

ADHD

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

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WayAhead Mental Health
Information Line

Local Early Childhood Centre

WayAhead
Mental Health Information Service
Level 5, 80 William St
Woolloomooloo NSW 2011

1300 794 991
info@wayahead.org.au
www.wayahead.org.au

**“The children
who need love
the most
will always
ask for it
in the most
unloving
ways”**

Russel Barkley

What is ADHD

(Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)?

The term Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) describes children or adults who have difficulties in staying attentive or focused, are impulsive, frequently very active (over-active) at levels

higher than expected for their age and have difficulties controlling their behaviour. Although the disorder is usually diagnosed during childhood, it may continue into adulthood.

What Are The Symptoms?

- Hyperactivity and restlessness
- Poor impulse control - acting without thinking
- Compulsive aggression - disruptive at home and in school, disturbs other children, and may behave in potentially dangerous ways
- Excitable, impulsive and unpredictable behaviour - frustration may lead to temper tantrums
- Difficulty in dealing with failure or frustration – may cry often and easily
- Short attention span – difficulty with concentration
- Poor muscle and eye-hand co-ordination
- Poor sleeping habits
- Normal or high IQ yet experiences difficulties at school.

What Causes ADHD?

The exact causes of ADHD are not clear. Like many other conditions ADHD may develop in response to a combination of biological, psychological and social factors.

What Treatment is Available?

There is no one single treatment for the symptoms of ADHD. However it is thought that a combination of talking treatments, such as psychotherapy, counselling, behaviour therapy, family therapy, parenting skills training, and education support can be used to gain some control over the symptoms. A multi-pronged approach to treatment is most useful, with a variety of interventions available from parents, schools and professionals.

Medication

The most common types of medication used for treating ADHD in Australia are psychostimulant drugs called Dexamphetamine or Ritalin. Although it may seem unusual to treat ADHD with a medication considered a stimulant, it actually has a calming effect on children with ADHD. It is important to learn about the pros and cons of medication and discuss these with your doctor.

Behaviour techniques

Behaviour techniques may help parents and teachers to assist the child to identify and moderate problematic behaviour; additional one-to-one help in the classroom may also prove useful.

Dietary changes

Some parents have found that changing the child's diet improves the symptoms.

What Can I Do to Help Myself/My Child?

- Attend support groups to find other parents dealing with similar difficulties
- Attend training in parenting skills
- Learn how to advocate for your child effectively with schools and health professionals
- Build your own support network of family members, friends, other families with ADHD and professional services – don't try to cope alone.

Reference

National Institute for Mental Health, Maryland, USA

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/adhd.cfm>



Where do I go for help?

The WayAhead Directory

is an online resource providing a comprehensive list of mental health related services in NSW.

www.WayAhead.org.au

Phone Support and Useful Websites

WayAhead Mental Health Information Line
1300 794 991

Local GP

Local Early Childhood Centre (listed in the White Pages)

Pediatrician

Sydney Developmental Clinic
sydneydevelopmentalclinic.com.au
02 9276 6100

ADDults with ADHD (NSW) Inc.
www.adultadhd.org.au
02 9889 5977



Translating & Interpreting Service
(TIS) 131 450

Please call the Mental Health Information Line through the Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS). Free to Australian citizens or permanent residents.

Macquarie University Psychology Clinic
mq.edu.au/about/campus-services-and-facilities/hospital-and-clinics/psychology-clinic
02 9850 8000

Relationships Australia - Family Skills Program, Penrith
02 4728 4800
02 4728 4802

Junaya Family Development Service - Blacktown
02 9621 3922

Learning Difficulties Coalition of NSW (Inc.)
www ldc.org.au
02 9806 9960 (parent helpline)

Canberra & Queanbeyan ADD Support Group
www.addact.org.au
02 6290 1984
02 6287 4608 (A/H: 6pm - 9pm)

Sutherland Shire Learning Difficulties Support Group
02 8544 8604

Disclaimer

This information is for educational purposes. As neither brochures nor websites can diagnose people it is always important to obtain professional advice and/or help when needed.

This information may be reproduced with an acknowledgement to the Mental Health Association NSW.

The Association encourages feedback and welcomes comments about the information provided.

** Place fact sheet review text here **

“ I found people who understood exactly what I was going through ”



