

# Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Strategies

## Organization

- Provide a predictable routine – class timetable and student checklists.
- Have an uncluttered environment.
- Give visual warnings for transitions – 5-minute sand timer or a countdown clock.
- Give time guidelines for work– work on plan for 10 minutes, then write for 15 minutes, then check over for 5 minutes.
- Have strategic desk placements – away from windows, doors and other students who distract.
- Have a work-station set up for independent work times that is away from distractions and has organization supports, such as checklists.
- Set up buddy pairs – pair with a peer with good organization and study skills.
- Build movement breaks into the routine – take a message to another class, move seats mid-task to talk to a new peer, hand out equipment or use a move and sit cushion.
- Set short, achievable targets and activities.
- Use color coding or visuals to support organization.

## Behavior management

- Have simple classroom rules on display with visuals to support understanding if needed.
- Give specific praise – “Well done for finishing all 5 sentences!” rather than just, “Well done!”
- Give immediate praise or consequence that is clearly linked to behavior.
- Praise effort as well as work produced.
- Give frequent feedback.

## Inattention

- Simple classroom rules on display with visuals to support understanding.
- Immediate reinforcement or consequence, clearly linked to behavior with a visual, such as a behavior chart or working for card (don't be afraid to take away tokens as visual feedback for inappropriate behavior).
- Reinforcement and rewards specific to individual interests (many with ASD do not respond to social based rewards such as praise), vary these rewards to keep interest high.
- Try to avoid over stimulation.
- Safe, quiet place to calm down.

## Impulsivity

- Minimize waiting times – give an activity to do while student is waiting for something.
- Give quick non-confrontational feedback when pupil shouts out, such as a ‘hands up’ card or write their name on a board.
- Give lots of reinforcement for positive behaviors (more than feels natural).
- Set up a contract to outline expectations for behavior.
- Use visual prompts as a reminder of expected behavior.

## Hyperactivity

- Use a sit and move cushion or a weighted blanket, when sitting for long periods.
- Use fiddle toys during listening activities (monitor whether these are more of a distraction than a help, give clear instructions of how they should be used).
- Give breaks between activities.
- Do stretching/exercise routines at the beginning of morning, recess and lunch sessions.
- Vary types of tasks – physical movement tasks, relaxing tasks, noisy tasks, quiet tasks.
- Chunk tasks into shorter pieces – students can tick off checklist or similar to indicate when each section is complete.