

## ADHD in Preschool and Kindergarten Children



Researchers believe up to 5% of preschoolers may have ADHD. Most children are not diagnosed with ADHD until they are older. However, more and more evidence suggests that children who have problems in preschool or kindergarten will continue to have problems later on.

The symptoms of ADHD often become clear when a child is in preschool or kindergarten. They may include injuries, behaviour problems, and learning problems.

It is important to keep in mind that it is normal for preschoolers to be hyperactive, impulsive, and inattentive sometimes:

- They may run in circles without stopping to rest.
- They may bump into objects or people.
- They may need constant supervision to make sure they do not get hurt.
- They may ask questions constantly.
- They usually have very short attention spans.

- They often cannot concentrate for long on quiet activities.

These symptoms do not necessarily mean that the child has ADHD. ADHD would only be diagnosed if the symptoms are much worse than in other children of the same age and sex, and if they are causing problems for the child.

### Injuries

Children with ADHD are injured more often than other children. They often need to go to hospital, for example with head injuries or broken bones.

They often bang into objects or other people. They often climb and jump off furniture.

### Behaviour problems

#### Hyperactivity

Preschool and kindergarten children with ADHD are often unable to sit still for games and stories. They may roll around on the floor or crawl under tables. They seem to be constantly running and "on the go," only stopping when they are tired out. They may ask many questions but run off before they hear the answers.

#### Inattention

Children with ADHD may seem unaware of the routines, rules, and expectations in daycare or preschool even after they have been there for several months, and may have trouble following instructions. They may also have trouble following rules and routines at home

## Learning problems

Children with ADHD may not achieve what teachers expect of them in preschool or kindergarten. This includes both school work and social interaction. They may have trouble understanding how the classroom works. They may also find it hard to give focused, organized answers to a teacher's questions.

Children with ADHD symptoms in preschool or kindergarten often have problems with school later on. For example, children with inattention in kindergarten often have poor reading readiness skills, such as phonological awareness, vocabulary, letter recognition, and identifying letters that correspond to a sound. In turn, they are more likely to read poorly in the first grade.

