

## September 2011

Homework and Study Habits  
ADD/ADHD

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The school year is up and running and now is the time to make sure your child is developing positive homework and study habits. This may also be the time when you question if your child is struggling with learning new information or has trouble with concentration.

### **Setting the stage: Sometimes it's all about location.**

Here are some tips for creating the best possible work/study space:

- Offer a quiet, comfortable place with little distractions.
- No TV, radio, or video games in the back ground.
- Have younger (or older) siblings stay away while your child is hard at work.
- Give a level, non cluttered, work surface with good lighting. Your young Einstein will not remember much if he/she is fussing or fidgeting with a rocking table or dim lighting.
- Stay close in case your child needs some guidance. Sometimes it's hard to get your momentum back if you have to track someone down to ask a question.
- Encourage your child to complete their homework that day rather than procrastinate. The assignment may not be due until next Tuesday, but if you can do it now – why not?
- Offer help with organization. Putting papers and worksheets in their proper folders, or binders is an important part of being prepared for class – remind your kiddo that they will feel less stress or anxiety if they can find what they need when they need it.

### **Learning Disabilities**

If your child is trying his or her best to learn certain skills, but is not able to keep up with their peers, it's important to find out why. There can be many reasons. There are programs and resources available to help children with learning issues.

Learning disabilities describe a range of learning problems with the way the brain gets, uses, stores, and sends out information. Children with learning disabilities may have trouble with one or more of the following skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and math.

The causes of learning disabilities are not always known. Most children who have problems learning can reach their goals by developing different ways of learning. Love, support, and patience from parents, friends, and teachers, as well as the right medical care are important ways to help your child. If you have concerns about your child's learning, give our office a call. The link below is a great resource for more information.

<http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/learningdisabilities.cfm>

## ADD/ADHD

ADHD is a condition of the brain that makes it difficult for children to control their behavior. It is one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood. It affects 4% to 12% of school-aged children.

### Symptoms of ADHD

The American Academy of Pediatrics identifies 3 groups of behavior symptoms: inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.

The table below explains these symptoms:

Symptom	How a child with this symptom may behave
<b>Inattention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Often has a hard time paying attention, daydreams</li><li>• Often does not seem to listen</li><li>• Is easily distracted from work or play</li><li>• Often does not seem to care about details, makes careless mistakes</li><li>• Frequently does not follow through on instructions or finish tasks</li><li>• Is disorganized</li><li>• Frequently loses a lot of important things</li><li>• Often forgets things</li><li>• Frequently avoids doing things that require ongoing mental effort</li></ul>
<b>Hyperactivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is in constant motion, as if "driven by a motor"</li><li>• Cannot stay seated</li><li>• Frequently squirms and fidgets</li><li>• Talks too much</li><li>• Often runs, jumps, and climbs when this is not permitted</li><li>• Cannot play quietly</li></ul>
<b>Impulsivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frequently acts and speaks without thinking</li><li>• May run into the street without looking for traffic first</li><li>• Frequently has trouble taking turns</li><li>• Cannot wait for things</li><li>• Often calls out answers before the question is complete</li><li>• Frequently interrupts others</li></ul>

The condition affects behavior in specific ways.

### How You Can Tell if Your Child Has ADHD

It is normal for all children to show some of these symptoms from time to time. Your child may be reacting to stress at school or home. She may be bored or going through a difficult stage of life. It does not mean she has ADHD.

Sometimes a teacher is the first to notice inattention, hyperactivity, and/or impulsivity and bring these symptoms to the parents' attention.

At routine visits, your pediatrician will often ask questions such as:

- How is your child doing in school?
- Are there any problems with learning that you or your child's teachers have seen?
- Is your child happy in school?
- Is your child having problems completing class work or homework?
- Are you concerned with any behavior problems in school, at home, or when your child is playing with friends?

If your child has shown symptoms of ADHD on a regular basis for more than 6 months, discuss this with your pediatrician. The link below is a great resource for parents of children with ADHD.

<http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/adhd.cfm>

Help is just a phone call away. If you suspect your child has a learning difficulty, symptoms of ADHD, or you need help with healthy homework and study habits, please call our office. We are happy to help in any way we can.