

## ADHD in School-Age Children

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Children are usually diagnosed with ADHD between the ages of seven and nine years old. At this age, parents and teachers often start to notice problems that affect the child's school work and friendships.

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



- They may play active games for a long time.
- They may act impulsively when they are excited, tired, or hungry.
- They may not want to spend a long time on tasks they do not want to do, such as homework or chores.

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.

### Behaviour problems

#### Hyperactivity

Children with symptoms of hyperactivity may:

- often fidget, squirm, and turn around in their seat during a lesson
- seem like they are constantly "on the go" in the classroom
- make a lot of noise even during play or leisure activities
- run around or climb when it is not appropriate

Symptoms of hyperactivity can cause problems in other areas. For example, hyperactive children may have a hard time making friends because other children resent their behaviour.

#### Inattention

Children with symptoms of inattention may:

- be distracted very easily
- have trouble concentrating on tasks for a reasonable length of time
- often make careless mistake

- have trouble following instructions and completing activities
- have trouble keeping track of their personal belongings and materials
- struggle to remember routines and organize tasks and activities
- have problems getting started on activities, particularly those that are challenging
- not seem to be listening when spoken to directly

Symptoms of inattention can also cause problems in other areas. For example, inattention is closely linked to failure in school.

Symptoms of inattention can also cause problems in the area of social communication. Inattentive children have difficulty following conversations, lose track of topics, and misinterpret what is being said.

## **Problems with social interaction**

Children with ADHD usually act much younger than their age, especially in their ability to control their actions. They may interrupt other people's conversations or activities, and often do not slow down enough to listen to others. They may also become frustrated easily when asked to wait or take turns.

Children with ADHD may have trouble paying attention to subtle social cues like facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. Alternatively, some individuals with ADHD can focus too much on the reactions of others and can be overly self-conscious. Both of these extremes can make social interactions challenging for children with ADHD.

Children with ADHD often do not have any close friends, or they may have trouble keeping up friendships.

## **Problems with school and homework**

Children with ADHD may talk too much when they are not supposed to, but then fall silent when the teacher asks a question. Alternatively, they may blurt out answers before they hear the whole question.

Children with ADHD often have problems with their school work and homework. They may not be able to work by themselves, or they may have problems starting or finishing work. They may have trouble with or avoid written work.

Although children with ADHD usually have normal intelligence, they tend to score poorly on tests and are at high risk for failing their grade level. This is especially true of children with symptoms of inattention.

## **Injuries**

Children with ADHD are more likely to be injured at school and at home. They are especially likely to break bones and be involved in falls, bicycle accidents, and pedestrian accidents.

**Notes:**