

# The Myth of the A.D.D. Child

50 Ways to improve Your Child's  
Behaviour and Attention Span  
without Drugs, Labels, and Coercion

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## Author's Underlying Belief

- A.D.D. does not exist, these children are **not** disordered
- A.D.D. labeled children have a different style of thinking, attending and behaving
- It is the broader social and educational influences that create the disorder, not the children
- Book is based on a **wellness** model of children and learning – the children themselves at core are fully intact, whole and healthy human beings – not suffering from a medical disorder
- Author proposes the best way of helping these children is not to saddle them with a medical label and then apply selected specialized treatments, but **by providing them with the kinds of nurturing, stimulating, and encouraging interventions** that are good for **all** kids!



## The A.D.D. Myth

- A.D.D. is a neurologically based disorder due to biochemical imbalances in the areas of the brain that are responsible for attention, planning and motor activity
- Afflicts 3 – 5 % of children population, significantly more boys than girls (4:1 ratio)
- Some A.D.D. children have co-morbidities – learning disabilities, conduct disorders, Tourette’s syndrome, OCD, or mood disorders incl. anxiety and depression
- There is no known “cure” for A.D.D. Some outgrow it, more than half live with it as a lifelong condition
- Can be successfully treated with psychoactive medication, and behavior modification, a structured classroom setting, parent training and counseling



## Is A.D.D. a Simplistic Answer to the Problems of a Complex World ?

- A.D.D. as a Social Invention
- A.D.D. as a Symptom of Societal Breakdown
- A.D.D. as a Product of a Short-Attention-Span Culture
- A.D.D. as a Response to Boring Classrooms
- A.D.D. as a Reflection of normal Gender differences
- A.D.D. as a “Bad Fit” between Parent and Child
- A.D.D. as a Different Way of Learning
- A.D.D. : A Mixed Bag of Kids



# A Word on Medication

Such drugs, used in the right way with the right individuals by responsible physicians, can significantly enhance the quality of life!

There are at least 3 situations where the use of psycho-stimulants or related drugs may be appropriate / useful :

- 1) For cases of severe hyperactivity due to neurological and other biological causes
- 2) Used on a short-term basis with children who are experiencing severe crisis in their lives – to create an atmosphere of greater calm, which then allows follow-up programs for improved management
- 3) Used as a last resort, after a sincere attempt to employ a number of non-drug interventions has failed to produce significant results

***Advice : Use Medication as a Last Resort, and not as a first choice, or as the only treatment.***

However, If your child is currently on medication, **DO NOT** take him off it without first consulting your psychiatrist !



## Guidelines on Using the 50 Strategies

- **Use the Questionnaire** to direct you to the strategies most relevant to you and your child's situation (tick all the items that apply)
- **Involve your child** as much as possible in the selection of the interventions – the more you respect him and empower him to take control, the more progress
- **Do not try everything at once.** Select one strategy, try it out for 2 -3 weeks, evaluate the effects, then incorporate it or discard it, before moving on to another one
- **Make a list** of all ideas you have tried over time, which ones worked and which did not. Add your own other strategies that you feel might be effective



## Strategy #1 : Provide a Balanced Breakfast

- Avoid sugar-laden high-carbohydrate breakfast
  - Research study findings : “Hyperactive kids” who ate carbohydrate breakfast and sugar drink did more poorly on attention span test and have the highest blood sugar levels. However, “hyperactive kids” who ate protein meal and sugar drink actually did better at attention tasks than even non-hyperactive groups
- ⇒ Parents should provide ADHD kids with a breakfast that has a good balance of complex carbohydrates (cereals, bread, pasta), protein (milk, cheese, eggs, lean meat, fish, poultry etc), and fruit. *(refer Appendix 1)*
- ⇒ Try out balanced breakfast for at least 2 weeks, monitor and follow up with teachers on improvement feedback

***Do Not Skip Breakfast !***



## Strategy #2 : Consider the Feingold Diet

- A Diet free of artificial flavorings, preservatives, food dyes, and other additives, as well as foods containing naturally occurring salicylates (eg. oranges, apples, berries, and grapes)
  - Require major changes in the way you cook, shop, eat out, and manage your child's entire food intake over a long period of time, and require the cooperation of the whole family
  - Need the consent of your child to go on this diet
  - After a period of total abstinence, reintroduce abstained foods one at a time and look for behavior reactions to specific additives
- ⇒ ***This is not for everyone!***





## Strategy #3 : Limit TV and Video Games

- Constant TV and video games promote short attention span. Violent TV programs may also promote aggressiveness in children
- Negatively affect children's behavior by taking them away from activities that are more active, multi-sensory, and intellectually, socially and emotionally nourishing
- ⇒ *Do not use TV to calm a hyperactive child – calm them with physical exercise, sports, wrestling, hugging, bathing and a lot of direct attention.*
- ⇒ *Do not completely prohibit TV and video games either, supervised TV and video games can increase visual-spatial and critical thinking skills (understanding plots, characters, scenes, big picture etc)*

### **Guideline** :

- *One hour a day during school week, and not more than 2 hours on weekends for TV watching*
- *Eliminate violent TV and video programs as much as possible (otherwise watch with them and discuss their feelings)*



## Strategy #4 : Teach Self-Talk Skills

- Self Talk is a process whereby an individual develops key phrases that can guide him through a complex task or difficult situation. He then learns to repeat these phrases to himself at times of need.
- Usefulness of Self-Talk:
  - ⇒ Helps ADD children develops self control, reflection skills
  - ⇒ Employed as a means to control anger
  - ⇒ Can help children to focus and organize themselves
  - ⇒ Used to remember Problem-solving strategies at school
  - ⇒ Used to help a child form a more positive image of himself as a learner
  - ⇒ Approach works best with kids who are highly verbal
  - ⇒ Children who learn to engage in Self-Talk become less impulsive (a research study showed)



## Strategy #4 : Teach Self-Talk Skills

### Examples of Self-Talk :

For Anger : “Keep Cool”, “Chill Out”, “Relax”

Problem Solving : “Read the Problem, Consider all the answers. Stop and think. Mark my ans. Check the ans.”

Organizing in school : “Write down homework. Check the instructions”

Positive Self-Talk : “I’m OK”, “I can do it”

### Four Stages to train kids to use Self-Talk :

- 1) Ask your child to say the Key Phrase out loud
- 2) Tell him/her to whisper the phrase
- 3) Suggest only his/her lips move
- 4) Ask him/her to say the phrase silently

*Also let your Child develop his / her own phrases – Unique expressions of his/her own personality are more likely to be remembered.*



## Strategy #5 : Find Out What Interests Your Child

- One of the latest theories :

*Not Attention Deficit, but Motivational Deficit !*

- According to this view, ADD is a neurological disorder that creates an insensitivity to consequences (rewards, punishments)
- Author's view : Kids labeled A.D.D. don't have a Motivational Deficit, they have *motivations towards other goals* ... often not the things that authorities want them to be motivated by, nor deemed important (lectures, textbooks, worksheets, boring routines)

*What to Do to help A.D.D. labeled children succeed in life :*

- ⇒ 1<sup>st</sup> Step : Discover what really interest them – Observe him during the times when no one is telling him what to do. How does he spend his time, what excites him and fills him with passion, enthusiasm?
- ⇒ 2<sup>nd</sup> Step : Feeding the flames of enthusiasm by help to develop / nurture their interest and make it a talent (refer Appendix 2)

***Regard your child's interests – no matter how trivial or "impractical" to you – with a sense of honor and respect !***



## Strategy #6 : Promote a Strong Physical Education Program in Your Child's School

- Physical activities (PE) help children with learning and behavior problems to “blow off steam” and thereafter be more focused, quiet and more socially appropriate
- How parents can help to build a strong PE program :
  - ⇒ Serving on the school PE committee (if there is one)
  - ⇒ Offering to serve as a aide in PE classes or as a volunteer monitor during playground time
  - ⇒ Helping to build or repair physical education equipment
  - ⇒ Helping to raise funds to expand PE resources
  - ⇒ Be actively involved in the school's CCA sports programs

***You will be helping your child with a very important avenue for channeling his energies and enhancing his self-esteem.***



## Strategy #7 : Enroll Your Child in a Martial Arts Class

- Martial Arts skills could prove to be a wonderful vehicle for the training of *self-control, concentration, and respect for others* for children labeled hyperactive or A.D.D.
- What can it do for your child?
  - ⇒ Train children to control their boundless supplies of energy - Direct physical and mental energy in a focused way
  - ⇒ Empower kids to feel good about themselves by enhancing their capacity to defend themselves, and developing a skill that is highly valued in their peer group
  - ⇒ Promote respect for others through the right courtesies and ethical values that each art employs
  - ⇒ Give kids an acceptable way of handling aggressive feelings without hurting themselves or anyone else

***Options : Karate, Judo, Aikido, Tae-Kwon-Do, Eastern Martial Arts***



## Strategy #8 : Discover Your Child's Personal Learning Style

*We all have different learning styles !*

### The 7 Intelligences :

1. **Linguistic – intelligence of words**

This child likes to read, writes easily, tells great stories and can memorize facts

*His/Her Needs* : *books, audio tapes, writing, dialogue, debate, stories*

2. **Logical-Mathematical – intelligence of reasoning**

This child enjoys maths, science, handles number problems easily, and is good with logic

*His/Her Needs* : *Science kits, problems to solve, brainteasers, trips to science museums*

3. **Spatial – intelligence of pictures & images**

This child draws well, remembers visual details, thinks visually, like art activities

*His/Her Needs* : *Art activities, Lego materials, videotapes, movies, imagination games, mazes, puzzles, trips to art museums*



## Strategy #8 : Discover Your Child's Personal Learning Style

### The 7 Intelligences (cont'd) :

#### 4. Bodily-Kinesthetic – intelligence of physical skill

This child like to work with his hands, may be a good athlete, needs to move in order to learn, gets “gut feelings” about things.

*His/Her Needs : role play, drama, movement, building materials, sports & physical games, hands-on learning and tactile experiences*

#### 5. Musical – intelligence of melody, tone and rhythm

This child enjoys listening to music, has good sense of rhythm, often has a pleasant singing voice, and may play an instrument

*His/Her Needs : Sing-along time, music lessons, trips to concerts, records and tapes, musical instruments, and opportunities to join a choir or band*

#### 6. Interpersonal – intelligence of getting along with other people

This child usually have many friends, enjoy socializing, shows empathy for others, and is generally quite co-operative

*His/Her Needs : friends, group games, social gatherings, mentors, apprenticeships, group learning, clubs, volunteer opportunities*





## Strategy #8 : Discover Your Child's Personal Learning Style

### The 7 Intelligences (cont'd) :

#### 7. Intrapersonal – intelligence of self-knowledge

This child has a good sense of his personal strengths and weaknesses, possesses self-confidence, often sets goals for the future, able to reflect and learn from past experiences

*His/Her Needs : secret places, time alone, self-paced activities, private hobbies, independent study, opportunities to make choices*

Important to Note : Every child has ability in all 7 of these areas !

But each child differs in the ways in which he/she expresses each ability

A person with high levels of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence seems to be at particularly high risk for the ADD/ADHD label (needs to learn by touching things, moving around, getting physical with learning)

***Share Your Child's Learning Style with his Teachers !***



## Strategy #9 : Use Background Music to Focus & Calm

*For some of these A.D.D. labeled kids, music serves to calm and focus them during study / work tasks*

- One study showed that hyperactivity reduces in ADHD kids when they listen to highly stimulating music – rock music
- Don't assume or leap to conclusion – talk to your child about the effect of music and what type of music calms and focus him
- Experiment with and without his preferred music for study / home tasks and compare results
- Try using classical, baroque and contemporary pieces as auditory background for study – mask out other sound distractions
- Use different music for different conditions (*refer to Appendix 3*)
- Also try different music for selected times of the day, eg.
  - ⇒ Stimulating and awaking music at beginning of the day
  - ⇒ Lullabies and soothing, calming music for bedtime

***Music may well turn out to be the “good medicine” he needs for his attention and behavior difficulties !***



## Strategy #10 : Use **COLOR** To *Highlight* Information

*Very young children live in a World of **COLOR**  
But when they grow and go to school, their world became  
Black and White*

- Textbooks are black words on white paper
- Teachings are black markers on white boards
- This *black & white* world deters some from learning

Research study found that use of **COLORS** helps to draw attention for A.D.D. labeled kids – when used appropriately to highlight material to be learnt (words, numbers, text)

- ⇒ Encourage meaningful use of **COLOR** for school work eg. Colored pencils, markers, colored paper etc
- ⇒ Teach children how to use colored highlighter pens to highlight important material as they read and study



## Strategy #11 : Teach Your Child to Visualize

*Most “A.D.D. children” have good imaginations*

*Turning external physical hyperactivity into internal mental motion*

- Use Visualization as a tool for learning, attention and behavior (esp. for Visual learners)
- Albert Einstein conducted “thought experiments” that helped him formulate the theory of relativity (“*The imagination is everything.*”)

### Ways to use Visualization :

- ⇒ Create a mental “blackboard” for spelling, time tables, formulas etc
- ⇒ Create a visual picture of what is read from textbook, situation
- ⇒ Use imagery as a means of self-control (eg. “The Turtle Technique” for responding to aggressive or provocative behavior of peers)
- ⇒ Use fantasy to deal with hyperactive behavior (to slow down)

## Strategy #11 : Teach Your Child to Visualize

*Help children labeled A.D.D. to form personalized mental images to help them cope with their behavior or with the actions of others\_:*

### ***For Calming Down :***

- ❖ A special place in nature (eg. Lake, woods, mountains)
- ❖ A favorite trip (eg. Amusement park, aquarium)
- ❖ An imaginary journey (eg. To a magical land, outer space)
- ❖ A secret place (eg. Tree house, fort, cave)

### ***For Focusing :***

- ❖ A favorite color, A favorite toy
- ❖ A special hero
- ❖ A favorite movie

### ***For Responding to Criticism :***

- ❖ Ducking arrows (of criticism)
- ❖ Letting the breeze (of criticism) pass around
- ❖ Allow criticism to fall off like water from a duck's back
- ❖ Fending off bad words with an imaginary light-saber
- ❖ Putting on an imaginary protective white light / armour
- ❖ Image of herself acting calmly /responding to criticism

Let your child create her own Imagery - ***Success may just be a Picture away !***



## Strategy #12 : Remove Allergens from the Diet

***What may be eating your child could be what  
your child is eating !***

### Most common Allergens :

- Food colorings, preservatives, artificial flavors
- Dairy products (milk, cheese), chocolates, soya
- Wheat, yeast, eggs, peanuts, some vegetables

### Symptoms of the Allergens :

- Hyperactivity, irritability
- Inability to concentrate
- Fatigue
- Stuffy nose, dark circles / puffiness around eyes,
- Abdominal pain, Headaches
- Eczema and Asthma



## Strategy #12 : Remove Allergens from the Diet

*If you suspect your child may have food allergy,  
Go for a Food Allergen Test, or try this !*

### Elimination Diet :

- Include most meat, vegetables, fruits and nuts, rice and water
- Eliminate dairy products, sugars, wheat, eggs, corn, chocolates
- Cut soft drinks, certain fruits and vegetables

### Multi-step procedure :

- 1) Prepare menus of approved foods
- 2) Keep diary of child's behavior symptoms 3 days before the diet
- 3) Eliminate suspected foods for 5 – 10 days, or until child's symptoms show significant improvement lasting 48 hours
- 4) Begin to add suspected foods - one each day
- 5) If a specific food seems to provoke a behavior reaction, don't give it to your child anymore, and wait until symptoms subside before adding any new foods.

***You must enlist the support of the child to ensure success!***



## Strategy #13 : Provide Opportunities for Physical Movement

- Provide opportunities at home and school to channel physical energy in ways that are not disruptive to others
- What can teachers do (innovative ideas)?
  - ⇒ Seating arrangement that take into consideration the child's need to move eg. Sit him near a wall so he can stand or wiggle
  - ⇒ Provide a wiggly child with *two* desks at opposite sides of the room (So he will have a place to go if he gets up!)
  - ⇒ Frequent changes in activities to provide movement
  - ⇒ Start the school day with tai chi warm up (in China)
  - ⇒ Exercise Breaks - Provide students with special physical energizers through the day to discharge / channel restless energy (eg. Simon Says, simple aerobic ex. set to music, run around the school etc)

***A child's hyper-energy only becomes a problem when the environment around him fails to find a constructive use for it!***





## Strategy #14 : Enhance Your Child's Self-Esteem

- Studies lend support to the idea that A.D.D. labeled kids may have significantly *lower self-esteem* than so called normal peers
- Children develop lower self-esteem as a result of the kinds of negative experiences they accumulate from home and school as they grow up
  - ⇒ Avoid putting down your child, do not compare with siblings
  - ⇒ Use affirmations or validating statements eg. “I love the way you smile”, “You played so well in the match today ....”
  - ⇒ Genuinely appreciate your child's existence as a unique and special person (and tell him/her how unique and special he /she is)
  - ⇒ By mirroring his positive features, the child learns to internalize this positive sense of self and grows up with a healthy sense of his own personal worth

***So Give your child Positive Affirmation every day !***



## Strategy #15 : Find Your Child's Best Time of Alertness

**Identify when your child's best times of day are in terms of focused attention, problem-solving ability and memory skills**

**Research study shows these findings apply to kids labeled hyperactive or A.D.D. as well :**

- ❖ Overall alertness tends to rise through the morning in most people to a noon day high, and then declines steadily throughout the afternoon
- ❖ Short term memory seems to peak at about 9 in the morning, and long-term memory appears to function best at about 3 in the afternoon
- ❖ Problem solving skills peak in the morning and then fall during the afternoon and evening

**Implications for Teachers and Parents :**

- ⇒ Schedule activities requiring short-term memory (lectures, facts learning, spelling tests) and problem-solving (math test, science experiments) in the morning, when it's easier to maintain attention
- ⇒ Schedule more interesting activities that demand less precision and sustained attention (eg reading for pleasure, art, music) and activities involving motor activity (eg. PE) in the afternoon

**Is your Child most alert in the morning or is a night "owl"?**

***Find your child's "Islands of Alertness" during the day and the year where he really shines, and maximise them for learning!***



## Strategy #16 : Give Instructions in Attention- Grabbing Ways

A key principle in developing “*attention-grabbers*” is to make them vivid and compelling


- People are more likely to attend to and remember something if it moves (kinetic), is colorful, imaginative, exaggerated and /or absurd.

Some “Attention-grabbing” ways in giving instructions :

- ⇒ Use Music – sing out your instruction
- ⇒ Use Cues – create Cue Cards, pictures, signals,
- ⇒ Use Objects – eg. Throw a beanbag to catch attention
- ⇒ Use Body Cues – a nod, glance, hand gestures

***Don't be Parrots, be Peacocks !***

- ⇒ Display a range of *colorful strategies* to catch a child's attention, and awaking the desire to respond.



## Strategy #17 : Provide a Variety of Stimulating Learning Activities

- It is now believed that many kids who are labeled A.D.D. are in fact *under-aroused* (they need larger dose of stimulation from the environment than the average person)
  - Proper stimulation from the **learning environment** can help to optimize the arousal state of these children
  - Home and school environment for “hyperactive kids” (*and all kids*) should be exciting, novel and stimulating places of learning – not boring, repetitive, textbook and worksheet wastelands
- ⇒ Child’s Need for change – interpreted as failure to sustain attention

***Provide your child with stimulating learning activities!***

***(see Appendix 4 for a list of novel learning activities)***



## Strategy #18 : Consider Biofeedback Training

- Changing the brain waves of the “A.D.D.” person
- It is believed A.D.D. children produce more theta (wide focus) and less beta (narrow focus) activity. Biofeedback attempts to help them produce less theta and more beta, thus improving their ability to focus and concentrate
- Guidelines to follow when considering Biofeedback :
  - ⇒ Should be an *adjunctive* treatment to be used with other approaches (not to be relied on as a proven intervention)
  - ⇒ May not be appropriate if the child is clinically depressed, suffers from seizure disorders, is under 7 yrs old, or has psychotic episodes
  - ⇒ Make sure the practitioner is clinically certified, has plenty of experience working with kids with attention problems
  - ⇒ Remember that the machine does not create the results, the child does. It is what the kids do with their minds that helps create the new behaviors – the machine merely serves as a medium for change

***Biofeedback is an expensive treatment alternative!***



## Strategy #19 : Activate Positive Career Aspirations

### *The Good News :*

- The real world offers the chance to display strengths and abilities that a narrow classroom curriculum never could!
- Your child may find his true place in life only when he can get out into the real world and discover a vocation that allows him to do what he does best
- In order to ensure that he *finds* his true vocation, however, you as parents need to begin stimulating his career aspirations from an early age

**Caution :** This is NOT to push him into a job description that matches *your* idea of what he should do, but rather letting him know that the kinds of traits he possesses are valuable out there in the work place.

Ask your child from time to time what he/she like to be when he/she grows up. Take their aspirations seriously, do not belittle them or try to discourage them even though you think the vocation is unsuitable or unrealistic.

***Stimulate career aspirations by exposing him to a wide range of vocations that involve novelty, change, imagination, movement!***

***(see Appendix 5 for a list of high-action, high-movement career choices)***



## Strategy #20 : Teach Your Child Physical Relaxation Techniques

- “A.D.D.” kids are under a great deal more *stress* than their peers
- It is important to teach the kids relaxation techniques to help them relieve stress and cope with pressures at home and at school
- Methods include visualization, aerobic exercise (jogging, swimming), deep breathing, meditation ....
- Let your child develop his own unique self-comforting methods to use whenever he feels he is under pressure or need to de-stress :
  - ⇒ Hitting a ball
  - ⇒ Listening to music
  - ⇒ Playing with pets / favorite toy
  - ⇒ Spending time with favorite friends
  - ⇒ Spending time at a ‘secret place’
  - ⇒ Taking a nap
  - ⇒ Just do nothing / daydreaming

***Empower him with techniques that he can use for the rest of his life !***



## Strategy #21 : Use Incidental Learning to Teach

- Children labeled A.D.D. are good at paying attention to what they are *not supposed to be paying attention to*. Their real difficulty often has to do with paying attention to things that do not interest them.
  - New field of teaching has emerged over the past 20 years, based upon the capacities of individuals to learn quickly and easily through *incidental learning – where knowledge is absorbed in pleasantly incidental ways*.
  - For example, children are asked to relax, listen and enjoy rhythmic classical or baroque music while in the background the teacher repeats the information to be learnt – they are told they do not have to concentrate on the teacher's voice and words. *The academic material is incident to the act of listening to the music!*
- ⇒ Essential Rule here : If children aren't paying attention, find out what they *are paying attention to* and then put the material they need to learn smack right in the middle of their field of attention.

***Parents can apply this concept about incidental learning at home for homework and everyday tasks !***





## Strategy #22 : Support Full Inclusion of Your Child in a Regular Classroom

- **Special Education is not the answer !** Our kids do not need special education curriculum, behavior modification programs and additional ‘special ed’ labeling. *Instead, they need good role models for behavior and social skills, and interaction with ‘normal’ peers.*
- **Full inclusion in a regular classroom is best**, without being labeled as “learning disabled” or some other labeling. *Meet your child’s teachers and discuss your child’s special learning interests, abilities, limitations and needs.*
- Seek support for your child in the regular classroom setting :
  - ⇒ Engage the Special Needs Officer in the primary school for support
  - ⇒ Offer to sit into the class to support your own child (with the school's permission)
  - ⇒ Request the teacher to provide support for your child (buddy assignment, personal reminders, lesser homework, extra time etc)
- Consider these options when necessary :
  - ⇒ Changing class (to a more flexible teacher)
  - ⇒ Changing School (one with a more supportive environment)



## Strategy #23 : Provide Positive Role Models

*What does Winston Churchill, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Beethoven, Louis Armstrong, William Wordsworth have in common ?*

- Kids labeled Hyperactive and A.D.D have unique talents and can be very successful in life. Provide them with positive Role Models to encourage and inspire them to achievement
- You can help your child discover positive role models by :
  - ⇒ going to the library to find biographies or autobiographies of eminent individuals who struggled with behavior or attention problems in childhood
  - ⇒ by researching the family tree for relatives who were particularly restless, did not do well in school, yet successful
  - ⇒ by reading children's books that include characters modeling some of these traits
  - ⇒ Do a project on one or more of his favorite "hyperactive heroes"

**Key Message :** *"If they can be successful, then so can I"*



## Strategy #24 : Consider Alternative Schooling Options

- International Schools / Private Schools (*please weigh first the Pros and Cons vs local mainstream schools*)
- Home-schooling :
  - ⇒ Requires a major time commitment from at least one parent to plan a child's curriculum, and to follow through on instruction and evaluation of work on a daily basis
  - ⇒ To be effective, homeschooling needs to be designed around the needs, abilities, and interests of your child
  - ⇒ It is also recommended that you network with other homeschooling parents to schedule social events so that your child has contact with kids his own age

There are 2 Home-schooling Agencies in Singapore :

1. Teach Asia – using Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) program  
(website : [www.teach-asia.com](http://www.teach-asia.com) Mr Randy Teo, Tel : 6769-1291)
2. Victory Life Christian Training Agency (Mrs Jan Boey, Tel : 6281-9431)



## Strategy #25 : Channel Creative Energy into the Arts

- Many children who are labeled Hyperactive and A.D.D appear to possess huge reserves of **creative energy** that simply aren't being tapped and appropriately channeled
- If this is true, then the use of arts, including *music, dance, theater and painting*, could represent an important ingredient in helping them to become successful people
- How you can help your child channel his energy through the arts :
  - ⇒ **Locate an area of the house where you can set up a "make-a-mess corner"**, then provide painting materials, old magazines, modeling clay etc
  - ⇒ **For kids with special abilities and strong motivation, provide music lessons, dance classes, art programs to develop their talents in a more structured way**
  - ⇒ **Keep a respectful distance from his/her creative work, unless invited to be involved**
  - ⇒ **Encourage arts programs in your child's school**
  - ⇒ ***2008 onwards : Try enrolling your child with special artistic talent into the Singapore Arts School***



## Strategy #26 : Provide Hands-on Activities

- *Do you find that your “A.D.H.D” child likes to touch things?* Behind this behavior lies an important need for your child : to have direct hands-on experience with the world.
- We all need to use the external world as a reference point for all thinking activities  
*(During the first 18 months of life, all thinking and learning takes place through physical experiences for an infant)*
- As we grow, some have a greater need of physical experiences than others in order to relate to the world – *the Haptic Learner* - they need to have physical contact with something in order to learn about it (eg. to learn about fractions, he needs to cut a pie into slices, or apple into segments)
- Hyperactive and A.D.D kids appear to be haptic or “hands-on” learners



## Strategy #26 : Provide Hands-on Activities

- How you can satisfy this need for your child :
  - *Give your child something to do with his hands whilst he is involved in stationary activities (eg. for long car trips : give him a game-boy, small puzzles, toy action figures etc)*
  - *Provide opportunities for tactile stimulation - visit the Science Centre, Zoo, Botanical Garden*
  - *Supply 3-D building materials for free play - anything that allows your child to build three-dimensional forms eg. Lego blocks, wooden blocks, clay, play dough, origami. Provide an open space for your child.*
  - *Use manipulative materials to teach academic subjects eg. for maths and science*

***It is good to have pet animals around for children with high-touch needs!***



## Strategy #27 : Spend Positive Times Together

### *Parents are a child's first teachers !*

- A positive relationship between parent and child prepares the child for a full and active participation in the world (*if the relationship is filled with yelling, arguing, fighting, and other negative interactions, then the child's adaptation to life will be troubled*)
- Positive relationship is forged from **all the little moments** that parents and children spend together : moments of *playfulness, creativity, respect, problem-solving, wonder, silliness, curiosity and delight* that parent & child mutually share
- Children instinctively crave positive contact with their parents : For a young child, love is spelled “**T-I-M-E**”  
(Time spent should be positive, and not wasted in arguing, fighting and other struggles which is common in families where a child is experiencing behavior difficulties)



## Strategy #27 : Spend Positive Times Together

- Research shows clearly the impact of a *positive parent-child relationship* upon a child's later success in life, academic achievement and emotional well-being.

*You are helping to install “shock absorbers” in your child’s heart and mind that have a lifetime guarantee.*

- Guide for parents :

- Spend regular positive time with your child.
- Don't wait for the positive time to happen, **Make it happen** by scheduling it into your day
- Make sure it happens regularly even if only for 30 min a day.
- See Appendix 6 for a list of positive things you can do together with your child
- Also make use of meal times and bedtime for positive contact
- **Important** : Plan on being available for special events in your child's life : parent-teacher meetings, sports events, school plays, music recitals, birthdays, graduation etc.





## Strategy #28 : Provide Appropriate Spaces for Learning

- Every child needs an appropriate personal space in which to learn. For children who are “on the move, or who have a wider attention focus, this space may need to be even larger or more flexible than the average child.
- *Over-crowding* or *under-arousing* school and home spaces may trigger or worsen symptoms of hyperactivity
- Recommendations on providing personal space :
  - ⇒ School : Desirable to provide a variety of study spaces to accommodate the needs of kids' different energy states and learning styles
  - ⇒ At home provide a child with his/her own private study space that is comfortable and free from major distractions
  - ⇒ Respect his sacred private study space - give him the space he needs to find himself.



## Strategy #29 : Consider Individual Psychotherapy

- There are many types of child psychotherapy, from talk therapy, play therapy to behavioral and cognitive therapies. All these therapies have in common *a process for helping children change for the better.*
- Many “A.D.D kids” are always being criticized by teachers, ridiculed by peers and punished by parents because of their behaviors, leading to anger, and resulting in more inappropriate behaviors (cycle of failure)
- Research suggests that up to *25% of “A.D.D. Kids” suffer from anxiety disorders, and as many as 75% may be depressed,* then psychotherapy to treat these deeper emotional issues may be extremely important to their future well-being. For stressed-out children, psychotherapy can provide a means of healing emotional wounds.



## Strategy #29 : Consider Individual Psychotherapy

- Psychotherapies most widely used for A.D.D. type issues
- ⇒ Behavioral Therapy : helps the parents set up a system of reinforcements to reward specific positive behaviors. Also helps the child to identify his own negative & positive behaviors and show him ways of shaping new behaviors.
- ⇒ Cognitive Therapy : helps children to *think* about their actions in new ways. Eg. To attribute their success in school to personal effort. May also help children to develop specific self-talk skills to boost morale or organizing new information, face new challenges

If you select this intervention :

- Choose a therapist with solid credentials (psychiatrist, psychologist, family therapist)
- Plan on taking an active role in your child's therapy
- ⇒ Meeting periodically with your therapist to discuss your child's progress
- ⇒ Learn what you can do at home to support his growth

***Psychotherapy is not a “Cure” for A.D.D – but a source of support for your child to achieve success in life!***

## Strategy #30 : Use Touch to Soothe and Calm

- A.D.D. labeled children have high needs for stimulation – that includes **tactile and bodily-kinesthetic stimulation** as well (eg. the child that touches ‘everything’ as he walks by)
- Many of these kids suffer from chronic stress (school problems, peer conflicts, parent-child tensions) and developed **muscular tensions** – touch can serve as a way of helping to dissolve those tensions and free up constricted muscular energy to flow more naturally
- For children who “*have gone to another planet*”, Touch can also serve to “ground” children to the here-and-now, and provide a means of bring them back to their senses
- Ways for parents to provide nourishing touch experiences :
  - ⇒ **Back-rubs** ⇒ **Hugs**
  - ⇒ **Foot massages** ⇒ **Light back-scratching**

***Touch is simply human energy, apply it with kids whose energies are off-track, can help them find a place of calm within themselves, and assist them in moving with confidence into the world***



## **Strategy #31 : Help Your Child with Organizational Skills**

Suggestions to help your child to self-organize in school and home life :

1. **Set up a Homework file** for school assignments, include :
  - calendar for recording due dates
  - colored paper for writing down assignments for different subjects
  - dividers for different subjects and color coded
  
2. **Use study time efficiently** :
  - read textbook material with a color highlighter pen
  - how to skim text for key points and captions
  - take notes using "mind-mapping" technique
  - help your child prioritize tasks (by importance, sequence)
  - give him frequent breaks (aids recall)



## **Strategy #31 : Help Your Child with Organizational Skills**

Suggestions (cont'd) :

### **3. Organize Home and School Space :**

- Color code drawers and shelves for different things, or get him to create a graphic symbol for each
- Help him organize his desk by dividing it into sections
- Get him to practice organizing his things

### **4. Do Household Chores**

- Give him/her responsibility for some household chores
- Rotate chores to keep experiences fresh
- Create a family chore chart to remind who does what chores

### **5. Building up to Self-Organization**

- Involve your child in the creation of organization materials
- Don't overwhelm, try ideas progressively and let him take time to discover useful organization techniques to manage his life



## Strategy #32 : Help Your Child Appreciate the Value of Personal Effort

- For kids who experience repeated failure in the classroom and at home, the light of curiosity, initiative and effort may slowly begin to die out (*surrender of the spirit*)
- Research suggests that many A.D.D. labeled kids experience *learned helplessness* – view things that happened to them as being beyond their control (whether they do well or fail)
- Successful students are much more likely to look at factors they do have control over – especially *their own personal effort* – as explanation for both their successes and failures.
- To help your child appreciate the Value of Personal Effort :
  - ⇒ Talk to him about the reasons for his successes & failures in school (make a list of all his reasons and highlight the ones he has most control over)
  - ⇒ Encourage him to use a positive self-attribution eg. “I do well when I work hard” or “Good thing happen when I try”.
  - ⇒ Share success stories with him eg. Hellen Keller, Thomas Edison who said “Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration”
  - ⇒ **Acknowledge his good efforts, be his cheer-leader!**

## Strategy #33 : Take Care of Yourself

- Parents of A.D.D. children are often themselves *victims* – of the “system” that refuses to understand their children, of their children’s unpredictable behavior, and of stresses of parenting such kids
- Parents have expressed feelings of depression, anxiety, self-blame, social isolation, and incompetence in parenting skills
- *Parents of A.D.D. children may require as much help as their children in coping with stress!* A calmer, happier and more secure parent is in a much better position to respond appropriately to a child’s difficult behaviors than one who is angry, anxious or insecure.
- How to take care of Yourself :
  - ⇒ Quickly defuse tension when locked in a power struggle with your child - take a few deep breaths to reduce your stress enough to keep from yelling at your child, or take a “time-out” yourself to cool off
  - ⇒ Take time off for yourself to relax : meditation, yoga, massage, exercise
  - ⇒ Stay healthy : Sleep and eat well
  - ⇒ Do activities that you like each week : reading, gardening, sports, music, romantic dinner with your spouse, meet friends, worship and pray etc.
  - ⇒ Join a parent support group : SPARK

***Don't be a Victim, be a Victor !*** 48





## Strategy #34 : Teach Your Child Focusing Techniques

### *Can Attention be trained? YES !!*

- Current research suggests that focusing exercises and meditative techniques can be successfully used to help hyperactive and A.D.D children
- One technique is to teach them to *notice things in the environment more closely and with greater depth*. Once the child shows the ability to focus upon an object for more than a few moments, this experience can be lengthened by suggesting that he spend time looking at an object intently for as long as he can (you can even turn this into a game or competition)
- Objects to look at : candle, picture, a favorite toy, a tree, house, anything the child chooses to single out for attention. Make sure the child sees this as fun or enjoyable.
- Also helpful to *teach the child to focus inward* and concentrate on her breathing, on a visual image in her mind, on a word, or an idea (she learns to use this central thought to bring herself back from distractions)
- Recommendations :
  - ⇒ *Pick a regular time of 10-20 min each day to work with your child on attention and focusing techniques*
  - ⇒ *The child must enjoy doing this - stop if it makes the child anxious or confused*

## Strategy #35 : Provide Immediate Feedback

- It is very important to provide *immediate feedback* to kids with attention and behavior problems – as many of these children are not aware of what they did, the consequences of their actions, how they look to others. *They don't "own" their behavior.*
- Immediate feedback does not mean giving rewards or punishment for the behavior (reward is the typical A.D.D. approach)
- Give immediate feedback for them to get a real sense of themselves and their impact on the environment and other people.
- Techniques to give feedback :
  - ⇒ *Counting* : count the number of times during the day that the behavior occurs (eg, interrupting others) and present to the child *in a matter-of-fact and non-judgmental manner.*
  - ⇒ *Take photos or video your child's behavior and show it to him soon after.*
  - ⇒ *Follow the child around and describe verbally what he/she is doing, or encourage the child to describe what he is doing whilst he does it.*
  - ⇒ *Objective is to help kids to confront their out-of-control behavior by means of observing and then learning to take charge of their own actions*



## Strategy #36 : Provide Your Child with Access to a Computer

- Children labeled A.D.D. typically do very well with computers – which seem tailor made to their needs. Software programs :
  - often provide instant feedback and immediate reinforcement
  - allow the user to control his own pace
  - are often colorful, animated and graphically interesting
  - provide visual, auditory and tactile stimulation
  - are non-judgmental, lets a person improve his performance in small steps
- Refer to Appendix 7 for some inviting software programs for *“hyperminds”*
- Suggestions :
  - ⇒ Spend time with your child to find out what programs interest him
  - ⇒ Do family projects using computers, play interactive games, design greeting cards, write family newsletters, create blogs
  - ⇒ Use computer software (esp in game format) to teach reading, math and other academic skills
  - ⇒ **When your child discovers a computer program that “thinks” the same way he does, his learning curve might just suddenly zooms sharply upwards.**



## Strategy #37 : Consider Family Therapy

- *Research is clear that families with A.D.D. identified kids are not trouble free – higher levels of marital distress, parental psychopathology (incl. depression and anxiety) and other family stress*
  - ⇒ *But Caution to make the A.D.D. child the Scapegoat of family problems !*
- Research suggests that A.D.D. kids are more hyperactive, distractible or impulsive with their mothers than with their fathers => A.D.D. symptoms may increase or decrease as a function of specific family interconnections. Family structures and parents have a great influence on a child's behavior.
- **Consider Family Therapy as an intervention for distressed families :**
  - ⇒ Help the family accept the A.D.D. child and cope with the difficulties of having such a child in the house, help to improve communication, sibling relationships, family interactions
  - ⇒ Offers the possibility not only for the healing of your child, but for your own healing and that of others in the family

## Strategy #38 : Teach Problem-Solving Skills

- A.D.D. labeled kids have more than their fair share of problems. Often their response to these problems is to *impulsively act out their feelings of anger, disappointment, frustration*, rather than deal with the situation directly. Or they might respond by shrinking from the challenge and engaging in avoidance behaviors.
- By teaching them problem-solving skills, we help develop alternative ways of confronting life's challenges – in place of *using tantrums, fighting, disobeying, forgetting things, lying, being late, and a hundred other ineffective coping strategies*.
- **Problem-solving is a teachable skill**. It also leads to heightened feelings of competence and enhanced self-image for the child.
- 4-Step Plan to develop problem-solving skills :
  - ⇒ Step 1 : What's the problem? *Define as precisely as possible*
  - ⇒ Step 2 : How can I solve it? *Brainstorm as many solutions as possible*
  - ⇒ Step 3 : What's my plan? *Let your child's choose the best option & act*
  - ⇒ Step 4 : How did I do? *Evaluate its results and the learning*

**You can also help your child become a expert problem-solver by modeling it in your own life.** Consider holding regular family meetings in which each person can bring up problems and get help in solving them.



## Strategy #39 : Offer Your Child Real-Life Tasks to Do

- There is **behavior-changing power** in giving children responsibility for real-life tasks (confirmed by teachers teaching A.D.D. children)
- Children with behavior and attention problems learn better from real-life experiences and this can have transforming effect :
  - shows the child he is treated with respect and with trust
  - through practical things to do helps them learn about rules, routines, challenges and difficulties
  - help them develop competence, responsibility and a feeling of membership in society
  - enables them to find out what they are good at (can build a career)
- Refer to Appendix 8 for a list of real-life jobs and tasks you can *offer* your child at home and in school (*offer and not made to do*)
- Caution :
  - ⇒ **Make sure that the task is not beyond the skill level of your child, or he may end up feeling anxious, incompetent, and/or humiliated, and thus discouraged to take on new tasks in the future.**
  - ⇒ **Help the child acquire the skills if they really want to do something**

## Strategy #40 : Use “Time Out” in a Positive Way

- Time outs are needed to regain control when emotions become too strong – *for both parent and child*.
- Time outs is not productive when used as a *punitive* method on the A.D.D. child – he will need to create his own stimulation in the dull environment and it undermines the child’s self-respect and dignity.
- **Time outs should be used in a positive way by both parent and child.** It can serve as a “break in the action” for parent and/or child to cool off and regain control, to reflect on behavior and come up with better ways of dealing with the problem.
- Recommendations to use Time Outs positively :
  - ⇒ Explain to your children the purpose of Time Outs
  - ⇒ Model by taking Time Outs yourself when you are angry or frustrated
  - ⇒ Let the child decide himself when he needs to go to a Time Out area
  - ⇒ Rename Time Out : thinking corner, quiet space, home base, energy place, centering spot, peace room etc.
  - ⇒ Let children do things in the Time Out area to help them gain control, feel better and sort things out : eg. self-talk, visualization, meditating, do physical relaxation ex, listen to music, and think about solutions to the problem.





## Strategy #41 : Help Your Child Develop Social Skills

- As many as 60% of all kids identified as A.D.D. experience some form of *social rejection* from their peer group, due to their *hyperactivity, impulsiveness and socially inappropriate behavior*.
- **Social Skills are learned** – we learn them by having them modeled for us by parents, siblings and others, and by practicing them in our own peer group.
- A.D.D. kids in particular need to be taught social skills (eg. taking turns, sharing, cooperating, communicating, dealing with anger etc)
- Ways to help your child learn social skills :
  - ⇒ Encourage your child to participate in social activities. Start with non-competitive and low-stress settings like arts-and-craft programs, swimming classes, social outings with his friends
  - ⇒ Encourage your child to invite a friend home for games, dinner or movie. *A child who has at least one good friendship can weather the storm of difficult peer relations in other parts of his life.*
  - ⇒ Role play together situations experienced in school, talk to him about the difficulties he faced with peers (use the 4-step problem solving model)
  - ⇒ In school, teachers should pair up an A.D.D. child with a buddy who is good in social skills, and to help him in group work and group projects





## Strategy #42 : Contract with Your Child

- From ages of 7 to 12 (“the heart of childhood”) children are actively concerned with rules, responsibilities and “contracts” of this kind :  
“if you do this, then I’ll do that.”
  - ⇒ *Contracts can be used as a strategy for improving difficult behaviors*
  - ⇒ *Contracts can also serve to help children learn responsibility*
- Contracts must be **negotiated** between parent and child (not reward-and-punishment programs unilaterally set by the parent). **Dialogue** until both parent and child are in agreement about the behavior problem and what a good outcome looks like.
- Allow the child to choose his ‘reward’ if he improves the behavior (what you will do for him in return). May also add a ‘punishment’ for continuance of bad behavior (for serious offenses like stealing, hurting other people)
- **Once agreement is reached, draw up a contract in writing :**
  - ⇒ **Work together on the wordings, incl use of his language. Fix review time.**
  - ⇒ **Both to sign the contract and post it prominently for both to see.**

Do short term contracts with quick payoffs (end of day or week) rather than long-term agreements (end of month or year). A.D.D kids look for immediate gratification.

## Strategy #43 : Use Effective Communication Skills

- As a parent, do you nag, cajole, command, threaten, lecture, confront, judge, criticize, or ridicule to get your child to respond?  
⇒ *All these have proven NOT to work – the kids become “mother-deaf” and “nag-proof”.* This kind of communication do not improve behavior, but worsen an already fractured parent-child relationship.
- Basis for a successful parent-child relationship is formed from “dialogue based on firmness with dignity and respect” (*Positive Discipline experts H. Stephen Glenn and Jane Nelsen*)
- Five basic communication barriers to building closeness and trust :
  1. Assuming (Makes an ASS out of U and ME)
  2. Rescuing (always reminding)
  3. Directing (ordering them to do things)
  4. Expecting (“I thought you would .....”)
  5. Adultisms (“You should know better than that!”)

***All these are  
Dialogue Killers!***

***Also pay attention to Non-verbal Communication (body language)!***



## Strategy #43 : Use Effective Communication Skills

- Instead, parents can improve relationships with their kids by using these **5 Communication “Builders”** :
    1. Checking (their thinking, feelings)
    2. Exploring the what, why and how (learn more by using these questions)
    3. Encouraging
    4. Celebrating (by giving specific praise)
    5. Respecting (“I love to hear your ideas....”)
  - ⇒ Positive communications help parents enter into their children’s world to understand what feelings, motivations and intentions might be underlying their behaviors. Also show respect to the children.
  - ⇒ Use “I” messages rather than “You” messages (eg. “I am upset with you doing this..” rather than “You did this ....” - invoke blame / guilt)
- Must Read - Books by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish :**
- ❖ “How to Talk so Kids will Listen & Listen so Kids will Talk”
  - ❖ “How to Talk so Teens will Listen & Listen so Teens will Talk”



## Strategy on Engaging Cooperation at Home & in School (from Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish)

Instead of nagging, commanding, threatening, criticizing etc.

Use these approaches :

1. **Describe the problem**  
"I see homework not finished"
2. **Give information**  
"Unfinished homework will get you into trouble with your teacher tomorrow"
3. **Offer a choice**  
"You can do it now or do it after dinner"
4. **Say it with a word or gesture**  
"Homework"
5. **Describe what you feel**  
"I don't like to see school work half done"
6. **Put it in Writing**  
"Dear Johnny, please finish me up so that I will be complete.  
Thanks, your homework pal ...."

## Strategy #44 : Give Your Child Choices

- When children are deprived of making choices in their life, they may quietly die a slow spiritual death as they find their personal voice ignored and forgotten. Externally it will appear as if the child has “lost motivation”, “become withdrawn”, or is depressed. *Essentially their inner flame has gone out.*
  - ⇒ *Especially the A.D.D. child is hardly given any choices in day-to-day settings and decisions regarding him!*
  - Studies support the positive impact of giving A.D.D. labeled children choices – their motivation level increases and their behavior becomes more appropriate. The act of choosing itself serves almost as a calming and stabilizing force for some A.D.D. kids.
  - Some ways to give choices to the child :
    - ⇒ Let him choose the time, place and method for doing homework
    - ⇒ Let him decide rewards and punishment for shaping behavior
    - ⇒ Involve him in making family decisions (where to eat, family vacations)
    - ⇒ Involve him in discussion regarding his educational destiny
- By giving the child opportunity to make lots of little choices when young, he is more likely to make the right choices for big decisions later on in life!*



## Strategy #45 : Discover and Treat the 4 Types of Misbehavior

*Children misbehave because they don't feel significant or belonged.*

The 4 Types of Misbehavior (according to Rudolf Dreikurs) :

1. Misbehave to gain attention
2. Misbehave to achieve power
3. Misbehave to seek revenge
4. Misbehave to assume an attitude of inadequacy (giving up)

How to Uncover - 2 main ways :

- ❑ Pay attention to your reaction to your child's misbehavior
  - Do you feel irritation or annoyance; feel threatened; feel hurt; or start to feel inadequate?
- ❑ Take note of your child's response when you tell him to stop misbehaving
  - Does he stop and then resume behavior later on; or defy you; or retaliate by saying or doing something hurtful; or adopt a passive-aggressive strategy trying to wear you down?



## Strategy #45 : Discover and Treat the 4 Types of Misbehavior

*Children misbehave because they don't feel significant or belonged.*

How to Deal with :

1. Attention Seeking - Ignore the behavior or do something unexpected to distract (eg. sing a song in response to the child's attention-seeking whining)
2. Power Struggle - Take a cooling-off period followed by a problem-solving session with your child to resolve the struggle
3. Revenge Seeking - Curb the urge to retaliate, engage in open dialogue, rebuild trust and encourage cooperation through a friendly, caring and respectful attitude
4. Feelings of Inadequacy - teach skills, set up opportunities to experience small successes, gentle encouragement to build adequacy and self-worth

***Rewards and Punishment are NOT effective ways of helping children feel significant and a sense of belonging!***



## Strategy #46 : Establish Consistent Rules, Routines and Transitions

***The key word is Consistency !***

- All children need clear limits and consistent boundaries. But children who themselves are inconsistent in their behavior may need them even more.
- A primary responsibility for parents and teachers of kids with behavior difficulties is to provide a safe and protected space at home and at school : a space with consistent rules, regular routines, and efficient transitions to help him through the day.
- Suggestions :
  - ⇒ Involve your child or student in deciding what rules there should be in the household or classroom.
  - ⇒ Frame the rules in a positive way
  - ⇒ Have few broader rules than many small rules
  - ⇒ Institute daily routines at home eg. get-up time, meal times, bedtime.
  - ⇒ Create daily / weekly calendar to help him with events
  - ⇒ In school, teachers need to prepare them for task transitions

***Consistency, accompanied by respect and care for the child, will provide him with the "backbone" he'll need to make his own way as a adult.***



## Strategy #47 : Hold Family Meetings

- Family Councils or family meetings empower children to take responsibility for their own behavior – an attractive non-controlling alternative to the use of behavior modification programs
- ⇒ *Lets the child experience Equality in the family – helps to activate his inner powers of self-control and self-discipline*
- How to hold Family Meetings :
  1. Fix a regular scheduled time for all family members to meet (usually once a week) for a set length of time
  2. Rotate chairperson's role so that each family member gets to experience being a facilitator. Make decisions by consensus rather by majority rule.
  3. Appoint and rotate the scribe for each meeting to write up a summary of the meeting, and post it at a common place for reference.
  4. Parents must refrain from overwhelming the meeting with their advice, ideas, lecturing, criticisms and judgments
  5. Start meetings with positive sharing and appreciation of other family members for things that happened during the week
  6. End meetings with a fun activity eg. a game, sport, movie
  7. Above all, keep the focus on the family - try very hard not to single out the A.D.D. child's problems and behaviors. Frame all problems as *family problems* and seek everyone's advice for solutions.

***Make sure that the Family Meeting is upbeat and proactive !***



## Strategy #48 : Have Your Child Teach a Younger Child

### *One who teaches, learns !*

- *For kids with learning and behavior problems, cross-age tutoring puts them into the “adult” role and thus elicits from them their most responsible social and behavior skills. Also enhances self-esteem.*
- Also, Tutors must think through the processes they teach before presenting to their younger charges. This helps awaken mental processes that can be applied to course work at their own level.
- Parents can support cross-age tutoring at home by encouraging their children to work with younger siblings, cousins or neighboring friends:
  - ⇒ *Help younger kids with homework or simple tasks like drawing a picture, reading a story*
  - ⇒ *Teach a skill to share his/her gifts and talents eg. riding a bike, making models, painting ...*
  - The more opportunities to play the role of “teacher”, “expert”, or “authority”, the easier it will be for them to slough off the negative labels given to them over the years due to their behavior problems.

*Develop Maturity and Responsibility by becoming a model teacher !*

## Strategy #49 : Use Natural and Logical Consequences

- Instead of using punishment to discipline, let the child learn positive behaviors through Natural and Logical Consequences :
  - ⇒ *Natural Consequence* : refers to things that happen as a result of the natural flow of events
  - ⇒ *Logical Consequence* : refer to events created by the parent that are logically related to the child's actions
- Advantages of Natural & Logical Consequences over punishment :
  - ❖ They are directly related to the child's behavior
  - ❖ They make life the teacher
  - ❖ They put the child in the driver seat and allow him to make the choices
- Natural Consequence is preferred over the two, as the impersonal force of nature/social order is doing all the disciplining.
- To apply natural consequence, simply ask the question : "What would happen if I didn't interfere?"
- To create effective logical consequence, apply the 3R criteria (is the proposed consequence *related, respectful & reasonable?*)

*Important for parents to use a friendly but firm tone, and avoid threats, sermons, lectures, judging or disparaging remarks.*



## Strategy #50 : Hold a Positive Image of Your Child

*“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being.” - Goethe*

- Children with learning and behavior problems do not need more labels. What they need most is to be surrounded by adults who see the best in them, and view them in more positive light.
- A new way of looking at these high-energy or “*active-alert*” kids or the “*spirited child*” – through these distinct traits :
  - ❖ A high degree of physical activity (very energetic)
  - ❖ A high degree of alertness to surrounding environment
  - ❖ A bright mind
  - ❖ Fearfulness
  - ❖ Intensity
  - ❖ Hunger for attention
  - ❖ A tendency to be controlling
  - ❖ A fluctuating self-esteem
  - ❖ Trouble getting along with others
  - ❖ A tendency to be a performer
  - ❖ An ability to empathize (sensitive, perceptive)



## Strategy #50 : Hold a Positive Image of Your Child

Reframing negative terms used on your child into positive ones that can serve as “*Hope Magnets*” pulling the child closer to his potential :

*Instead of thinking of him as...*

- ❖ Hyperactive
- ❖ Impulsive
- ❖ Distractible
- ❖ Daydreamer
- ❖ Inattentive
- ❖ Unpredictable
- ❖ Argumentative
- ❖ Stubborn
- ❖ Irritable
- ❖ Aggressive
- ❖ A.D.D.

*Think of him as ....*

energetic  
spontaneous  
creative  
imaginative  
wide focus  
flexible  
independent  
committed  
sensitive  
assertive  
unique

Remember a hyperactive child is an **alive** child. The energies of A.D.D. labeled kids are a valuable natural resource that, properly channeled, can really make a difference in the world !



## Other Useful Books :

- ❑ **“Why Johnny Can’t Concentrate”** *by Robert A. Moss*
- ❑ **“Taking Charge of ADHD”** *by Russell Barkley*
- ❑ **“Only a Mother Could Love Him”** *by Ben Polis*
- ❑ **“How to Talk So Kids will Listen & Listen So Kids will Talk”** *by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish*
- ❑ **“How to Talk So Kids can Learn at Home and in School”** *by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish*
- ❑ **“How to Talk So Teens will Listen & Listen So Teens will Talk”** *by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish*
- ❑ **“Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus ... CHILDREN are from Heaven”** *by John Gray*

Description this bookA psychologist challenges current diagnoses of Attention Deficit Disorder and shows. how to deal with hyperactivity and short attention spans through practical strategies for. making the most of a child s vitality and creativity. 25,000 first printing.

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When *The Myth of the A.D.D. Child* was first published in 1995, Dr. Thomas Armstrong made the controversial argument that many behaviors labeled as ADD or ADHD are simply a child's active response to complex social, emotional, and educational influences. In this fully revised and updated edition, Dr. Armstrong shows readers how to address the underlying causes of a child's attention and behavior problems in order to help their children implement positive changes in their lives. The rate of ADHD diagnosis has increased sharply, along with the prescription of medications to treat it. Experts say that children need more unstructured time, but maybe they're not busy enough. When she wasn't doing homework, she worked on computer-programming projects for science fairs, entering several over the course of the year. She practiced the piano for 30 minutes most days and got up early to sing in a choir, too. In other words, she could be the poster