



TEN KEY FACTS ABOUT ADD AND ADHD

Chris A. Zeigler Dendy, M.S.

Alex Zeigler, B.S.

1. **Rate of ADHD:** Approximately **11 percent** of all students have ADD or ADHD.
2. **Facts about the ADHD brain:** Neurotransmitters, the chemical messengers of the brain, don't work properly. The ADHD brain has a **three to five-year delay in brain maturation**. The key **prefrontal part of the brain** controls attention, emotions, and other executive functions. Reduced levels of neurotransmitters (brain chemistry) are found in the **reward center of the brain**; consequently this may explain why students with ADHD can focus on video games and other high interest activities but find it much more difficult to work on boring or more **challenging assignments that require greater levels of brain chemistry**. ADHD brains continue maturing into the 30's and 40's.
3. **Less mature:** Have a **30% delay in developing executive function skills**; This does not have anything to do with their IQ; this means they may be less mature, organized, independent, more emotional, and have difficulty keeping friends. They'll need more support & supervision.
4. **Types of ADHD:** There are **two distinctly different types** of Attention Deficit Disorder. Doctors call them **1) AD/HD, predominately hyperactive and impulsive and 2) AD/HD, predominately inattentive, without hyperactivity**. Teachers call this last type, ADD.
5. **ADHDers not all alike.** All children with ADD or ADHD **are not identical**. Since symptoms of ADD or ADHD may be mild, moderate, severe or combined with other conditions, skills and maturity levels will vary in these children.
6. **ADHD often occurs with other conditions:** (2/3rd) have at least one other condition (Learning Disabilities, Tourette Disorder, ODD, Anxiety, Depression, Bipolar, Substance Abuse).
7. **Executive functions very important:** Executive functions control the ability to analyze, organize, and plan their school work. Consequently, these. Examples include:
 - 7.1 **Working memory:** (holding facts in your head and manipulating them);
 - 7.2 **Controlling emotions:** (getting upset and "blowing up", arguing or talking back.)
 - 7.3 **Talking to yourself:** (telling yourself to follow rules, do chores & homework.)
 - 7.4 **Analyzing and organizing:** (critical for writing essays and complex math);
 - 7.5 **Forgetfulness and disorganization:** (forgetting homework and tests,)
 - 7.6 **Daily work varies:** can do work some days and most other days they can't.)
 - 7.7 **Not learning from punishment and rewards:** (more difficult to discipline);
 - 7.8 **Impaired sense of time:** (don't accurately judge the passage of time);
 - 7.9 **Sleep disturbances:** (the child may have trouble falling asleep, waking up),

7.10 **Levels of alertness:** (difficulty staying alert to listen and take class notes.)

7.11 **Transitions and changes in routine:** (may result in misbehavior)

8. **ADHD is inherited, it runs in families: 50% of parents and 30% of siblings** also have it.

9. **Medication works:** [75-92%]. When meds work, **school work and behavior will improve** significantly. Medicine is the most effective treatment for ADHD. The brains of children with ADHD on meds mature more quickly because the medication enhances their learning experiences. Learning experiences change the brain. The best treatment includes a combination of medication, and academic and behavioral interventions.

10. **A life-long challenge:** Children **don't outgrow ADD/ADHD**. ADHD brain continues maturing into the 30's so child learns new skills and learns to compensate!

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