

Post Diagnostic Pack for Children, Young People and Families Following a Diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)



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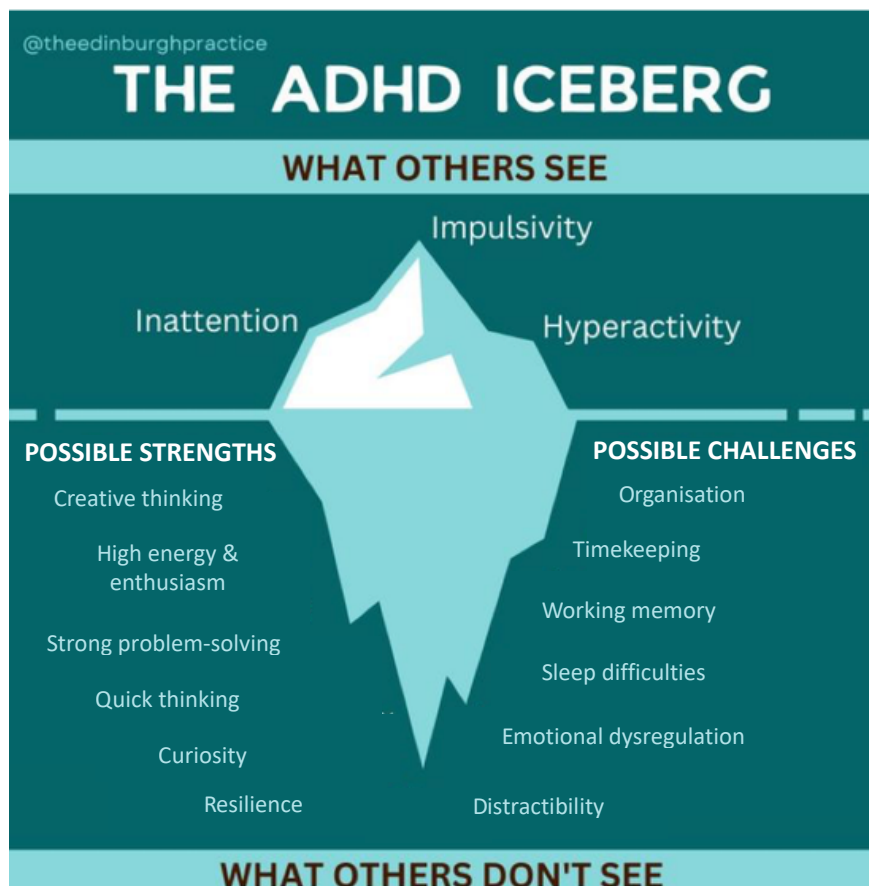
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What is ADHD?

ADHD is a **neurodevelopmental condition** which means there are some differences in how the brain works. ADHD develops in childhood and continues into adulthood.

Symptoms fall into two main categories:

- Inattentiveness
- Hyperactivity and Impulsiveness



What is ADHD?

Symptoms can include:

Inattention

- Difficulty with attention/focus
- Avoiding tasks that require sustained effort
- Difficulty completing tasks
- Difficulty with organising
- Losing or forgetting things
- Becoming easily distracted

Hyperactivity

- Fidgeting
- Difficulty staying seated
- Running or climbing excessively
- Always “on the go”/feeling very active
- Talking excessively

Impulsivity

- Blurting out answers
- Struggling to wait
- Interrupting or intruding on others

Children and young people with ADHD may experience difficulty:

- **Getting started:** difficulty starting, organising, or following instructions
- **Remembering:** losing things or forgetting tasks/information
- **Attention:** easily distracted, struggle to focus or switch tasks
- **Effort:** difficulty finishing tasks or sustaining effort
- **Emotions:** challenges managing feelings or letting things go
- **Impulsivity:** rushing tasks, interrupting others
- **School:** may need extra support with learning and behaviour

What causes ADHD?

We don't know exactly what causes ADHD, but we do know a few helpful things:

- It can run in families – so you might have relatives with ADHD too
- Brains work a bit differently – this can affect things like focus, attention, and impulse control
- The brain uses chemical messengers (called neurotransmitters) to send signals
- If these chemicals are not balanced, it can make it harder to:
 - ◆ Pay attention
 - ◆ Stay focused
 - ◆ Think before acting

Additional Symptoms

Alongside attention, hyperactivity and impulsivity, ADHD can also affect:

- **Planning and organisation (executive functioning):**

Finding it harder to plan, stay organised, manage time, and complete tasks

- **Sensitivity to rejection (RSD):**

Strong emotional reactions to criticism, rejection, or feeling like you've let someone down

- **Waiting and rewards:**

Finding it difficult to wait for things or stay motivated on longer tasks

- **Managing emotions:**

Quick changes in mood, frustration, or feeling overwhelmed more easily

- **Sensory differences:**

Being very sensitive to noise, light, textures, or needing movement (e.g. fidgeting)

- **Sleep difficulties:**

Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or switching off at night

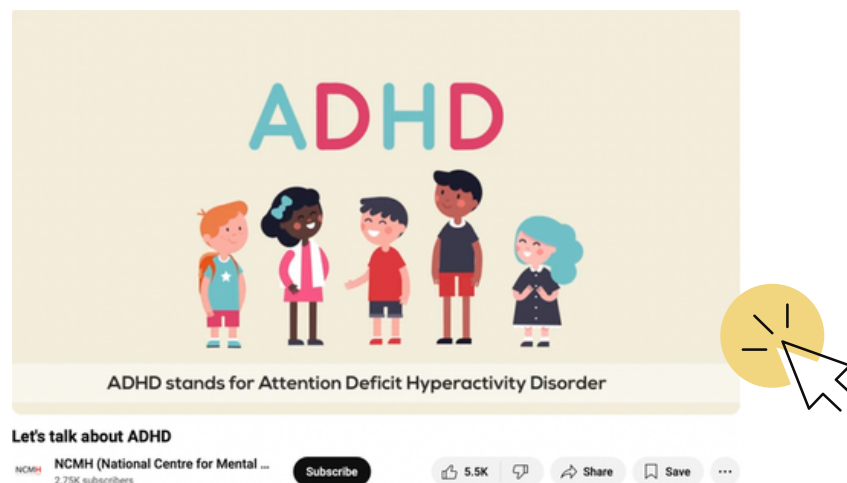
**For more information and strategies,
please [click here](#).**



Sharing the Diagnosis

Parents can wonder how to share the diagnosis with their child. This is a very individual process, and you know your child best.

For younger children, we recommend showing them the **'Let's talk about ADHD' video**, developed by the National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH):



For young people, we recommend the **'Mood Café'** and the **'Young Minds'** websites:

<https://www.moodcafe.co.uk/welcome-to-fife-s-neurodevelopmental-hub/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/mental-health-conditions/adhd-andmental-health>

Sharing the Diagnosis

Helpful Tips

Reiterate that having a diagnosis of ADHD does not define who they are as a person.

Keep the conversation reassuring and constructive.

Instead of using words such as “disorder” or “condition”, try using phrases such as “your brain works differently to others” or talking about neurodiversity with them.

Find a suitable time to talk without distractions or interruptions.

Leaving breaks in the conversation can help your child reflect and share how they feel about their diagnosis.

Ask your child how they feel about sharing their diagnosis with others and explain how it can be beneficial for teachers or others to know about their challenges and strengths.

Empower your child and remind them it is their choice who they share their diagnosis with.

Focus on their strengths in relation to their ADHD diagnosis in addition to what supports will be helpful.



ADHD Strengths

There may have been conversations about your child's challenges as part of the ADHD assessment and diagnosis, but it is also important to highlight strengths in relation to an ADHD diagnosis. ADHD brings unique traits and abilities that others do not have, and these should be celebrated!

HYPERFOCUS

You may concentrate on the things you love so much that you are able to accomplish much more and be much faster than others.

STRONG SENSE OF JUSTICE

It can be a great strength to hold a strong sense of what is right and wrong.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Having a lot of thoughts and ideas can help you think of unique solutions to tricky situations and make quick decisions.

FUN TO BE AROUND

Fun, enthusiastic, kind, generous and good at motivating others.



ADHD Strengths

GREAT CONVERSATIONS

All these ideas in your mind can shape up as fun and engaging conversations with others.

ENDLESS ENERGY

Having ADHD can mean never running out of batteries and being able to keep going!

NOTHING GOES UNNOTICED

Having ADHD doesn't always mean having a lack of attention. It can also mean attention to detail and noticing things that others may miss.

ADHD Management

Management of ADHD can involve:

- **Parent Support and Education:** For example, helping parents understand ADHD, their child's unique profile including strengths and challenges, how best to support them and positive strategies to help their child thrive.
- **Support for Children and Young People:** For example, using evidence-based psychological therapy to help with developing emotional regulation techniques.
- **Environmental Adaptations:** For example, discussing with your child how they think ADHD symptoms impact them educationally and liaising with school regarding supports and adaptations such as visual timetables, movement breaks, fidget toys and headphones.
- **Medication:** ADHD medications adjust the amount of neurotransmitters (the chemical messengers that transfer information between nerve cells) in the brain. We need the right amount of neurotransmitters for information to be transferred and to help with for example, sustaining attention, staying focused and reducing impulsivity.

There are national guidelines available for the management of ADHD which can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng87>

The **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)** guidelines recommend various supports including parenting approaches and support for children and young people with, for example, problem-solving, social skills and regulating emotions.



ADHD Management

Strategies can include:

Giving your child 'jobs or tasks' which require activity or provide a sense of responsibility and increase independence.

Encourage and praise children for doing things for themselves.

Reward task completion immediately where possible.

Allow the use of fidget toys such as a stress ball, twiddle toys, etc. when these aid concentration and if your child has lots of energy and needs to move in other ways.

Vary pace, tasks, and activities. Include 'hands-on' or practical activities where possible. Present interesting, motivating material to help with attention.

Use positive attention to encourage and build self-esteem.

Some children find it difficult knowing how long it takes to complete a task or how much time has passed. Visual timetables, timers and prompts can help your child keep track of their progress.

Give clear, concise, direct instructions. Ensure your child understands the instruction and can repeat it back.

Allow a "movement break" if the room becomes over-stimulating or they feel fidgety or need to get up and move.

Give shorter tasks and break longer tasks down into smaller, more manageable chunks for example, first do this, next do this.

Reduce background noise and distractions, have a clear space to work.

Help your child with planning and thinking ahead by setting goals and writing plans down. Setting goals can help with task completion. Focus on one or two goals at a time, make goals realistic and achievable. A planner or diary can be useful.

Consistency, routine and structure are helpful.

Strategies to help with memory including writing it down, rehearsing and repeating, representing things visually and breaking things down (chunking).



Resources

For Children & Young People

Online Resources



[Young Minds ADHD and Mental Health](#)

[Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder \(CHADD\)](#)

[ADHD and Me - ADHD Voices YouTube](#)

[ADHD and You](#)

[ADHD Voices](#)

[‘ADHD – It’s my superpower’ from the BBC Website](#)



Apps



[Chill Panda](#) – An app designed to help anxiety management

[Move Mood](#) – An app designed to manage low mood and depression in teenagers

[Unique: Manage ADHD & Focus](#) – Personal ADHD toolkit, including strategies, learning, and meditation

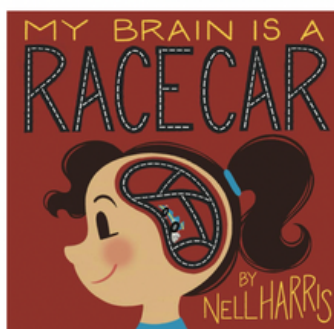
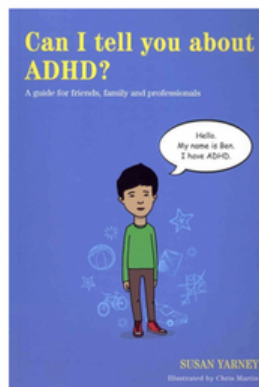
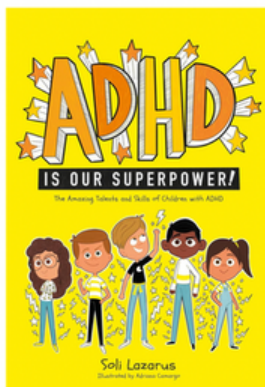
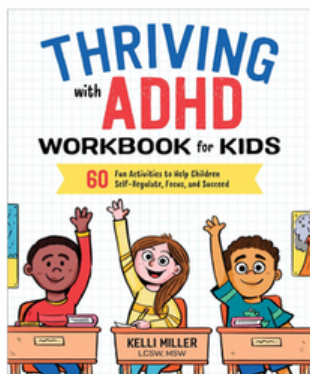
[Smiling Mind](#) – Mindfulness tool to promote good mental health



Resources

For Children & Young People

Books



Podcasts

[Journey With Me Through ADHD](#)

[Mostly Mindful for Teens and Tweens](#)

[The ADHD Kids Can Thrive Podcast](#)

[Shining with ADHD](#)





Resources

For Parents

Online Resources



Royal College of Psychiatrists – Clear guidance for parents, carers, and professionals

ADHD Foundation – Practical information on understanding and managing ADHD

National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH) – “Let’s talk about ADHD” resource

Great Ormond Street Hospital – Easy-to-read ADHD overview



ADDISS (National ADHD Information & Support Service) – Information, books, and guidance

ADDitude Magazine – Articles, tips, and tools for families (website + app).

Living with ADHD – Advice for families, schools, and individuals, including behaviour strategies

Triple P (Positive Parenting Programme) – Evidence-based strategies to support behaviour and relationships

The Parent Factor (Barnardo’s) – ADHD-focused support programme for parents

Understanding ADHD (King’s College London) – Free online course

ACAMH Learn – Talks, lectures, Q&As, quizzes, and podcasts for parents

Resources For Parents

Online Resources



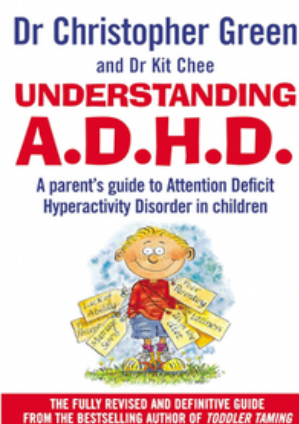
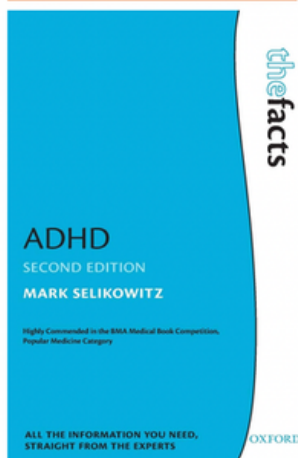
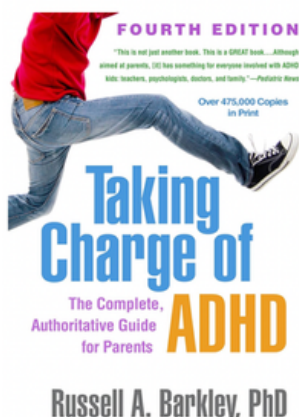
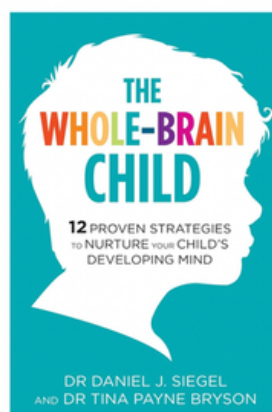
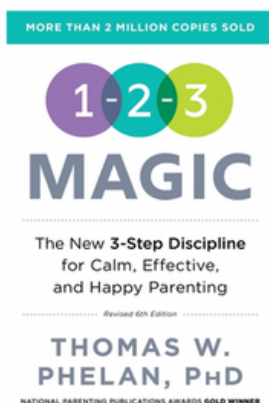
Cerebra – Advice on supporting children with neurodevelopmental conditions (including sleep).

The Sleep Charity – Practical guidance to improve sleep for children and families

EPIC (University of Edinburgh) – Booklets and toolkits to support learning, behaviour, and wellbeing



Books





Resources

For Parents

Podcasts



The ADHD Parenting Podcast – Practical, evidence-based strategies from practitioners specializing in ADHD.

ADHD Families Podcast – Offers practical systems to reduce burnout, hosted by a parent of children with ADHD.

Beautifully Complex – Focused on empowering parents raising neurodivergent children with compassion.

ADHD Experts (ADDitude Magazine) – Real-life answers from leading experts to questions submitted by parents.

Calm the Chaos Parenting – Provides trauma-informed, actionable frameworks for managing certain behaviours.

In It: Raising Kids Who Learn Differently – Offers honest stories and expert advice on navigating learning differences.

Support Groups

Local Groups

Barnardo's Sibling Group – A fun, supportive group for children and young people (7-12 years) who have a neurodivergent sibling.



Monthly Saturdays from 10am to 11.30am



Barnardos, 111 Oxfangs Road North, EH14 1ED



NDwell@barnardos.org.uk

Barnardo's Advice Sessions – Bookable advice sessions for parents and carers to access a sounding board and listening ear from a skilled and experienced support worker.



Craigmillar Library, 101 Niddrie Mains Road, EH16 4DS (**Monthly on Tuesdays, 10am-1pm**)



Silverknowes Golf Club, 118 Silverknowes Road, EH4 5ET (**Wednesdays, 9am- 12pm**)



NDwell@barnardos.org.uk

Support Groups

Local Groups

EDAN (Edinburgh Disability and Neurodivergence) Hub – Supporting Families with children and young people with disabilities and/or who are neurodivergent.



Dependent on the chosen service



Dependent on the chosen service



enquiries@edanhub.scot | 07526 565 672

Neuro Stars – A weekly support group for young people aged five to 16 years, who have a neurodivergent diagnosis or are in the process of diagnosis.



Every Friday, 2pm- 3:30pm



The Shed at Tynecastle Park, Wheatfield St,
EH11 2NZ



neurostars@bighearts.org.uk



Neurodiversity Support at The Edinburgh Practice

The Edinburgh Practice offers a wide range of neurodiversity support services delivered by our highly specialised multidisciplinary team. We work with a strength and rights-based approach that fully embraces neurodevelopmental differences. We offer a range of services for children, young people, adults, parents/carers and families delivered at the practice and/or in educational settings.

Educational Psychology

Educational Psychology is available for children, young people, parents/carers and adults.

Educational Psychologists offer:

Support for Children and Young People

- Supporting children and young people to understand their diagnosis, using age-appropriate resources.
- Consultation with children and young people to help identify their strengths, challenges as well as the supports they find helpful at home and school.

Support for Parents and Carers

Consultation, support and advice to parents/carers regarding:

- Understanding neurodevelopmental conditions including Autism and ADHD.
- Playing and interacting with children.
- Understanding and managing increased anxiety.
- Strategies to support emotional regulation.
- Understanding and supporting sensory needs.
- Awareness of masking.
- Supports for home and school including a safe space, visual timetable, predictable routines and sensory supports.
- The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) process including SHANARRI and Child Planning Meetings (CPMs).



Neurodiversity Support at The Edinburgh Practice

Support for Independent Schools

- Consultation and advice to school staff regarding neurodevelopmental conditions including information regarding neuroaffirming practices. Sessions can be tailored to the schools' needs and requirements.

Clinical Psychology

Clinical Psychology is available for children, young people, parents/carers and adults.

Clinical Psychologists offer:

- Psychoeducation and therapeutic support to develop an increased understanding of the strengths and challenges that can come with neurodiversity (for parents and/or for individuals) and how to best support children and young people to allow them to thrive.
- Evidence-based psychological therapy for mental health difficulties, such as anxiety or low mood, which may occur alongside neurodiversity.
- A space for children and young people to work through some of the challenges that can arise from navigating a neurotypical world.

Speech & Language Therapy

Speech and Language Therapy is available for children and young people.

Speech and Language Therapists offer:

- Support for children, young people and their families to understand autism, with the option to have information adapted to support language and communication differences.
- A neuroaffirming approach which can help an individual understand their communication style as well as building an understanding of communication in autism and develop strategies to support the autistic person.

Neurodiversity Support at The Edinburgh Practice

Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy is available for children and young people.

Occupational Therapists offer:

- Support with daily living skills for neurodiverse people, such as self-care, engaging in meaningful activity, and creating routines and structure.
- Thorough assessments, generating collaborative and tailored intervention plans for the home, school, further education, or work environment.
- Sensory assessments and recommendations to help identify any sensory sensitivities clients are experiencing.

Dietetics

Dietetics is available for children, young people, parents/carers and adults.

Dieticians offer:

- Support for children and young people experiencing eating or nutrition difficulties believed to be linked to neurodiversity (such as ARFID) our specialist Dietician provides thorough assessments and a collaborative intervention plans specifically tailored to individual needs.

Neurodiversity Support at The Edinburgh Practice

Systemic Family Therapy

Systemic therapy is available for children, young people, parents/carers, adults and families.

Systemic Family Therapists offer:

- An initial meeting with the person who has received the diagnosis along with significant others. For a young person, these might be parents and siblings and for adults, their partners and/or children, if this was felt helpful.
- The systemic therapy works towards a shared understanding of the meaning of the diagnosis for each person and how it influences relationship patterns. For example, does the diagnosis bring more closeness or distance; what does it change; does it change how each person makes sense of patterns of behaviour and responses between them?
- The aim of developing this shared understanding between family members is to identify new possibilities for interaction and to strengthen existing bonds and resilience in families.

Play Therapy

Play Therapy is a non-directive and child-centred means by which a child can express themselves freely. The child leads the way in their play, choosing their own toys and activities. They do not need to verbally explain what they are doing. Clear and appropriate boundaries are provided to support children with self-regulation and safety.

Play Therapy includes:

- At the initial appointment, the play therapist will meet with the parents/caregivers and the child to assess whether play therapy is currently the most suitable intervention.
- During subsequent appointments, the play therapist will respond to the child's lead in a nonjudgemental and attuned way to help further and deepen their exploration of their inner world through play.
- Meetings with parents continue throughout to discuss the therapeutic process and provide tailored support for family relationships.

Neurodiversity Support at The Edinburgh Practice

Art Therapy

Art Therapy is a type of psychotherapy which uses creative art-making as a tool to support self-understanding, healing, and emotional and mental wellbeing. Art therapy is available for children, young people, parents and carers.

Art therapy includes:

- An initial meeting with the person who has received the diagnosis, along with their parent or carer. The therapist will discuss how art therapy works and answer any questions you may have.
- At follow-up appointments, your art therapist will provide materials and guidance adapted to your needs, supporting you through creative exploration and expression of your thoughts, emotions, and experiences.
- Art therapy can be less challenging and intimidating than talking therapy, fostering self-discovery through increased freedom of expression. It can increase the accessibility and efficacy of therapy for neurodivergent individuals. It can be structured or fluid, depending on your needs.

Psychiatry

Our Consultant Psychiatrists have expertise in Autism and ADHD. Our doctors offer assessment and diagnosis for mental health difficulties which may occur alongside neurodiversity (e.g. anxiety and depression) and medical treatments where appropriate (e.g. medication for ADHD).