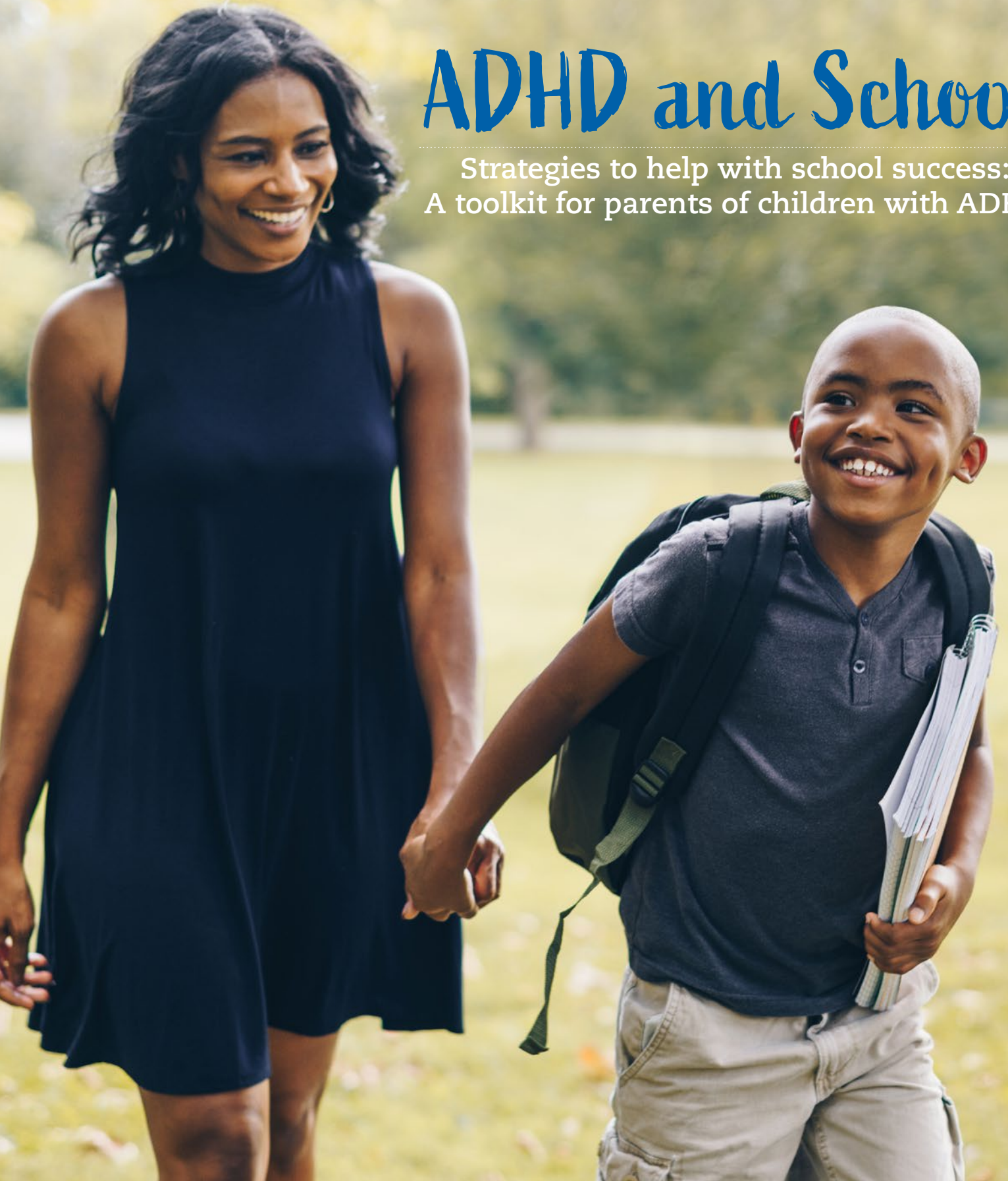


# ADHD and School

Strategies to help with school success:  
A toolkit for parents of children with ADHD



**F**OR 30 YEARS, CHADD has been providing support, training, education, and advocacy for children and adults living with ADHD and their families. We know that school for many children with ADHD brings a lot of challenges. This toolkit includes resources tailored to ADHD struggles, such as how to create routines, how to set up a homework station, and how to structure home-school communication. Additional resources include customizable charts, a sample letter requesting special education services, an information card for teachers on ADHD, and information on the rights of students with ADHD from the U.S. Office for Civil Rights. We hope this will help you and your child have a successful school year.

—CHADD - *The National Resource on ADHD*

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## Creating Morning and Afternoon Routines

### 1. Backwards planning

- Identify the time your child needs to be out the door (mornings) or the time your child needs to be in bed (evening)
- Create two lists. One for tasks before school and one for tasks after school
- Estimate the time for each task
- Plan backward from the time your child needs to be out the door or in bed

### 2. Safety net

- Plan for bumps
- Add in extra time for breathing room

### 3. Prep ahead (for morning routines)

Do as many tasks as possible the night or weekend before such as:

- Take a shower
- Choose clothes
- Prepare breakfast food
- Pack a backpack
- Pack sports and activity bags
- Prepare the launch/landing pad

### 4. Prep ahead (for afternoon routines)

Prepare for afternoon tasks the day or weekend before such as:

- Clean off the launch/landing pad
- Prepare snacks
- Have a homework space set up with all materials
- Create a visual reminder of after school rules

### 5. Time checks along the way

- Break up longer time periods
- Use a timer or alarm to set increments for each activity
- Can use apps

### 6. Ask your child for input

- Involve your child in developing routines
- Ask them how long they think things take and then have them time themselves

*\*Take care of your routines (getting ready in the morning or for bed at night) before or after your children if possible*





## Morning Routine Sample (same each day)

7:00-7:15	Wake up
7:15-7:30	Shower
7:30-7:45	Get dressed
7:45-8:00	Breakfast
8:00-8:15	Brush teeth, fix hair, makeup, etc.
8:15-8:30	Flex time
8:30-8:45	Out the door



## Afternoon Routine Sample (different each day)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Weekend
3:30 - 4:00	Free time	Baseball	Break	Homework	
4:00 - 4:30	↓	↓	Homework	↓	
4:30 - 5:00			↓	Break	
5:00 - 5:30	↓	↓	↓	Dinner	
5:30 - 6:00	Chores	Break	Break	Baseball	
6:00 - 6:30	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	↓	
6:30 - 7:00	Homework	Chores	Chores	↓	
7:00 - 7:30	↓	Homework	Free time	↓	
7:30 - 8:00	↓	↓	↓	↓	
8:00 - 8:30	Free time	Free time		Chores	
8:30 - 9:00	↓	↓	↓	Free time	
9:00 - 9:30	Bedtime	Bedtime	Bedtime	Bedtime	

Adapted from the National Resource Center on ADHD: A Program of CHADD's Ask the Expert webinar, *Improve Homework Time with Strategies that Work for ADHD*, presented by Cindy Goldrich, EdM, ACAC

## Setting up a Homework Station

- 1.** Involve your child in setting up the space to help figure out what works best for him or her early in the school year. Your child can help pick the location and decorate the area.
- 2.** Make sure the homework space has its own set of materials and supplies. If possible, keep an extra set of school books at home.
- 3.** Provide and use a timer to help your child know the difference between work time and break time.
- 4.** Set clear and achievable work completion goals rather than telling your child to work for a certain period of time. For example, "You can take a 10 minute break as soon as you complete 20 math problems and at least 15 of them are correct".
- 5.** Pick the space so that you can keep an eye on your child, but aren't hovering.
- 6.** Remove or minimize things that require direct attention and become a distraction. Things that distract might be the television or access to social media.
- 7.** Allow your child to use strategies that help him or her focus, such as background noise, music with or without words, or fidget toys. Try it out with your child to see what works.
- 8.** Some children work better if they are able to stand or move around/walk while doing activities such as reading, memorizing, or being quizzed. Try it out with your child to see what works.
- 9.** Monitor throughout the year and make any adjustments as needed to help him or her work better.



## Home-School Communication Trackers

Trackers are tools that can be individualized to each student. You can work with a teacher to customize a tracker to fit the needs of your child as well as make it age appropriate. Some ideas to keep in mind when using a tracker:

- **ACCENTUATE** the positive. Make the tracker about rewarding positive behavior, not penalizing the behavior that still needs improvement.
- **FOCUS** on 2-5 behaviors. You don't want to overwhelm your child by listing too many behaviors.
- **VARY THE DIFFICULTY** of the behaviors. 1-2 might be behaviors that your child really struggles with, 1-2 might be behaviors could sometimes be a challenge, and 1-2 might be behaviors that they do well most of the time. You want to make success easy.
- **PLAN REWARDS** for improvements and success on trackers. You want rewards to be practical, motivating, and available each day after school. Work with your child to identify rewards that are meaningful to them, not just something you think is a good idea. Rewards are often effective if they are related to the behavior. For example, if your child works hard to complete work quickly, they can get extra time for a fun activity. If they work hard on behaving responsibly, they can be allowed to do an activity that requires a bit more maturity, like staying up a bit longer.
- **FINE TUNE** the tracker on a regular basis. Your child's abilities and needs change. Edit the tracker in collaboration with your child and your child's teacher when possible. Update rewards as well.

Some behaviors that could be included in a tracker are:

- Follows directions
- Stays on task
- Completes Assignments
- Stays in seat
- Keeps hands and feet to self
- Works quietly
- Comes to class prepared
- Turns in homework
- Gains the teacher's attention appropriately
- Comes to class on time
- Listens to others and waits for a turn to speak
- Follows the rules
- Shows respect to the teacher and other students












Adapted from CHADD's Parent to Parent Program



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## Daily Behavior Tracker (Pre-K and Elementary Grades)

Smile = complied with two or fewer teacher prompts	8:30 - 10:15	10:30 - 12:00	12:40 - 1:45	2:00 - 3:00
<b>Follows Directions</b>				
<b>Stays on Task</b>				
<b>Completes Assignments</b>				

<b>Came prepared with a homework folder and planner to school.</b>	
<b>Turned in completed homework to teacher.</b>	

Adapted from CHADD's Parent to Parent Program



## Rating Scale—Circle a Number

- 1** = 0-25% of time
- 2** = 26-50% of time
- 3** = 51-75% of time
- 4** = 76-100% of time

## Weekly Behavior Tracker

(Elementary and middle school grades)

Monday	Performance Rating			
Stays in seat	1	2	3	4
Works quietly (no talk outs of noises)	1	2	3	4
Keeps hands and feet to self	1	2	3	4
Stays on task	1	2	3	4
Tuesday	Performance Rating			
Stays in seat	1	2	3	4
Works quietly (no talk outs of noises)	1	2	3	4
Keeps hands and feet to self	1	2	3	4
Stays on task	1	2	3	4
Wednesday	Performance Rating			
Stays in seat	1	2	3	4
Works quietly (no talk outs of noises)	1	2	3	4
Keeps hands and feet to self	1	2	3	4
Stays on task	1	2	3	4
Thursday	Performance Rating			
Stays in seat	1	2	3	4
Works quietly (no talk outs of noises)	1	2	3	4
Keeps hands and feet to self	1	2	3	4
Stays on task	1	2	3	4
Friday	Performance Rating			
Stays in seat	1	2	3	4
Works quietly (no talk outs of noises)	1	2	3	4
Keeps hands and feet to self	1	2	3	4
Stays on task	1	2	3	4

Adapted from CHADD's Parent to Parent Program



**Rating Scale—Circle a Number**

**1** = 2 or fewer days this week

**2** = 3 to 4 days this week

**3** = all days this week

**Weekly Organization and Class Participation Tracker**  
(Middle and high school grades)—sent home on Friday

Behavior	Performance Rating		
Comes prepared with paper, pencil, and books	1	2	3
Gains the teacher's attention appropriately	1	2	3
Works steadily on tasks as directed by the teacher	1	2	3
Completes classwork on time	1	2	3
Homework assignments recorded accurately in planner	1	2	3
Homework turned in on time	1	2	3



## Sample Letter to Request an Evaluation for Special Education Services

[FULL NAME OF CHILD'S SCHOOL]  
[SCHOOL'S FULL ADDRESS]  
[DATE]

Dear [PRINCIPAL'S NAME]:

I am requesting that my child, [CHILD'S FULL NAME], be evaluated for special education services and/or accommodations granted under Section 504 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). I am concerned that [CHILD'S NAME] is having difficulty and may need special help in order to learn.

For the last [NUMBER] years [his/her] classroom teachers have noted that my child has [YOUR CHILD'S CHALLENGES]. Please note that [NAME AND CREDENTIALS OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL] has diagnosed my child as having Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). [NAME OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL] is concerned that [CHILD'S NAME]'s ADHD is resulting in decreased alertness in the classroom and may be significantly impacting [his/her] school performance, learning, and behavior.

I would like to meet with all those who will be doing the evaluation before my child is tested so that I may share information about [INSERT CHILD'S NAME] with them. I understand that the evaluation is provided at no cost to me. I also understand that I must provide written permission for these tests to be administered and I will be happy to do so once I have received all the appropriate forms and an explanation of the process. I will also expect a copy of the written report generated by each evaluator so that I may review them before the IEP or 504 planning meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience so that we may begin preparations for the evaluation.

Sincerely,



[YOUR NAME]  
[YOUR ADDRESS]  
[YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL ADDRESS]

# Additional Resources



1. Customizable charts from this toolkit
2. CHADD's Teacher Card: Recognizing ADHD in the Classroom/ Strategies & Tips to Help Students with ADHD
3. Know Your Rights: Students with ADHD
4. Fact sheet: Restraint and Seclusion of Students with Disabilities
5. IDEA vs Section 504 infographic
6. Additional Web and YouTube Resources

## Morning Routine

7:00-7:15	
7:15-7:30	
7:30-7:45	
7:45-8:00	
8:00-8:15	
8:15-8:30	
8:30-8:45	

## Afternoon Routine

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Weekend
3:30 - 4:00					
4:00 - 4:30					
4:30 - 5:00					
5:00 - 5:30					
5:30 - 6:00					
6:00 - 6:30					
6:30 - 7:00					
7:00 - 7:30					
7:30 - 8:00					
8:00 - 8:30					
8:30 - 9:00					
9:00 - 9:30					



### Daily Behavior Tracker (Pre-K and Elementary Grades)

 Smile = complied with two or fewer teacher prompts	8:30 - 10:15	10:30 - 12:00	12:40 - 1:45	2:00 - 3:00
<b>Follows Directions</b>				
<b>Stays on Task</b>				
<b>Completes Assignments</b>				

<b>Came prepared with a homework folder and planner to school.</b>	
<b>Turned in completed homework to teacher.</b>	

Adapted from CHADD's Parent to Parent Program

## Weekly Behavior Tracker

(Elementary and middle school grades)

### Rating Scale—Circle a Number

- 1** = 0-25% of time
- 2** = 26-50% of time
- 3** = 51-75% of time
- 4** = 76-100% of time

Monday	Performance Rating			
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
Tuesday	Performance Rating			
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
Wednesday	Performance Rating			
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
Thursday	Performance Rating			
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
Friday	Performance Rating			
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4

Adapted from CHADD's Parent to Parent Program

# Weekly Organization and Class Participation Tracker

(Middle and high school grades)—sent home on Friday

**Rating Scale—Circle a Number**

- 1** = 2 or fewer days this week
- 2** = 3 to 4 days this week
- 3** = all days this week

Behavior	Performance Rating		
	1	2	3
	1	2	3
	1	2	3
	1	2	3
	1	2	3
	1	2	3



## RECOGNIZING **ADHD** IN THE CLASSROOM

ATTENTION	DISORGANIZED/ FORGETFUL	RESTLESS	IMPULSIVE	WORK HABITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Easily distracted</li><li>• Tunes out of lessons</li><li>• Daydreams</li><li>• Trouble staying in seat</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forgets to take books home</li><li>• Forgets assignments or forgets to turn them in</li><li>• Loses homework, pencils, etc.</li><li>• Messy desk, backpack, papers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fidgets</li><li>• Fiddles with nearby objects</li><li>• Trouble waiting, taking turns</li><li>• Trouble staying in seat</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talks excessively, blurts out or interrupts</li><li>• May disrupt class</li><li>• Trouble following rules</li><li>• Careless errors</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trouble starting/finishing work</li><li>• Incomplete, late or missing assignments</li><li>• Trouble following rules</li><li>• Doesn't follow instructions</li><li>• Easily frustrated</li></ul>

**FOR STRATEGIES & TIPS TO HELP STUDENTS WITH ADHD SEE REVERSE SIDE**



CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH  
ATTENTION-DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

[www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)





# STRATEGIES & TIPS TO HELP STUDENTS WITH ADHD

## SEATING

1. Away from distractions	Offer seating options such as single desks instead of two-person desks or tables; U-shapes, E-shapes, and rows (straight or staggered) often help.
2. Near teacher or responsible peers	Teacher can help focus attention to tasks, clarify directions. Seeing others at work can cue student to return to task.

## ORGANIZATION

1. Assignment notebook	Many students with ADHD have trouble remembering and tracking assignments
2. Backup way to get assignments	Students who struggle with organization need strategies that help them complete their work in spite of their struggles.
3. Teach & practice organization skills	Students must be taught missing skills or compensatory strategies on a level that matches their younger developmental age.
4. Notify parents of important due dates	Ultimately, everyone who touches a student's life has a role to play. Regular communication is essential.

## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

1. Teach and reinforce good listening	Be specific about what to do (eye contact, not interrupting). Reward good behavior. Positive reinforcement works best.
2. Use procedures and routines	Practice, monitor, review, and reteach routines. Keep reviewing until it becomes a habit.
3. Allow some fidget objects	Fidgeting objects may help some children with ADHD focus rather than being a distraction.
4. Give at least 3x more positive feedback than negative	Positive feedback is more powerful in changing behavior. It should also be specific so they know what behavior to repeat.

## INFORMATION DELIVERY

1. Add written or pictorial directions to oral directions	Students may miss parts of oral directions. Written or pictorial instructions help fill in the gaps.
2. Use graphic organizers. Give outlines for note taking	Students understand and remember information better when ideas, words, and concepts are associated with pictures, diagrams, charts, and maps.
3. Give multisensory instruction	Use song and movement to practice spelling words. Use color to call attention to letters with the word and to aid memory.
4. Give instructions one at a time	Students may have memory problems and may only be able to remember one step at a time. Repeating directions helps keep them in memory longer.
5. Break large projects into small tasks with deadlines for completing each task	Students with ADHD have difficulty breaking down large projects into smaller tasks, leading to projects that are not completed or rushed through on the night prior to due date.

## STUDENT WORK

1. Visual prompts, cues, frequent redirection to task	Use a prearranged private signal. Ask student for input on what will work best.
2. Use task cards to reinforce directions	Task cards serve as reminders. Explain to class that everyone learns differently or give everyone task cards to avoid stigmatizing the child with ADHD.
3. Match independent assignments to student ability	Sometimes performance or skill expectations are a struggle; for example, cursive writing or reading independently.
4. Shorten assignments (every other math problem, shorter spelling list)	This is to compensate for the length of time it takes to complete.
5. Reduce handwriting (write answers only, word processor, or dictate to parent)	Motor skills may not be fully developed in these students.



## Know Your Rights: Students with ADHD

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If you are the parent or guardian of a student in public elementary or secondary school, including a charter school, and that student has attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), the information below summarizes your rights and your school district's legal obligations under a Federal civil rights law that prohibits disability discrimination called Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).

### **Federal Law Protects Students from Disability Discrimination**

- Section 504 protects any student with a disability from discrimination based on disability.
- Regardless of how well he or she performs in school, a student who has trouble concentrating, reading, thinking, organizing or prioritizing projects, among other important tasks, because of ADHD may have a disability and be protected under Section 504.
- A student with ADHD who has a disability under Section 504 may also be entitled to special education or related aids or services from his or her school district.

### **Your School District Must Determine if A Student Has a Disability and Needs Services**

- Under Section 504, your school district must evaluate a student, at no cost to you, if the district believes or has reason to believe a student has a disability and needs special education and/or related services because of that disability.
- You can also request that the school district evaluate a student. For example, you might request an evaluation if you suspect a student has ADHD, or a student has received a diagnosis of ADHD outside of school.
  - A district must either: (1) conduct the evaluation, or (2) explain why it is refusing to evaluate the student and notify you of your right to dispute that decision through the due process procedures under Section 504.
  - During an evaluation process, you can, but are not required to, provide information to the school to consider before an evaluation.
- Signs that a student may need an evaluation could be: considerable restlessness or inattention; trouble organizing tasks and activities; communication or social skill deficits; or significant difficulty related to beginning a task, recalling information, or completing assignments.
- Your school district must determine if an evaluation is necessary even if a student exhibits behavioral (and not academic) challenges.
- If the school district suspects a student has a disability, the district cannot deny or delay this disability evaluation in order to first provide the student with intervention strategies.
- If your school district requires, as part of the evaluation, a medical assessment to determine whether a student has ADHD, the school district must ensure that the student receives this assessment at no cost to you.



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- When conducting the disability evaluation, your school district cannot consider the positive effects of mitigating measures in determining if a student has a disability. For example, if your daughter uses medication to address ADHD, the school district cannot consider the positive effects of that medication as a basis to determine she does not have a disability.

**A Student May Be Entitled to Individualized Services to Meet His or Her Needs**

- All elementary and secondary school students who are individuals with disabilities as defined by Section 504 are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Under Section 504, FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet a student's educational needs as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities are met.
- School districts often set forth these needed services in a document, typically referred to as a "Section 504 Plan."
  - The school district cannot limit FAPE to those aids or services that are free or low-cost, and cannot exclude needed aids and services just because of their expense.
- Not every student with ADHD needs the same set of services, or any services at all. School districts cannot simply provide the same aids and services to all students with ADHD. Each student's needs may be different, and Section 504 requires school districts to provide for those individual educational needs.
- The special education or related aids and services that are included in a student's Section 504 Plan, or similar document, should be clear and detailed so that you and the school both understand what the plan requires, and can make sure it is implemented consistently.

**Your School District Must Provide You with Due Process Under Section 504**

- The school district must allow you to appeal district actions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability. This obligation is more commonly known as "due process."
- The school district must tell you about this due process system, notify you of any evaluation or placement actions, allow you to examine the student's records, provide you an impartial hearing, allow you to have a lawyer at that hearing, and provide you a review procedure.

**Resources**

To learn more about a school district's Section 504 obligation to provide FAPE to students with ADHD, please see OCR's July 2016 Dear Colleague Letter and Resource Guide, at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201607-504-adhd.pdf>, and visit OCR's website, at [www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr).

If you want to learn more about your rights, or if you believe that your school is violating Federal law, you may contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, at (800) 421-3481, (800) 877-8339 (TDD), or [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov). You may also file a complaint online at [www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintintro.html).



## Fact Sheet: Restraint and Seclusion of Students with Disabilities

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### *What Is the Dear Colleague Letter on Restraint and Seclusion?*

The [guidance letter and series of questions and answers](#), issued by the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) on December 28, 2016, inform school districts how the use of restraint and seclusion may result in discrimination against students with disabilities in violation of Federal laws that prohibit disability discrimination, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).

### *Why did OCR Issue this Guidance?*

According to the Department's Civil Rights Data Collection CRDC, during the 2013-14 school year, students with disabilities were subjected to mechanical and physical restraint and seclusion at rates that far exceeded those of other students. The existence of this disparity raises a question as to whether school districts are imposing restraint or seclusion in discriminatory ways. In addition, OCR continues to see in investigations legal violations in schools' use of restraint and/or seclusion for students with disabilities. OCR is issuing the guidance to help educators, parents, students, and other stakeholders better understand Section 504, and how the use of restraint or seclusion may run afoul of the law.

### *What does Federal law require school districts to do for students with disabilities?*

The guidance explains that Section 504 requires a school district to provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in the educational program and to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each student with a disability. To meet the FAPE requirement, school districts must evaluate any student who needs, or whom the district has reason to believe needs, special education or related services because of a disability.

A student's behavioral challenges, such as those that lead to an emergency situation in which a school believes restraint or seclusion is a justified response could be a sign that the student actually has a disability and needs special education or related aids and services in order to receive FAPE. When a student exhibits behavior that interferes with the student's education, or the education of other students, in a manner that would reasonably cause a teacher or other school personnel to believe or suspect that the student has a disability, the school district must evaluate the student.

### *Can the use of restraint or seclusion deny a student's receipt of Section 504 FAPE?*

Yes. A school's use of restraint or seclusion may have a traumatic impact on a student, such that even if she were never again restrained or secluded, she might nevertheless have new academic or behavioral difficulties that, if not addressed promptly, could constitute a denial of FAPE. That traumatizing effect could manifest itself in new behaviors, impaired concentration or attention in class, or increased absences, any of which could, if sufficiently severe and unaddressed, result in a denial of FAPE for that student.

The repeated use of restraint or seclusion in school could deny a student's receipt of FAPE in another way. Consider a student with a disability who engages in behavior in response to which the school secludes him for extended periods and on multiple occasions. While secluded, the student does not





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receive educational instruction or services. Cumulatively, the school's repeated use of seclusion with that student could result in the school's failure to comply with the Section 504 team's decision about the regular or special education, related aids and services, or supplemental services and modifications that the student needs, or the appropriate setting in which to receive those services, and therefore may constitute a denial of FAPE.

Where the school determines that not all of the student's educational needs are being met, the school must (1) determine the extent to which additional or different interventions or supports and services, including positive behavioral interventions and supports and other behavioral strategies, may be needed; (2) determine if current interventions and supports are being properly implemented; (3) ensure that any needed changes are made promptly; and (4) remedy any denial of FAPE that resulted from the school's prior use of restraint or seclusion.

***Does the parent or guardian of a student with a disability have a right to discuss the impact of restraint or seclusion on their child's access to FAPE?***

Yes. Section 504 requires that school districts establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards for parents or guardians to appeal district actions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of students with disabilities who need or are believed to need special education or related services. The school district must tell parents and guardians about this system, notify them of any evaluation or placement actions, allow them to examine their child's records, afford them an impartial hearing with opportunity for parent or guardian participation and representation by counsel, and provide them a review procedure.

***How Can I Get Help From OCR?***

- ***Requesting More Information.*** With questions or for more information, including technical assistance on civil rights compliance, please contact the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) customer service team at 1-800-421-3481 (TDD 1-800-877-8339) or [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov) or visit OCR's website at [www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr).
- ***Filing a Complaint.*** Anyone who believes that a school that receives Federal financial assistance has discriminated against someone based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, can file a complaint of discrimination with OCR within 180 days of the alleged discrimination. The person or organization filing the complaint need not be a victim of the alleged discrimination, but may complain on behalf of another person or group. For more details, please visit [www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintintro.html) or contact OCR's customer service team at 1-800-421-3481 (TDD 1-800-877-8339).



# IDEA <sup>vs</sup> Section 504

What are they? Laws that provide special education, other services, and appropriate accommodations for eligible children with disabilities in the United States.

## What is the legal difference?

### IDEA

A funding statute requiring all states to follow its conditions for funding special education

### Section 504

A civil rights statute requiring all recipients of federal funds to provide non-discriminatory services, including reasonable accommodations

## Where does it apply?

All state and local public school districts.



All federally funded programs, which includes all public schools.

## Who does it cover?

# 13

categories of disabilities. Children must be eligible under at least one category



# Any

child with an identified physical or mental disability

## What about ADHD?

Falls under the "other health impairment" category. Kids with ADHD in some cases are eligible under the "emotional disorder" and "learning disability" categories.

If ADHD substantially limits a major life activity, such as learning, then a child qualifies for services.

## What makes your child eligible?

- Meet criteria for specific category of disabilities
- Disability impairs educational performance
- Your child requires special education intervention



- Has a documented disability
- Disability limits a major life activity

## Will your child receive special education services?

Yes. To qualify your child must need some form of special education intervention.



Not necessarily. Your child may receive both special education and related services, or only the related services such as preferential seating and movement breaks.

## How does your child start receiving services?



The school conducts a special education evaluation and develops an IEP (individualized education plan)

The school conducts an evaluation for 504 services and creates a 504 Plan listing all the accommodations your child will receive.



## Anything else I should know?

No cost to parents.  
The school needs parent permission to evaluate your child

## NRC's Website on Education

<https://chadd.org/for-parents/education/>

Find more resources here including this guide, *Educational Rights for Children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): A Primer for Parents*, and links to other advocacy, information and resource centers for parents. If you don't agree with the services and accommodations your child's school has decided for your child, find here how to appeal the school decisions.

## Educational Rights: Public vs. Private Schools

<https://chadd.org/adhd-weekly/educational-rights-public-vs-private-schools/>

**ADHD Weekly, March 23, 3017**

Learn how educational rights are alike and different in public and private schools.

## Parent-Teacher Conference Worksheet

<https://www.understood.org/~media/3a665634d0bd4751a78bc5fa15b87fb0.pdf>

**Understood.org**

When meeting with your child's teacher, use this worksheet to make notes on areas for discussion including homework, class participation, academics, and social/emotional functioning. Suggested questions to ask teachers are also provided in this worksheet.

## NRC's Ask the Expert Webinars on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/user/HelpForADHD/videos>

- [How To Select the Best School Accommodations For Your Child With ADHD](#)  
Jennifer Engel Fisher, MS
- [Improve Homework Time with Strategies That Work For ADHD](#)  
Cindy Goldrich, Ed.M., ACAC
- [Department of Education Guidance Broadens Understanding of 504 Rights for Kids with ADHD: Part I](#)  
Paul Grossman, JD
- [Department of Education Guidance Broadens Understanding of 504 Rights for Kids with ADHD: Part II](#)  
Matthew Cohen, JD
- [Academic Evaluations: What Parents Need to Know](#)  
Missy Alexander, Parent Educator
- [Better Grades: Overcome Academic Challenges](#)  
Ann Dolin, MEd
- [No More Homework Battles](#)  
Joshua M. Langberg, PhD
- [IEPs vs. 504 Plans: What's the Difference](#)  
Robert Tudisco, Esq.
- [Helping Kids with ADHD Succeed in School: Homework, Organization & Planning Tips](#)  
Joshua M. Langberg, PhD



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