

# MOVING FORWARD

News and information about the education of special needs students for teachers and parents

Fall 2014

## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

### POWER!



The world has so many mixed messages, that it is hard to find the logic at times. Education is no different. Teachers often sit a very bright, innovative, creative child down and politely try to explain that he/she has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). But the term disorder is associated with a disturbance, and typically a child thinks “there is something wrong with me.” How do educators instill confidence and utter the word “disorder” at the same time?

Make no mistake, ADHD does exist. But the issue is more evident because most things go from point A to point B in a straight line. Books, writing, job applications, newspapers and other media are often displayed in a very organized, methodical manner. In short, ADHD people are round pegs trying hard to fit into the square hole that daily life presents.

Attention deficit people don’t always process information in a step-by-step fashion. They tend to thrive on

chaos, pictures, colors, lights and loud noise. ADHD is just another alternative way of processing that typically does not involve order, consistency

or a keen focus on minute details.

With or without the accompanying hyperactivity, the “disorder” message has to change to something more constructive. Without a doubt, there are some real challenges to having ADHD. But why highlight only the negative, and not the many assets that tend to accompany this “syndrome.”

When channeled in a constructive direction, there is often a creative power surge which can spark innovation and novel ideas.

This newsletter is not about the disorder, it’s about the energy that can rock the world. No more ADHD label. From now on, it will proudly be known as ADHP!

**(The “P” is for Power!)**

**Attention Deficit is a variation, not a deviation from normal.**

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*“The same right-brained children who are being labeled and shamed in our schools, are the very individuals who have the skills necessary to lead us into the 21st century.”*



Jeffrey Freed and Laurie Parsons  
**RIGHT-BRAINED CHILDREN IN A LEFT-BRAINED WORLD:  
Unlocking the Potential of Your ADD Child**

## THE FUTURE: TURNING “SYMPTOMS” INTO VIABLE ASSETS

ADHD reportedly affects 11% of children 4-17 years old, and is now the most prevalent psychiatric illness in America for young people.

Research tells us that ADHD people are drawn to novel and exciting experiences. They suffer from underfed brains that constantly cry out for stimulation. ADHD people find repetitive activities tortuous because they often crave unpredictability.

Interestingly, in environments that are best suited for those who need novelty built into their days, the “symptoms” of ADHD (high energy, constant change, spontaneity) suddenly become valuable assets. Given the right setting, ADHD symptoms can become positive tools for success.

The pharmaceutical industry thrives on the perception that ADHD is a **disease** that needs to be treated with medication. The key question becomes: *“Why is there such a high rate of children with ADHD, yet oddly, adults only account for 3-5%*

*of the diagnoses in this country?”* Do people simply “grow out” of the disorder, or do they carefully match their strengths with the right environment?

Schools tend to promote inflexible adherence to standards and scripted curriculums. However, when given a choice in the real world, smart adults find professions that are best suited to his/her strengths.

People with high level energy and a need for constant stimulation would probably not be best-suited for desk jobs, assembly line factory work, or as accountants. They need opportunities for movement, innovation and creativity.

Certain behavioral traits that work well in one set of circumstances, may be completely inappropriate in other situations. ADHD people just have to search for their optimal place in this world in order to reach their full potential.



## THE INCREDIBLE POWER OF TWO

The tale begins with a teacher who divided the class into two groups. The first group consisted of detail-minded, highly organized, and strict rule-followers. The other group employed novel, highly creative, but somewhat chaotic approaches to the assigned tasks.

The teacher gave both groups a project, and the end results were very predictable. The first group submitted a well-written, researched, detailed, structured, and —extremely dull report.

The second group were very resourceful, and had pictures, arrows, colors and an innovative design. The end result for this group was very interesting, yet very confusing, because their thoughts

followed such an erratic path that no one understood them.

The lesson from this informal experiment is obvious. When the teacher mixed up the two groups for another assignment, she blended the members into two new diverse groups, and this equalized their strengths and weaknesses. Needless to say, the end result was very impressive.

In addition to finding the right environment, ADHD people need to look for partners, teammates and mentors who will enhance their personal attributes and “cover” their weaknesses. Life is best when there is a balance of extremes.



**“CREATIVE SPIRITS HAVE ALWAYS ENCOUNTERED STRONG OPPOSITION FROM MEDIOCRE MINDS. ”**

**Albert Einstein**

***GREAT JOBS FOR ADHP PEOPLE***

**Hands-on Work:** Construction or Mechanics

**Problem-Solving:** Doctors or Detectives

**Exploration:** Scientist or Travel Agent

**Creativity:** Entertainer or Artist

**Leadership:** CEO or Politician

**Intensity:** Military or Fire Fighter

**Team Oriented:** Educator or Sales person

**Risk Taker:** Stock Broker or Police Officer

**Innovation:** Architecture or Designer

**High Energy:** Comedian or Athletics



**YOU GOT THE POWER!**

**Take the path less traveled**

Not boring

Social

Lots of interests

*Brave*

*Playful*

Adventurous

**See the big picture**

Artists

*Flexible*

Exploratory

FUN

Can do many things at once

Can think on their feet

**COOL**

Courageous

**INGENIOUS**

Charismatic

Daring

**One step ahead**

Doers

Goal-driven

Colorful

Hard Worker

*Resourceful*

Dedicated

Quick Witted

Capable

Unconventional

*Spontaneous*

Risk takers

**SMART**

Hands-on

dramatic

*Passionate*

**OUT OF THE BOX**

*Bold*

***Celebrate IMPERFECTION!***

# THE ADHP FRIENDLY CLASSROOM

The traditional classroom tends to illustrate the weaknesses of ADHP children. Instructors need insight and instructional tools to enhance their classrooms for the benefit of HDHP children and other students who require a more innovative teaching style.

## These strategies will benefit ALL students and add some Zip to the Classroom!

Lots of controlled movement throughout the day

Short chunks of information instead of long passages

Consistent outlets for creativity

Structured, yet flexible schedule

Unpredictability and Spontaneity

Active listening is reinforced

Assistance with organization

Stimulating presentations (The more senses the better!)

Allow students to communicate in ways that are comfortable

Pictures or mind-mapping instead of note taking

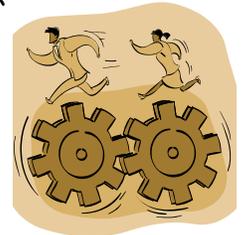
Announce the beginnings and endings of tasks

Emphasis on understanding social cues and promoting teamwork

Redirect oral interruptions instead of being punitive

Role model student expectations

Teach tolerance and acceptance of all children



### **Moving Forward**

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**School Board:**

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### **FAMOUS ATTENTION DEFICIT POWER PEOPLE**

**Michael Phelps**

**Terry Bradshaw**

**Will Smith**

**Justin Timberlake**

**Michelle Rodriguez**

**Adam Levine**

**Solange Knowles**

**Howie Mandel**

**Carmon Diaz**

**YOU?**

**TURN THE CRIPPLING CONCEPT OF  
A "DISORDER" INTO A SUCCESSFUL  
LAUNCHING PAD!**

