



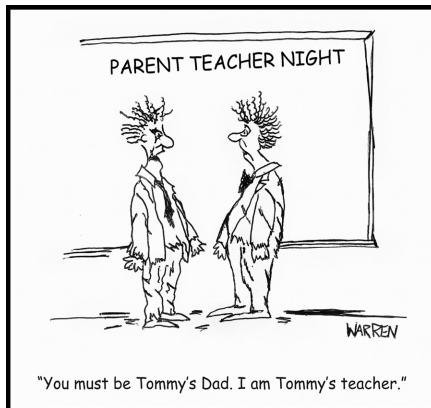
Navigating through... Special Education

Surviving and Succeeding with ADHD!

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Welcome to Navigating through Special Education. As one of the Special Education Facilitators in the high school, I will be presenting you with information and implications for high school parents and students from each month's SEPTA Meetings. For those of you who are unfamiliar with SEPTA (Special Education Parent-Teacher Association) is beginning its 18th year in Jericho bringing together families interested in the quality of education of children with special needs, from birth to age 21. SEPTA is a district-wide organization comprised of parents, teachers and administrators from all of the district's schools, which support and promotes greater awareness of special education. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the topics presented here, please feel free to contact me at extension 3585.



The September SEPTA Meeting was held and the topic of the meeting was "Surviving and Succeeding with ADHD!" The presenter, Beth Kaplanek, R.N., was the past National President of Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) and Co-Author of Parent to Parent: Family Training on AD/HD. Beth gave an enthusiastic presentation on what ADHD is and how families and schools can survive and succeed with AD/HD.

According to Ms. Kaplanek, AD/HD is a chronic disorder and is characterized by a pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity and/or impulsivity. It significantly impairs age-appropriate functioning in at least two areas of life, such as home, social settings, school or work.

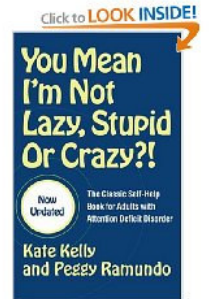
ADHD specified by the DSM-IV-R, American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 4th Edition, has four diagnostic subtypes.....



- Primarily Inattentive Type
- Primarily Hyperactive/Impulsive Type
- Combined Type
- NOS (Not Otherwise Specified)

AD/HD Factors to Think About...

- AD/HD can frequently be a hidden disorder
- Occasionally, we all exhibit AD/HD symptoms... however, AD/HD is governed by the rule and not the exception
- AD/HD is a performance deficit, not an intelligence deficit
- Individuals with AD/HD may have up to a 30% developmental lag in age appropriate social skills and emotional development (i.e., 10 year old acting like a 7 year old)
- Individuals with AD/HD may have an impaired sense of time
- Individuals with AD/HD may have sleep issues



AD/HD if Left Untreated...

- Can lead to academic and social failure
- Increased loss of self esteem
- Behavior problems and parenting issues
- Major life problems and destructive paths

Ms. Kaplanek recommends a “Multimodal Treatment Plan” that includes...

- Parent and child education about diagnosis and treatment
- Behavior management techniques
- School programming and support
- Possibly medication

Ms. Kaplanek believes that executive functions are impaired in AD/HD students and adults. She uses T.E. Brown, Ph.D., assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine, definition of Executive Functioning as the “Management Function of the brain that connects and prioritizes and integrates cognitive functions moment by moment.”

Six Clusters of Executive Functioning...

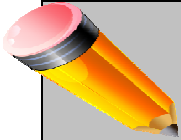
- Cluster 1: Organizing, Prioritizing, and Activating for Tasks
- Cluster 2: Focusing, Sustaining, and Shifting Attention to Tasks
- Cluster 3: Regulating Alertness, Sustaining Effort, and Processing Speed
- Cluster 4: Managing Frustration and Modulating Emotion
- Cluster 5: Utilizing Working Memory and Accessing Recall
- Cluster 6: Monitoring and Self-Regulating Action

Common Behavior Problems Associated with AD/HD, according to Ms. Kaplanek...



- Failure to think prior to acting
- Noncompliance to rules
- Repeats past mistakes
- Verbal and/or physical aggression
- Lack of concern or sensitivity for others
- Needs immediate gratification-doesn't work for long term incentives
- Poor problem-solving skills and internalization of the rules
- Easily frustrated-poor anger control

Some Suggestions on How Parents Can Help...



- Create an AD/HD “Friendly Environment” within the home where your child feels comfortable to be an “AD/HD” kid and does not have to worry about “messing” up the room
- Establish Behavior Intervention Programs
- Create “House Rules” with rewards and consequences
- Create Checklists of things to do before leaving school or home
- Create a home work station & routine with scheduled breaks
- Provide for a daily backpack check
- Utilize a PDA/Phone with a calendar that sends “beeps” on when due dates are approaching
- Praise efforts not outcome

For more information on this subject, you can visit CHADD’s Web Site at www.chadd.org.