

Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder

Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is an increasingly recognised condition which can lead to inattention, hyperactivity and impulsive behaviours.

There are three main types of ADHD which are:

1. **Inattentive** - difficulty paying attention and forgetfulness.
2. **Hyperactive** - Impulsive behaviours such as excessive talking or difficulty waiting for their turn.
3. **A combination of inattention and hyperactivity** - shows symptoms of both inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity

The cause of ADHD is often unknown, although it can be hereditary. Some families may ask themselves why their child has an impairment, which can cause stress and blame. Instead, it's important to remember that the challenging behaviours of ADHD are not something the child is directly in control of. Behaviours are the result of the way the brain processes information.

ADHD impacts a child's learning due to difficulties concentrating; it is not a matter of laziness or lack of willpower. Children with ADHD try hard to pay attention and keep their impulses under control. This requires a lot of work and is tiring and frustrating. Many children with ADHD have shame about their difficulties and are often labeled as 'naughty' or 'unable to learn'. They also have a fear of appearing stupid in front of their family and friends, and are often bullied. This can lead to children with ADHD acting out, not trying, pretending not to care (about

schoolwork or people), and sometimes dropping out of education.

Many children with ADHD can display curiosity, imagination, innovation, and a talent for creative problem-solving. They may also show high levels of energy, enthusiasm, loyalty, honesty, and resilience. To provide effective support, parents, teachers, and peers can try to identify and appreciate the strengths of each child, provide positive feedback, and show genuine interest in their activities and accomplishments.

Common signs of ADHD:

- Difficulty following instructions and paying attention (especially to details)
- Difficulties moving from task to task
- Impulsive behaviour with little regard for the consequences
- Challenging rules
- Difficulties sitting still
- Difficulties getting started and finishing tasks
- Hyperactivity.

It is important to provide the child with strategies to help them pay attention to manage their behaviours. This could include setting-up routines with a visual daily schedule, the strengthening of organisational skills, providing a consistent and calm space and reducing distractions.

A highly recommended website with information on strategies for children who learn and think differently: www.understood.org

"All schools shall promote fair and equitable access to education for all learners with disabilities regardless of their gender, age, social status, economic background, geographical location, race, ethnicity, religious background, sexual orientation and gender identity, or intersections between these factors."

(MoE, Special and Inclusive Education Policy)

"Every person has the right to early childhood education, primary and secondary education and further education."

(Fiji Constitution)

Who can help? For therapy services, Frank Hilton Organization and for teaching strategies reference <https://www.education.gov.fj/special-inclusive-education/>

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Please note that this document is for informational/education purposes only and does not replace medical advice.



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