

# Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

## Post-diagnostic Workshop 1

### Workbook

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## Workshop 1 Content

- Introduction and 'true or false' activity (slides 1-7)
- What is ADHD? History, diagnosis and prevalence (slides 8-12)
- Causes of ADHD (slides 13-14)
- Living with ADHD – symptoms and management tips (slides 15-26)
- Mindfulness exercise and homework (slides 27-28)
- Additional resources (slides 29-35)

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## Activity: True or False?

### Do you think these statements are true or false?

- ADHD isn't a real medical condition True False
- People with ADHD just need to try harder to pay attention True False
- People with ADHD can't ever focus True False
- All kids with ADHD are hyperactive True False
- Only boys have ADHD True False
- ADHD is a learning disability True False
- Kids with ADHD will outgrow it True False
- ADHD is caused by bad parenting True False

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## True or False answers

1. **ADHD isn't a real medical condition** False
  - The National Institutes of Health, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Psychiatric Association all recognize ADHD as a medical condition. In fact, it's one of the most common conditions in childhood.
  - Research shows that **ADHD is hereditary** - one out of four people with ADHD have a parent with ADHD.
  - Imaging studies show **differences in brain development** between people with ADHD and people who don't have it.
  
2. **People with ADHD just need to try harder to pay attention** False
  - ADHD isn't a problem of motivation or laziness. Kids and adults who have it are often trying as hard as they can to pay attention.
  - Telling people with ADHD to "just focus" is like asking someone who's near sighted to just see farther.
  - The reason they struggle with attention has nothing to do with attitude. It's because of differences in the way their brain functions and how it's structured.

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## True or False answers

### 3. People with ADHD can't ever focus

False

- It's true that people with ADHD usually have trouble focusing. But if they're very interested in something, they may focus on it intensely. It's called hyperfocus.
- Some kids with ADHD are easily distracted in class but can't pull themselves away from a game they're playing.
- Adults might have trouble focusing on the parts of work they find boring, but pour themselves into aspects they really like.

### 4. All kids with ADHD are hyperactive

False

- The stereotype of kids with ADHD is that they race around and can't stop moving. But not all kids with ADHD have hyperactivity as a symptom. And for those who do, hyperactivity usually goes away or lessens as they get older.
- There are **three types of ADHD**. One doesn't have an impact on activity levels at all. This type of ADHD is sometimes called ADD, and it mainly impacts attention.

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## True or False answers

### 5. Only boys have ADHD

False

- Boys are more than twice as likely as girls to be diagnosed with ADHD.
- Girls are more likely to be overlooked and remain undiagnosed. Part of the reason is that ADHD can **look different in boys than in girls**.
- Girls tend to have less trouble with hyperactivity and impulse control than boys do. They may seem more "day-dreamy."
- Learn more about **ADHD in girls** and **ADHD in boys**. And read a personal story from a woman who worked so hard for perfect grades as a teen that **her ADHD was overlooked**.

### 6. ADHD is a learning disability

False

- **ADHD isn't a learning disability**. ADHD symptoms *can* get in the way of learning, but they don't cause difficulty in specific skills like reading, writing, and math.
- Some learning disabilities often co-occur with ADHD, however. That might contribute to this myth, too. But just because ADHD isn't a learning disability doesn't mean kids can't get help in school, and adults at work.

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## True or False answers

### 7. Kids with ADHD will outgrow it

False

- Most kids don't totally outgrow ADHD, although some symptoms can lessen or disappear as they get older.
- Symptoms may also change as children get older and learn ways to manage them.
- Most people with ADHD continue to have symptoms into adulthood.

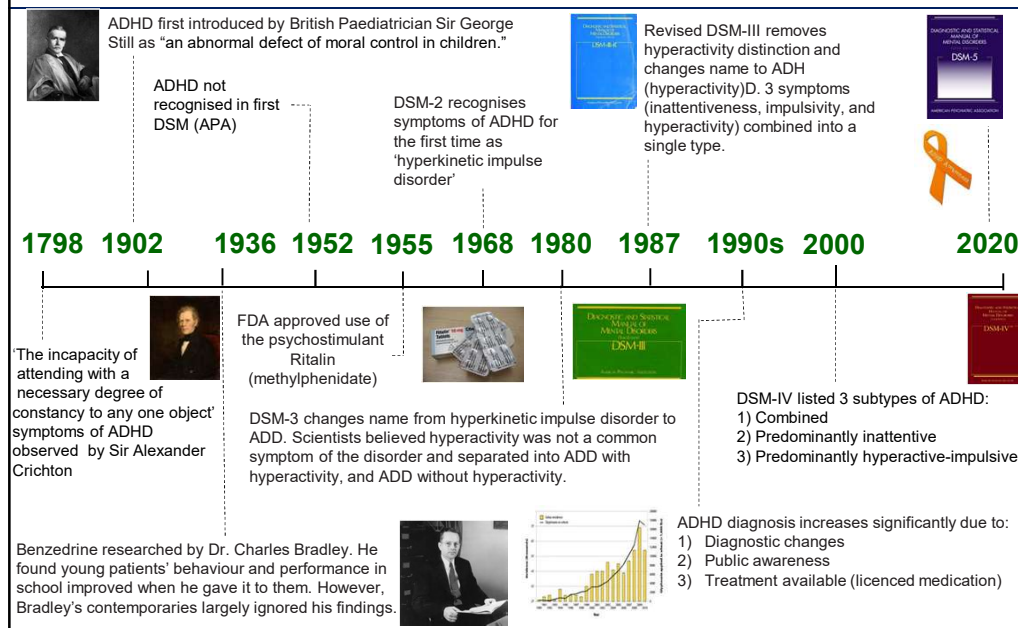
### 8. ADHD is caused by bad parenting

False

- ADHD is caused by brain differences, **not** bad parenting.
- Some people see kids fidgeting, being impulsive, or not listening and assume it's due to a lack of discipline.
- They don't realize that what they're seeing are signs of a medical condition, and not the result of something parents or caregivers did or didn't do.

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## History of ADHD



# ADHD Diagnostic Criteria

**Table 1**

**DSM-5 criteria for diagnosis of ADHD in adults**

≥5 symptoms per category in adults, persisting at least 6 months; present prior to age 12; several symptoms are present in ≥2 settings; symptoms interfere with, or reduce the quality of social, academic, or occupational functioning

**Symptoms have been present since a child, persistent for at least 6 months and affect at least 2 areas of your life**

**You have at least 5 symptoms, listed here, that affect your attention**

**Hyperactivity and impulsivity**

- a. Fidgetiness (hands or feet)/squirms in seat
  - b. Leaves seat frequently
  - c. Feeling restless
  - d. Unable to engage in leisure activities quietly
  - e. Always "on the go," difficulty being still for extended time
  - f. Talks excessively
  - g. Blurts out answers
  - h. Difficulty waiting his or her turn
  - i. Interrupts or intrudes on others
- ADHD: attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder

**Inattention**

- a. Lack of attention to details/careless mistakes
- b. Difficulty sustaining attention in tasks
- c. Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- d. Does not follow through on instructions
- e. Difficulty organizing tasks and activities
- f. Avoids tasks that require sustained mental effort
- g. Loses or misplaces objects
- h. Easily distracted
- i. Forgetful in daily activities

**You have at least 5 symptoms, listed here, of overactive behaviour or acting without been able to think through consequences**

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# ADHD Diagnostic Criteria

## ADHD Subtypes

	ADHD, Primarily Inattentive	ADHD, Hyperactive-Impulsive	ADHD, Combined Type
Inattentive/ Poor Attention Span	X		X
Impulsive and/or Hyperactive		X	X

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## ADHD prevalence quiz

1. How many school-aged children are diagnosed with ADHD?
2. How many adults are diagnosed with ADHD?
3. What are the Gender differences in diagnosis?

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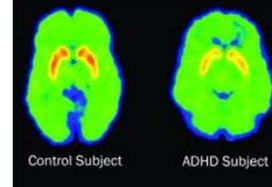
## ADHD prevalence answers

1. How many school-aged children are diagnosed with ADHD?  
Around 4 in every 100 school-aged children have ADHD
2. How many adults are diagnosed with ADHD?  
Around 2 in every 100 adults have ADHD
3. What are the Gender differences in diagnosis?  
Men are about 2 times more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than women

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## Causes of ADHD

- A number of studies point to brain differences in the way individuals process and respond to Information.
- People with ADHD often describe having a “noisy” brain which never quite quiets, or having problems with processing information in the same way other people do. developing ADHD.
- It’s also likely that genes are involved – about one third of people with ADHD have at least one parent with similar symptoms.
- It is also likely that some factors from your childhood experience will have increased the likelihood of you developing ADHD



### Video, The ADHD brain:

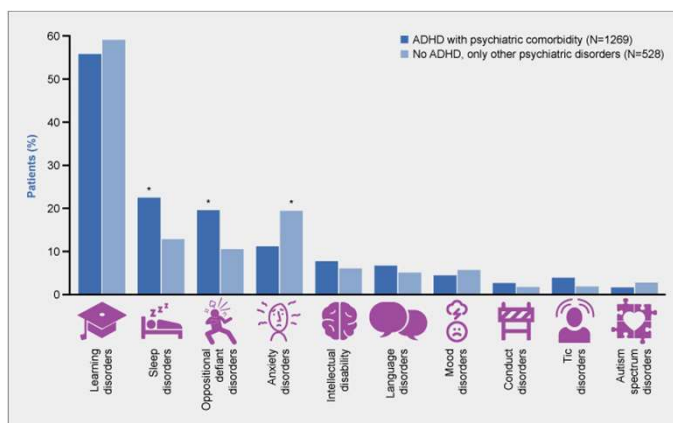
<https://www.webmd.com/add-adhd/adult-adhd-17/video-adult-adhd-brain>

### Self-help resource pack:

<https://www.thirdspace.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Lothian-Adult-ADHD-Information-Pack.pdf>

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## Comorbidities



### Potential consequences of no diagnosis:

- Forensic (>43%)
- Drug and alcohol (25%)
- Unemployment (>44%)
- School exclusion (>39%)

Psychiatric comorbidities in children and adolescents with and without ADHD. Reale L et al. Eur Child Adolesc Psychiatry 2017; 26: 1443-1457

Article, Addiction and ADHD: <https://www.addictioncenter.com/addiction/adhd/>

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## Having a diagnosis of ADHD

- It's normal to experience mixed emotions upon receiving a diagnosis. Having a diagnosis of ADHD can come as a relief for some individuals and a disappointment to others
- Most people describe a mixture or roller-coaster of positive and negative emotions
- There is no right or wrong way to feel about your diagnosis

Video, Receiving a Diagnosis as an Adult: <https://youtu.be/ONuKw5QoJHk>

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## Symptoms: Attention

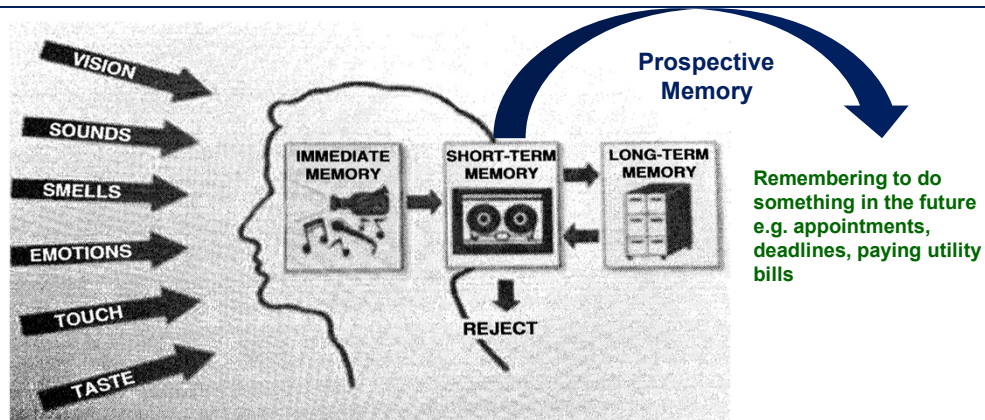
- You can learn to improve your attention control
- However, sustaining (i.e. completing a long task) and dividing attention (i.e. managing to focus with distractions) is something you will always find more difficult because you have ADHD
- **Try practicing noticing when your attention drifts, what is causing you to lose focus, and how to re-direct your attention, without feeling defeated or beating yourself up. This can help to improve your confidence and self control**

Video, Symptoms as an Adult: <https://youtu.be/AhWY50bzdqI>

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## Symptoms: Memory



Remembering to do something in the future  
e.g. appointments, deadlines, paying utility bills

Problems attending to information due to sensory overload  
e.g. in busy places

Difficulties performing tasks that require immediate memory of information,  
e.g. names, numbers

Problems storing information  
e.g. Forgetting instructions

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## Symptoms: Impulsiveness

- Impulsivity is like not being able to press a 'pause' button
  - It is sometimes caused by experiencing extreme and erratic emotions
  - You may not be able to stop speaking at times, or might blurt something out you shouldn't have said without thinking through the consequences
  - It can also make planning to do something that needs to be done difficult
  - It can increase risk, e.g. speeding in the car or excessive spending
- Have you experienced any of these symptoms, or any other symptoms of impulsiveness? Can you think of any positives of being impulsive sometimes?

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## Symptoms: Time Management

### *Difficulty with.....*

- Managing time and being organised (e.g. missing appointments)
- Being aware of how much time is passing and how long activities will take (e.g. being late for activities)
- Being distracted by anything that is going on around you (e.g. other people talking, a phone ringing)
- Completing goals (e.g. courses, work, therapy).
- Others misunderstanding disorganisation for laziness

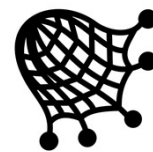


- **Think about what difficulties you have experienced with time management**

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## Symptoms: Time Wasting Traps

- 1. Switching attention**  
(e.g. focus on something else and leave original task unfinished)
- 2. Sensation-seeking**  
(e.g. seek excitement rather than sticking to task)
- 3. Procrastination**  
(e.g. having too high standards or finding menial tasks too tedious)
- 4. False busyness**  
(e.g. looking busy but doing lots of nonconstructive things)
- 5. Delay Aversion**  
(e.g. seeking short term rewards instead of working on long term ones)



- **Write down some of your time wasting traps. What strengths might there be in becoming engrossed for a long time?**

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## Symptoms: Home Life

- Adults with ADHD often find managing their routines difficult
- It can make it harder to keep on top of jobs at home such as shopping and cleaning
- It can make finances more difficult to manage
- How you organise your home and space and the times and ways of doing things can help



- **Are any of these difficulties familiar to you? What difficulties have you experienced at home?**

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## Symptoms: Sleep

- Having ADHD may make it harder to get off to sleep and stay asleep
- This can be caused by having an overactive brain, restless body and anxiety
- Unhelpful habits can make this worse (e.g. using phones in bed)
- Not sleeping makes it harder to get up and complete activities, creating a vicious cycle



- **Think about any difficulties you have experienced with sleep?**

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## Symptoms: Work and Study

### *Difficulty with...*



- Getting work done due to distraction
  - Having lots of energy and starting multiple projects without finishing them
  - Misjudging how long tasks take
  - Getting frustrated with others
- **Think about what difficulties you have had with work or study**
- **What strengths do you have that you could you bring to a job or team?**

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## Symptoms: Relationships and Social Skills

- Many children with ADHD are excluded or rejected from their peer groups, making it even harder to learn social skills.
  - As adults, you may zone out during conversations, which can make others feel ignored
  - You may also miss important details or mindlessly agree to something you don't remember later, which can be frustrating to your loved one
- **Think about the positive aspects of your relationships.**
- **Are there some aspects you would like to work on?**



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## Symptoms: Strengths



**Karina Smirnoff**



**Michael Phelps**



**Adam Levine**



**Justin Timberlake**



**Paris Hilton**



**Jamie Oliver**

"My day is filled with 10-hour dance rehearsals for my television show, teaching choreography, dancing in shows, and constant travel. With improvement in my ADHD symptoms, I can focus on finishing what I start."

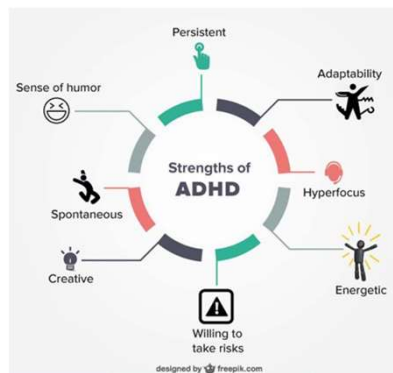
"I had trouble sometimes writing songs and recording in the studio. I couldn't always focus and complete everything I had to. I remember being in the studio once and having 30 ideas in my head, but I couldn't document any of them. ADHD isn't a bad thing, and you shouldn't feel different from those without ADHD."

"Kids write to me who are dyslexic or have ADHD, saying how important it is to find something practical you can apply your intelligence to. You just need to find your thing.' For me that was in the kitchen, I was cooking at eight. My knife skills are the same as they were when I was ten — I swear. 'When it was rough, when I was having a bad time at school, I never let my confidence be destroyed because I knew I was going to be a chef."

**TedTalk video, Making ADHD your superpower: <https://youtu.be/I9LRSgxbQqM>**

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## Symptoms: Strengths



➤ **What are your strengths? You probably have lots of strengths you haven't even recognised yet!**

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## Mindfulness Activity

### PAUSE and SHIFT attention

- Sit comfortably upright in a chair, in a relaxed position.

### in a PURPOSEFUL way

- Close your eyes slowly and gently, then feel your breath as it moves in and out of your body.
- Take note of any physical bodily sensations in a detached way, then let them pass.

### to the PRESENT moment

- Take several minutes to focus on your breath. How does it feel moving through your nose, throat, chest and lungs?
- Let your thoughts come and go - acknowledge them, then gently bring your attention back to your breathing.
- When you're finished, slowly bring yourself back into the present moment, and gently open your eyes.

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## Homework

Over the next week try:

1. Noticing your triggers for distraction
2. Practicing the mindfulness strategy, focusing on your body to help manage difficult sensations



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## Additional resources

You may find some of these resources and techniques useful to look back on later

There's no need to read every article, just pick out a few that sounds interesting to you!

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## What is ADHD

### 1. Article: Is ADHD hereditary?

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/is-adhd-hereditary>

### 2. Article: ADHD and the brain

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/adhd-and-the-brain>

### 3. The three types of ADHD

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/the-3-types-of-adhd>

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## What is ADHD

**1. Article: ADHD brain differences**

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/do-boys-and-girls-show-same-adhd-symptoms>

**2. Article: ADHD in girls**

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/adhd-in-girls>

**3. Article: ADHD in boys**

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/adhd-in-boys>

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## What is ADHD

**1. Article: ADHD in girls hidden behind academic achievement, a story**

<https://www.understood.org/en/community-events/blogs/the-inside-track/2016/05/19/my-anxiety-and-adhd-hiding-behind-a-perfect-veneer>

**2. Article: Is ADHD a learning disability**

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/adhd-in-girls>

**3. Article: ADHD and co-occurring conditions**

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/adhd-comorbidity>

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## What is ADHD

**1. NICE guidelines on diagnosis and management of ADHD**

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

**2. The National Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service**

<http://www.addiss.co.uk/>

**3. Video: Does ADHD ever just go away?**

<https://youtu.be/uwBi4lg3-yM>

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## Living with ADHD

**1. ADHD alien comic:**

<http://adhd-alien.com/>

**2. ADHD comic, Dani Donovan:**

<https://www.adhddd.com/>

**3. Ted talk; What is it really like to live with ADHD?**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/jessica\\_mccabe\\_this\\_is\\_what\\_it\\_s\\_really\\_like\\_to\\_live\\_with\\_adhd\\_jan\\_2017/up-next](https://www.ted.com/talks/jessica_mccabe_this_is_what_it_s_really_like_to_live_with_adhd_jan_2017/up-next)

**4. Video: How to ADHD**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-nPM1\\_kSZf91ZGkcgY\\_95Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-nPM1_kSZf91ZGkcgY_95Q)

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## Meditation tips and resources

### 1. How to meditate with ADHD

<https://www.additudemag.com/how-to-meditate-for-adhd-symptoms/>

### 2. Video: How meditation can help ADHD

<https://youtu.be/8oF0qaDDMQI>

### 3. Meditation apps:

Headspace: <https://www.headspace.com/>

Calm: <https://www.calm.com/>

The Mindfulness app: <https://themindfulnessapp.com/>

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