://caddac.ca/

Resources : Children

https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/adhd-hereditary

https://add.org/is-adhd-genetic/

https://www.oxfordcbt.co.uk/is-adhd-inherited/

https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6477889/

https://outschool.com/online-classes/adhd-social-clubs

Outschool's online ADHD classes and social clubs

Outschool's neurodiverse tutoring

Celebrating neurodiversity: how to bring your kids' superpower

Tilt Parenting ADHD podcasts

3 ways to customize your homeschooling for neurodiverse needs

Resources: Children

https://drsharonsaline.com/5cs-of-adhd/#:~:text=This%20approach%20is%20called%20the,%2C%20Collaboration%2C%20Consistency%20and%20Celebration.

https://intrepidednews.com/connect-more-argue-less/#:~:text=When%20you%20offer%20choices%20and,%2C%20Collaboration%2C%20Consistency%20and%20Celebration.

https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/adhd-hereditary

Final Thoughts:

Thank you on behalf of the Child, Youth and Family Department for the BC Metis Federation

For a copy of this presentation please email the Director of Child, Youth and Family:

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