

ADD / ADHD is classified into three areas; behavior marked by:

- inattentiveness, but not hyperactivity or impulsivity
- hyperactivity and impulsivity, but not inattentiveness
- inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsivity

The professional criteria for a diagnosis of ADD/ADHD requires the following:

- Early onset – symptoms must have been present before age 7.
- Duration – At least six symptoms must have been present for at least 6 months.
- Settings – The symptoms must be present in two or more settings.
- Impact – The symptoms must have a negative impact on the individual's school, family and/or social life.
- Developmental level – The symptoms are not due to the child's normal developmental level.
- Alternative explanation – The symptoms are not caused by another severe physical or mental disorder.

Classroom accommodations for students with ADHD:

- Seat the student away from windows and away from the door.
- Put the student right in front of your desk unless that would be a distraction for the student.
- Seats in rows, with focus on the teacher, usually work better than having students seated around tables or facing one another in other arrangements.
- Give instructions one at a time and repeat as necessary.
- If possible, work on the most difficult material early in the day.
- Use visuals: charts, pictures, color coding.
- Create outlines for note-taking that organize the information as you deliver it.
- Create a quiet area free of distractions for test-taking and quiet study.
- Create worksheets and tests with fewer items; give frequent short quizzes rather than long tests.

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Classroom accommodations for students with ADHD (*cont.*):

- Reduce the number of timed tests.
- Test the student in the way he or she does best, such as orally or filling in blanks.
- Show the student how to use a pointer to track written words on a page.
- Divide long-term projects into segments and assign a completion goal for each segment.
- Let the student do as much work as possible on computer.
- Accept late work and give partial credit for partial work.
- Have the student keep a master notebook, a three-ring binder with a separate section for each subject, and make sure everything that goes into the notebook has holes punched and is put on the rings in the correct section.
- Provide a three-pocket notebook insert for homework assignments, completed homework, and "final" to parents (permission slips, PTA flyers).
- Color-code materials for each subject.
- Allow time for student to organize materials and assignments for home. Post steps for getting ready to go home.
- Make sure the student has a system for writing down assignments and important dates and uses it.

Teaching techniques for students with ADD/ADHD:

- Signal the start of a lesson with an aural cue, such as an egg timer, a cowbell or a horn. (You can use subsequent cues to show much time remains in a lesson.)
- List the activities of the lesson on the board.
- In opening the lesson, tell students what they're going to learn and what your expectations are. Tell students exactly what materials they'll need.
- Establish eye contact with any student who has ADD/ADHD.
- Keep instructions simple and structured.
- Vary the pace and include different kinds of activities. Many students with ADD do well with competitive games or other activities that are rapid and intense.
- Use props, charts, and other visual aids.
- Have an unobtrusive cue set up with the student who has ADD/ADHD, such as a touch on the shoulder or placing a sticky note on the student's desk, to remind the student to stay on task.
- Allow a student with ADD/ADHD frequent breaks.
- Let the student squeeze a Koosh ball or tap something that doesn't make noise as a physical outlet.
- Try not to ask a student to perform a task publicly that might be too difficult.
- Summarize key points.
- If you give an assignment, have three different students repeat it, then have the class say it in unison, and put it on the board.

This information is intended for general summary purposes only and is not intended to take the place of local policy, procedure, or law.