ADHD

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Majoring in Elementary Education and Learning Disabilities
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Exceptionality Expertise

Basic overview:
ADD/ADHD is heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment.

Means of Identification:

- Symptoms shown before age seven
- six or more symptoms of inattention must be present for at least six months to a degree that does not meet normal development levels
- A few of the symptoms are, but not limited to:
  1. fails to give close attention to detail or makes careless mistakes
  2. difficulty keeping attention in tasks or play activities
  3. doesn’t listen when spoken to
  4. doesn’t follow instructions
  5. difficulty organizing
  6. avoids dislikes or reluctant to engage in activities that require mental effort

Characteristics and Distinctives:

*Impulsivity:*
- Blurts out answers before questions are completed.
- Has difficulty waiting on his/her turn
- Interrupts or intrudes on others

*Hyperactivity:*
- Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
- Leaves seat in classroom or other situations when expected to sit
- Runs or climbs excessively in inappropriate situations
- Difficulty playing or engaging in calm leisurely activities
- Talks excessively
- “driven by a motor” or “always on the go”
- Spend less time engaging in academic tasks than others
- Can’t find their homework, forget when assignments are due, forget to get papers signed by parents

Strategies:

1. Give organization in advance- Let the student know a summary of the lesson activities and expectations.
2. Set behavioral expectations for the lesson- Tell student explicitly how they are expected to behave during the learning activity.

3. Provide follow up directions- Guide students with extra directions after giving directions to the whole class.

4. Assign a homework partner- Partner the student with another student to check each other’s recording of homework and filing of papers into the right places.

5. Provide a checklist of frequent mistakes- Provide a list of mistakes the child frequently makes in different subject areas so that the student can proof for them by checking the list before turning in class work or homework.

6. Provide calming materials- While the teacher should remove materials that can be distracting to others, the teacher should provide materials to the student that can be manipulated quietly to provide extra sensory stimulation during instruction or other times.

7. Seat the child near a student role model- This provides the student a chance to learn positive behaviors and strategies from working cooperatively with the student and observing the student.

8. Plan Ahead- Make it a point to meet with your students with IEP’s before the school year begins. Get to know child/children and their parents. Getting parents on your side is imperative.

9. Create Goals Together- With the parents and the student, set a realistic learning goal; not too easy, but not too difficult either. Let the parents know that their child will be expected to meet this goal by the end of the year.

10. Review previous lessons/material- Review the needed prior knowledge/skills for the current material. Many children with ADHD have trouble with retention; so a little review often goes a long way.

11. Explain additional resources- Make it clear where the student can find help if they need it.

12. Physical Arrangement- Arrange the classroom to provide minimal distractions. It is effective to plan ahead and place students with ADD/ADHD in parts of the room where there is minimal distractions to the students.

13. Call on the Student Often- Call on the student often to effectively get the child’s attention and keep their attention. It helps to ensure the student is actively engaged and helps the teacher to gauge the child’s level of attention and understanding.
14. Giving Visual Cues- Provide the student with visuals that they can remember later to help ensure retention.

15. Highlighting Or Color-Coding- Highlighting important parts of notes and headlines can be very important for helping students to understand and retain key points in the lesson. Color-coding notes can also help students keep information organized.

16. Reduce Time- Shorten the time it takes to do certain tasks in the classroom. Let lectures be shorter, rather than longer. By reducing the time for lectures and tasks, it increases the chance the students maintain high attention levels.
• This website is has information about what teachers can do to help children with ADHD. It states and explains many strategies that can be used to help these students including selecting a supporting teacher and adapting a supportive curriculum. The site explains what specifically makes a curriculum supportive. The site also has examples of ways to provide supports and promote on-task behavior. Examples of memory boosters and attention getters and keepers are also listed on this website.  [http://www.teachervision.fen.com/add-and-adhd/teaching-methods/57949.html?detoured=1]

• Helpguide.org has advise for parents who are helping their children with ADD/ADHD at school. The site includes ways to help children succeed at school along with tips for supporting your child’s teacher. The site gives examples of strategies for supporting the teacher and thoroughly explains how to implement them. The site also has advise for teachers of students with ADD/ADHD including ways to deal with distractibility, interrupting, impulsivity, fidgeting, and hyperactivity. [http://www.helpguide.org/mental/adhd_add_teaching_strategies.htm]

• This PDF consists of information about how to identify children with ADHD, strategies for teaching children with ADHD, behavioral interventions, and classroom accommodations. The information includes advise on how to introduce conduct, and conclude lessons. It also includes examples of individualized instructional practice. Ways to help students with ADHD organize and use study skills are also described. Some specific accommodations the article discusses are special seating arrangements for students with ADHD to help them succeed along with instructional tools and what the physical learning environment should be like. [http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/adhd/adhd-teaching-2006.pdf]

• This website includes ten tips to teaching students with ADHD. This includes making math workbooks, having students multi task, and giving the child a checklist of the day’s assignments. Each tip includes an explanation and easy ways of implementing the tip. One recommendation is having the student play with silly putty while listening to the teacher. [http://www.westfieldacademy.org/adhd/]

• This video explains the different strategies to deal with distractibility such as preferential seating. Another strategy used is a box of fidget tools to deal with students’ fidgettiness and hyperactivity. The key to the fidget tools is to make sure they are benefitting the students and not distracting them. The purpose of the fidget tools is to help the students focus. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dd62-eL0JYI&feature=related]
Conclusion

I learned many different teaching strategies that I could use in my future classroom from researching for this strategies guide. One strategy I would implement is having the students sit near a role model. In the field placement class I am in this semester there is a student who has severe ADHD. She is constantly fidgeting, moving in her seat, talking out of turn, coloring, and walking to the bathroom or to sharpen her pencil. I have observed the teacher having this student sit in the front of the classroom when the teacher is teaching at the front, or having the student sit next to the teacher’s desk when she is sitting there. Whenever this student is sitting close to the teacher she behaves much better. Another step I would take in my future classroom is giving these students fidget tools. Fidget tools can allow the students to fidget without disrupting the rest of the class.

I would like to establish a positive environment in my future classroom. This type of environment will consist of a place where students with ADHD are given the tools and strategies they need to help them learn in the best possible way for them. Instead of punishing the behaviors students may perform due to their ADHD I will give the students ways to direct these behaviors in a way that will benefit their learning.

I will accomplish this type of climate by establishing positive expectations for the students at the beginning of the year. I will show the students the box of fidget tools and explain when and how they are to be used. I will make sure all of the students have daily planners so that they are organized. I will also give the students specific time limits on assignments so that the time constraint helps them focus and analyze what they have accomplished and what they still have left to do.