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KIDS' AREA

School And Me With ADHD!

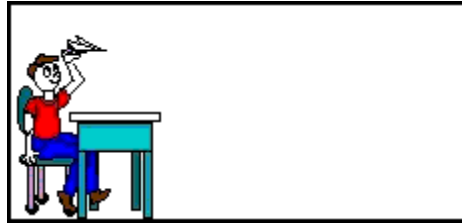
Peter Jaksa, Ph.D.



Kids with ADHD are just as smart as any other kids. So then why do many kids with ADHD have trouble in school? It's simple. Many kids have trouble sitting still, paying attention to their work, or being patient and waiting their turn. Some kids get bored quickly and talk too much in class. Many kids lose their work, or forget to turn it in! Some kids need help from teachers, parents, or a counselor to learn how to improve in those things. It's not a big deal to have ADHD, but it is important that kids get the help they need.

Some kids with ADHD have a hard time sitting still or staying in their seat. This is called feeling restless or hyper. It sometimes helps to be able to walk around for a while, but the teacher must agree to this first! Many kids with ADHD get bored way too easy, and they have a hard time paying attention to the work they're supposed to be

doing in class. They might talk too much or fool around too much which gets them in trouble with the teacher. Or they might disrupt other kids around them, so those kids can't do their work and end up getting mad at them.



Other kids don't get hyper in school, they mostly have trouble paying attention to their work or to the teacher. This is called being inattentive. It might help to have the teacher give a reminder (in a nice way!) when the student is daydreaming or fooling around instead of doing their work. It can also help for the student to review instructions on the board, or to raise their hand and ask the teacher if they forget what they're supposed to do.

Some kids have trouble with organization. They don't remember which assignments they're supposed to do, or just forget to take their homework and supplies home with them. It can really help to use an assignment notebook and write down every assignment when the teacher gives it. At the end of the school day, before the student leaves to go home, it can help a lot to do a quick "checklist" to make sure that all books, worksheets, and supplies are in the bookbag and go home with the student! At home it helps to have a regular study time set aside, which is used only for doing homework and studying. TV shows, phone calls, and video games will have to wait until after the study time! Many kids think it's a great idea to have a separate folder for each subject, and even use a different color folder for each subject. At the end of study time, or when all the work is done, it helps to do another "checklist" to make sure that all books, homework, and supplies go back in the bookbag. Put the bookbag by the door, and in the morning you're all set to go!



Many kids with ADHD are very good students, who get all their work done and get good grades. You can too, just make sure that you're doing the things which help YOU

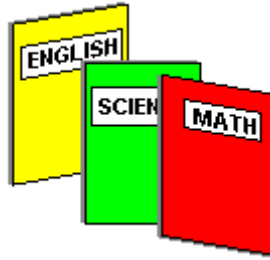
to succeed! Your parents, teachers, and counselor can help you learn what works best for you. The results will be worth it!

Here is a list of some things which help many kids do well in school:



THINGS TO DO AT SCHOOL

- Sit near the teacher and the blackboard to help you pay attention better.
- Sit by kids who do their work and don't fool around or talk as much.
- Use an assignment notebook and write down EVERY assignment right away when the teacher gives it. Don't wait until later or the end of class, you might forget!
- Get a daily or weekly progress report filled out by your teachers, to help you and your parents keep track of the work better. Don't let yourself fall behind!
- If you get real hyper in class, ask your parents to talk to the teacher about letting you move around a little. For example, sometimes you could pace in the rear of the classroom, do an errand, wash the blackboard, get a drink of water, go to the bathroom, and so on. But don't do these things without the teacher's permission!
- Sometimes the teacher will allow you to play quietly with a small object you keep in your desk, such as a soft squeeze ball, as long as you don't distract other people around you. This might help you feel less hyper.
- If distractions are a big problem when taking tests, ask the teacher about taking the test in a quiet area. Some kids with ADHD might also get more time to take tests if they need it. Your parents can discuss these things with your teacher.
- Work with your teacher or counselor to help you learn good study skills, test taking skills, organizational skills, and time management skills. Your teacher will know what these things are.



- Keep all assignments in their folders. Check the folder for every subject and make sure you turn in your work!
- Before leaving school, do a checklist to make sure that you have everything you need to get your homework done for the next day.



THINGS TO DO AT HOME

- Find a quiet area for studying at home that is free of distractions. Some kids like it quiet, while other kids do better if there is soft music playing in the background. Try it different ways and see what works best for you.
- Plan ahead! Don't put work aside until the last minute. When we have to rush to get things done, we usually end up with sloppy or incomplete work. Give yourself enough time to do a good job.
- If you have a large project to do, remember to "chunk it!" Break large projects down into smaller "chunks" and do each step at a time. Plan ahead about when you're going to complete each step.



- Use books-on-tape if it helps you to hear information as well as read it. Many people learn and remember things much better this way.
- If it would help, keep a second set of books and materials at home to make sure that you have what you need. Your parents can discuss this with the school.



- Study for EVERY test and quiz. Take a practice quiz or test the day before, which your parents can give you by asking practice questions.
- Proofread your work. People with ADHD sometimes rush too much and make silly mistakes, so it's very important to proofread and catch your mistakes. If you type your work on a computer, always use spell-check and grammar-check!

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About The Author

Peter Jaksa, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist with over 30 years' experience working with children, adolescents, and adults with ADHD. Dr. Jaksa is the author of numerous articles and columns about ADHD, including articles published in **ADDitude Magazine**, **Attention Magazine**, **Organize Magazine**, and **FOCUS**. He has provided interviews to national publications and news organizations including the **Wall Street Journal**, **CNN**, **U.S. News & World Report**, **Chicago Tribune**, and **Men's Health Magazine**. He has presented at national conferences to health care professionals, educators, and the general public. Dr. Jaksa is a contributing writer for **ADDitude Magazine** and a member of the Scientific Advisory Board. He is the author of *Life With ADHD* and co-author of *Real People, Real ADHD*.