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## PARENTING A CHILD WITH ADHD

Behavioural strategies and parenting are key to helping control the symptoms of ADHD. ADHD is not caused by bad parenting, but the parenting strategies below can help manage your child's inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. Children with ADHD do best when in an environment where:

- There is consistent structure with a regular routine
- Positive reinforcement and rewards are used more than negative reinforcement and punishments
- Screen time is limited and content is age-appropriate
- Expectations are realistic and in line with a child's abilities, and the severity of their ADHD
- Adults model good behaviours, such as healthy eating, good sleep habits, and physical activity and incorporate these into their child's routine

Some more specific techniques which work for children with ADHD include:

- In young children, pay less attention to annoying (but not harmful) behaviour, and consistently reward good behaviour (e.g. say "I really like how you're sitting on your chair during dinner instead of getting up" or "Thanks for playing quietly while I talked on the phone!")
- Post visual reminders to help them get through their morning, after-school, and evening routines
- Allow movement breaks when working on a prolonged task
- When giving instructions, make eye contact and give one or two clear steps at a time, rather than giving them a whole list of tasks, as they are more likely to have trouble remembering it and get distracted
- Electronic reminders (timers, calendars, and task lists)

Remember, every child with ADHD has their own strengths and challenges, so not every parenting technique will work for every child. Speak with your pediatrician if you're looking for additional parenting supports.

Additional information and resources:

- <https://caddac.ca/adhd/understanding-adhd/in-childhood-adolescence/for-parents/>
- <http://infinitypediatrics.ca/patients/handouts/> - Behaviour section
- <https://www.additudemag.com/>
- <https://caddac.ca/adhd/resources/online-resources/>