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# **Mental Dysfunction Associated With The Inability To Pay Attention**

## **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a mental dysfunction associated with the inability to pay attention or control certain activities (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013). Individuals with ADHD experience restlessness, and may at times become constantly active. Most cases are experienced during childhood, although the condition may persist through adulthood (Erskine et al., 2016). Patients with ADHD are likely to experience problems with impulse control, exhibit a disorganized personality, and struggle with attention challenges past teenage and into adulthood. Current research evidence depicts the interaction between environmental and genetic factors as responsible for ADHD. As noted by Erskine et al. (2016), brain injuries, low birth weight, genes, drug use during pregnancy, cigarette smoking, and alcohol use are some of the risk factors associated with the disorder. Moreover, young children who are exposed to environmental hazards such as lead have high chance of developing this condition.

## **Characteristics of ADHD**

At the onset, children suspected to have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder may show three of the following warning signs: hyperactivity, inattention (difficulty in paying attention), and impulsivity (acting without thinking). Children with ADHD also experience various types of morbidities, notably, sleeping problems and poor physical health development (Sciberras et al., 2016). The available evidence also suggests a correlation between the disorder and obesity (Sciberras et al., 2016). ADHD patients also tend to experience challenges in remembering day-to-day activities including completing house chores, running errands, and even keeping appointments. Besides, children with this condition are likely to lose the materials necessary for their tasks very easily.

## **ADHD Identification Procedure and Service Delivery**

While children may occasionally show symptoms of attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, certain characteristics are normal considering their age and growth stage (Piffner, 2011). This warrants a thorough analysis of their behavior before diagnosing them as ADHD patients. The diagnosis of patients with ADHD is based on the symptoms that have persisted for over six months to a degree of maladaptive development levels (Piffner, 2011). Parents and pediatrics need to consider multiple factors to accurately determine an ADHD diagnosis, including the severity of the condition, the onset stage, signs and symptoms duration, the effect of the behavior, and the setting in which the behavior occurs (APA, 2013). These parameters are defined below:

- **Severity:** The behavior of the minor understudy must be occurring frequently compared to other children of a similar age bracket.
- **Early-onset:** ADHD symptoms normally show up during the early stages of child

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development. Therefore, at least some of the characteristics must have been noted before reaching the age of seven.

- Duration: The behavior in question must have been persisted for not less than six months before evaluation.
- Impact: The symptoms of the behavior under study must have adverse effects on the child's academic and/or social life
- Settings: The signs under investigation must persist in different environments.

Since ADHD patients begin their education life before a diagnosis, they can survive in both conventional and special schools. While in a normal school, children with ADHD require special attention, treatment, and continuous guidance from their teachers. Depending on the specific needs, teachers need to do the following to comfort and make children with ADHD feel like their normal counterparts: be warm and positive, praise or reward efforts, and provide instructions that are clear and brief (Piffner, 2011). Besides, giving these children extra time to complete their work would be an added advantage.

## **Classroom Considerations**

Classroom culture can either promote or disorient student success. Creating constructive association with students and adopting innovative classroom management methods fosters positive behavior, increases attention, and promotes academic and social success (Piffner, 2011). Whenever teachers appreciate the distinguishing skills and connect with students, learners are more likely to positively respond to classroom procedures and strive for success. One of the classroom considerations for individuals with ADHD is the sitting arrangement. Teachers need to seat students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorders away from distractive areas, such as windows and high traffic areas. Instead, these learners should be placed in close proximity to the instructor so that their work can be easily monitored.

## **Teaching Strategies**

A student with ADHD needs to be allowed to respond to questions and participate in class discussions. Teachers should consider incorporating peer-mediated approaches to enhance students' learning opportunities for active and engaged learning. Some of the most viable teaching strategies include the following:

- Peer tutoring: This is one of the most successful ways of learning for ADHD students because it provides support for one-on-one discussion. Tutoring ensures the student acquires both social and academic skills. This method is popular in training sessions (Piffner, 2011).
- Cooperative learning: This approach delineates a carefully organized learning group where every learner is assigned a specific task and given clear expectations. The strategy is advantageous to students with ADHD.
- Sharing strategies: This approach involves pairing peers together. It enables students to work together in group discussions and compare notes on assignments.
- Self-correction opportunities: Here, the students are provided with materials to enable them to achieve the desired outcome, for instance, a calculator to confirm results.

Introducing computer games to learners: Most learners with ADHD find computer games more

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supporting because they provide the opportunity to respond, engage actively, and provide accurate feedback.

Some of the classroom accommodations for ADHD students may include providing footrests or resistance bands on chair supports to promote movement and improve focus. Besides, increasing space between desks prevents disturbance from fellow peers. Another technique entails having a teacher standing near the student while teaching.

## **Behavior Management and Social Strategies**

The objective of behavior management methods is to assist learners to control their overall conduct. Teachers need to adopt inconspicuous, nonverbal techniques, including hand gestures and eye contact to help learners recognizing certain behaviors (Piffner, 2011). This technique enables ADHD students to quickly respond to certain events before they occur. Besides, the use of environmental and visual prompts promotes desired classroom behaviors. For instance, presenting a picture of a student attending a lesson sets the standards and expectations of the tutor to the learners. Additionally, teachers can set timers to help ADHD students plan and manage their schedules. Timers should be placed in strategic positions to enable students to monitor their progress against the remaining time.

Social strategies can also act as reinforcement aids when establishing student behavior. Some of these strategies include praise and collaboration with the students' parents. Praising learners for positive behaviors prevents them from shifting attention and promotes a sense of belonging and social skills (Piffner, 2011). When parents and teachers communicate frequently, they become familiar with the requirements of an ADHD student, both in the school and home environments. The feeling of being cared for elevates happiness and makes ADHD learners feel they are part of society.

In essence, ADHD is complicated to address and manage. Therefore, it requires collective intervention from both teachers and parents. Teachers are placed in a difficult position as they need to identify the student's unique needs as well as the environmental demands. Most adaptive and accommodative strategies for ADHD students involve the integration of classroom support and techniques that promote both academic and behavioral success.