
ADHD at School

A Guide for Parents and Teachers
of Children with ADHD and
Learning Disabilities

Homework | Classroom Behavior | Distractibility
Teacher Support | Managing Meds | Special-Ed Services
Language Skills | Hyperactivity | Getting Organized

an *ADDitude* magazine eBook

ADDITUDE

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Your Essential School Handbook

The start of school is a familiar ritual—fresh pencils and notebooks, the farewell to summer, the excitement of seeing last year’s friends. But each new year also brings unfamiliar teachers, routines, and expectations—possibly even a new school.

As the parent of a child with ADHD or learning disabilities, you’re always on the lookout for new ways to bring order to her environment and routines, to help her focus on lessons, raise her hand before speaking, and remember to bring in her homework. You want the right combination of support strategies that will nurture your child’s unique strengths, and push her to meet the challenges each new school year will bring. The treatment plan you hammered out last year may not address this year’s term paper requirement. And if your child has moved up a school, you’ll have to factor in the impact of more classes and teachers, less structure and support, and greater academic demands.

This eBook, assembled by *ADDitude* editors and experts, offers solutions to the most common problems ADHD and LD students face in school and at home. In the following chapters, you will find detailed information about securing classroom accommodations, and then working with your child to master essential skills like reading, writing, and math.

This report helps end homework battles by suggesting proven strategies for completing and handing in daily assignments. It also offers tools for keeping backpacks and desks better organized, so more time can be dedicated to learning—not hunting for lost papers.

Finally, we offer sample letters and other hands-on tools to encourage parent-teacher coordination that results in better classroom behavior and better learning in every grade.

We hope you will use this special report as a handbook during your child’s academic journey, to help him shine from kindergarten through college.

—the editors of *ADDitude*

“Succeeding at school is one of the most therapeutic things that can happen to a child. In fact, school successes are often more helpful for students with ADHD than an hour of counseling a week.”

—Chris Dendy, author of
*Teaching Teens
with ADD and ADHD*

CONTENTS

4-16 CHAPTER 1: Securing School Accommodations

How to get your child the help and support he needs to thrive at school

17-24 CHAPTER 2: Working with Teachers

Daily report cards and other tools to help parents and teachers

25-33 CHAPTER 3: Managing ADHD Symptoms in School and at Home

How to reduce impulsivity, fidgeting, and distractibility at school

34-44 CHAPTER 4: Reading, Writing, Math

Helping your child enjoy books and numbers

45-52 CHAPTER 5: Study & Homework Help

Completing and turning in assignments on time

53-59 CHAPTER 6: The Organized Student

Help your child manage time and organize school materials and projects

60-71 CHAPTER 7: Grade-Specific Help

Pointers for elementary, middle and high school students, plus college aid

72-74 CHAPTER 8: ADHD Meds at School

Setting up a school-day dose

75-89 CHAPTER 9: Learning Disabilities 101

Recognizing the symptoms and choosing the best programs

90 APPENDIX: SPECIAL-ED GLOSSARY & RESOURCES

Recognizing the symptoms and choosing the best programs

TOOL

Each fall, *ADDitude* magazine produces a special **Success at School** edition brimming with academic information and advice. To order these back issues, visit...

additudemag.com/store.



CHAPTER 1

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATIONS

7 Steps for Securing School Accommodations

Federal law requires public schools to provide extra educational services to students with ADHD and/or learning disabilities. But it's up to parents to set up these accommodations and make sure they continue to work.

You think your child has ADHD or a learning disability. Now what? The good news is that federal law requires public schools to provide every student a “free and appropriate education” in the “least restrictive environment.” But it's up to *you*, the parent, to make sure your child's school follows through.

Here's a step-by-step walk through the special-education process.

Step 1. Get an Accurate Evaluation

Write a letter requesting an evaluation to see if your student might benefit from special services. Address it to the Director of Special Education Services. (It's often a waste of time to send the letter to the child's teachers, guidance counselor, or principal.) Send your letter by certified mail, or hand-deliver it, and keep dated proof of receipt for your records.

Should the school decline your request, or if you're dissatisfied with the evaluation's findings, arrange for a private evaluation. (In some circumstances, the school may have to pay for the outside assessment.)

Step 2. Meet With the Evaluation Team

A school-sponsored evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team—including special-education teachers, the school psychologist, and other professionals. As part of the process, they'll want to meet with you to learn more about how your child functions in school.

Team members will review your child's academic records, conduct a behavioral assessment, and observe her in the classroom. Following the assessment, you will discuss the results with the evaluation team and together you will decide whether your child needs special-education services to address how ADHD impacts her ability to learn.

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To find an educational advocate or attorney to guide you through this process, look online at...

- chadd.org
- ldanatl.org
- copaa.org
- wrightslaw.com

Special-Ed Glossary

Common special-ed acronyms, abbreviations, and terms that every parent raising a child with ADHD or LD should know—pg. 90.

TOOL

Sample Letter for requesting an IDEA evaluation—pg. 11.

Bring Documentation

Bring copies of your child's report cards, standardized test results, and medical records, as well as a log of your communications with the school and other professionals to the meeting.

Step 3. Decide Which Laws Are Applicable

Two federal laws provide for free, public special education services: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act.

IDEA covers kids with very specific conditions, including mental retardation, emotional disturbances, hearing impairments, and speech and language difficulties. Kids may qualify for coverage if they frequently have one of these problems in addition to attention deficit. Some qualify under another IDEA category: “Other Health Impairments.” If your child’s ADHD is so severe that he’s unable to learn in a regular classroom, he may qualify.

Section 504 covers ADHD kids who don’t qualify for special-ed services under IDEA, but who need extra help in the classroom. The law prohibits schools from discriminating against students because of physical and mental impairments. Just as the school must provide ramps for kids in wheelchairs, it must make modifications (such as preferential seating, extra time on tests, or help with note taking) for kids with brain-based learning barriers.

Step 4. Develop a Plan

If your child qualifies under IDEA, you should meet with the team to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP), which specifies your child’s educational goals and how those goals will be met in the “least restrictive environment”—which generally refers to a regular classroom.

Parents must be assertive. Make sure the IEP spells out exactly how the school will help your child meet his goals, which should be specific, measurable, and achievable. Include time limits: “By month three, James will reduce his interruptions from 10 per day to 2 per day.” The IEP should explain exactly how James will be taught to stop interrupting. Unless the strategies are specified, there’s no way to enforce them.

If your child qualifies under Section 504, a school representative will help you and your child’s teacher compile a 504 Plan, or a written list of accommodations. Unlike an IEP, there are no legal requirements about what should be included in a 504 Plan.

FYI

If the team decides your child doesn’t need special ed, you’re entitled to appeal your case in a “due-process” hearing—a legal proceeding that often requires legal representation for the family, testimony from independent experts, and a review of meeting transcripts, test scores, and other documents.

IEP Assistance

Learn more about writing and implementing an IEP—including required provisions and the evaluation-team composition—on the federal Education Department’s website: www.ed.gov.

Educational Advocate

What are [Educational Advocates](#) and how do they fight for the rights of students with special needs? [Learn more online](#).

Step 5. Insist on a Customized Plan

The school may try to tailor your child's IEP around its existing programs, even though IDEA requires schools to customize the plan based on the child's needs. If you're not satisfied with the IEP, don't agree to it. The school may offer something more, or you can request a due-process hearing. If you prevail, the school district may have to pay for your child's education in another school that offers the needed services—even if it's a private school.

Step 6. Monitor Your Child's Progress

By law, the educational team must meet annually to review your child's IEP. Many school districts schedule the annual meeting in the spring, so that team members can review current strategies and your child's progress, and set goals for the coming year. You can request a meeting whenever you think one is needed—like the beginning of each school year. Your child's progress during the summer, or the demands of the new grade, may necessitate plan changes.

If your child receives services under a Section 504 Plan, the school is not required to hold an annual review or to involve parents in meetings. However, many schools invite parents to participate in the process.

Step 7. Create a Paper Trail

As you secure services for your child, put all requests, concerns, and thank-you's in writing—and keep copies on file. A note asking the teacher for your child's test scores can be valuable if you later have to document that the request went unmet. After each IEP meeting and conference with school staff, summarize the main points in a letter to participants. This establishes a written record of what was said.

A recent U.S. Supreme Court decision underscored the importance of good record-keeping. The Court ruled that, in a due-process hearing, the legal burden of proving that a plan fails to meet a child's needs falls on the parents. It's more important than ever to document your child's difficulties, to be assertive about receiving progress reports, and to push for changes to the IEP as the need arises.

TOOL

The **best classroom accommodations** for children with ADHD and learning disabilities—pg. 10.

TOOL

Sample letter introducing your child to a new teacher—pg. 12.

TOOL

How to determine whether **your child's IEP** is still working—pg. 16.

TOOL

A checklist of key school records that every parent should keep—pg. 15.

Write an IEP that Works!

Follow these six rules to draft an individualized education program that will help your child achieve success at school.

1. Memorize the list of ADHD symptoms (following page) psychiatrists use for diagnosis.

Your child cannot be punished or discriminated against for displaying the symptoms of his condition, such as inattention, forgetfulness, or interrupting.

2. Determine how these symptoms affect your child at school.

Does he forget to turn in his homework? Does he fail to follow directions? Is he impulsively aggressive on the playground? List specific problems, then read up on strategies that address them.

3. Prepare yourself.

Come to the team meeting with the list of your child's symptoms, as well as a list of interventions you want the school to provide.

4. At the team meeting, work together to develop a list of specific, measurable, and achievable goals for the school year.

Set time limits: Johnny will improve his ability to respond to the teacher from one out of 10 times to eight out of 10 times by the semester break; Johnny will reduce his interruptions from 10 times a day to two a day by month three; Julie will be able to decode words at the 50th percentile as measured by the "Evaluation of Basic Skills."

5. Enunciate the ways in which the school will teach your child to achieve these goals.

"Every misbehavior signifies the need for instruction," says education advocate Dixie Jordan. Have the school write into the IEP exactly how they will teach Johnny to follow directions or stop interrupting. Which services will help Julie attain higher reading scores? If these strategies aren't written into the IEP, you can't enforce them.

6. Ask for the data.

If the school insists on certain interventions, ask for written evidence that what they're suggesting is effective. "If you have an inattentive child and the teacher says, 'Johnny, pay attention,' you're not going to

get good results,” says Jordan. “Johnny doesn’t know how it feels to pay attention. Someone needs to break down the steps and teach the child how to pay attention and how to filter out distractions.”

Diagnostic Criteria for ADHD

From the *DSM-IV*, American Psychiatric Association

>> Persisting for at least six months, to a degree that is maladaptive and immature, the patient has either inattention or hyperactivity-impulsivity (or both) as shown by:

Inattention – At least six of the following symptoms often apply:

- ❑ Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities.
- ❑ Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- ❑ Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.
- ❑ Does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions).
- ❑ Has difficulty organizing tasks and activities.
- ❑ Avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework).
- ❑ Loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys, school assignments, pencils, books, or tools).
- ❑ Easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
- ❑ Forgetful in daily activities.

Hyperactivity-Impulsivity – At least six of the following symptoms often apply:

- ❑ Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.

- ❑ Leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected.
- ❑ Runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness).
- ❑ Has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly.
- ❑ Appears “on the go” or acts as if “driven by a motor.”
- ❑ Talks excessively.
- ❑ Blurts out answers before the questions have been completed.
- ❑ Has difficulty awaiting turn.
- ❑ Interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games).

>> Some hyperactive-impulsive or inattentive symptoms that caused impairment were present before age seven.

>> Some impairment from the symptoms is present in two or more settings (e.g., at school [or work] and at home).

>> There must be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning.

>> The symptoms do not occur exclusively during the course of a pervasive developmental disorder, schizophrenia, or other psychotic disorder, and are not better accounted for by another mental disorder (e.g., mood disorder, anxiety disorder, dissociative disorder, or a personality disorder).

Classroom Accommodations to Help Students with ADHD & LD

IF YOUR CHILD HAS THESE PROBLEMS: SUGGEST THESE ACCOMMODATIONS:	
CLASSROOM SETUP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily distracted by classroom activity or by activity visible through door or windows • Acts out in class to gain negative attention • Is unaware of personal space; reaches across desks to talk to or touch other students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat student front and center, away from distractions • Seat student near good role model • Increase distance between desks
ASSIGNMENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is unable to complete work within given time • Does well at the beginning of an assignment but quality of work decreases toward the end • Has difficulty following instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow extra time to complete assigned work • Break long assignments into smaller parts; shorten assignments or work periods • Pair written instructions with oral instructions
DISTRACTIBILITY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is unable to keep up during classroom discussions and/or note taking • Complains that lessons are "boring" • Is easily distracted • Turns in work with careless mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide peer assistance in note taking and ask student questions to encourage participation in discussions • Seek to involve student in lesson presentation • Cue student to stay on task with a private signal • Schedule five-minute period to check over work before turning in homework or tests
BEHAVIOR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly engaging in attention-getting behavior • Fails to "see the point" of a lesson or activity • Blurts out answers or interrupts others • Needs reinforcement • Needs long-term help with improving behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignore minor inappropriate behavior • Increase immediacy of rewards and consequences • Acknowledge correct answers only when hand is raised and student is called upon • Send daily/weekly progress reports home • Set up behavior contract
ORGANIZATION/PLANNING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't keep track of papers • Has trouble remembering homework assignments • Loses books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend binders with dividers and folders • Provide student with assignment book; supervise writing down of assignments • Allow student to keep set of books at home
RESTLESSNESS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to move around • Has difficulty focusing for long periods of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow student to run errands or to stand at times while working • Provide short breaks between assignments
MOODS/SOCIALIZATION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is unclear as to appropriate social behaviors • Does not work well with others • Is not respected by peers • Has low self-confidence • Appears lonely or withdrawn • Is easily frustrated • Is easily angered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up social-behavior goals with student and implement a reward program • Encourage cooperative learning tasks • Assign special responsibilities in presence of peer group • Compliment positive behavior and work; give student opportunity to act in leadership role • Encourage social interactions with classmates; plan teacher-directed group activities • Acknowledge appropriate behavior and good work frequently • Encourage student to walk away from angering situations; spend time talking to student

How to Request School Accommodations

Use this sample letter as a template when writing to acquire school accommodations for your child with ADHD and/or learning disabilities.

Dear Mr/Ms. [name]:

I would like to request an evaluation of my son/daughter [full name and student ID# or date of birth] for his/her eligibility for special education provisions (IDEA) and/or Section 504 accommodations. I have been concerned that he/she is not progressing well in school and that he/she may need some special help in order to learn. He/she is in the [grade level and name of current teacher].

During the last two years, both of his classroom teachers have noted that he has substantial problems completing assignments, problems with excessive motor behavior, and impulsivity. Please note that Dr. Verywell Qualified [your doctor's name] has recently evaluated and diagnosed my son/daughter as having Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Because Dr. Qualified [your doctor's name] was concerned that his/her ADHD was resulting in decreased alertness and impairment in school performance and learning, he/she requested us to pursue these school-based evaluations, in order to get my son/daughter the help he/she needs.

I understand that the evaluation is to be provided at no charge to me. My reasons for requesting the procedure are [keep this paragraph short, but give one or two reasons for your concern].

I would appreciate meeting with each person who will be doing the evaluation before he/she tests my child so that I might share information about [child's name] with him/her. I will also expect a copy of the written report generated by each evaluation so that I might review it before the [IEP or 504 Plan] meeting.

It is my understanding that I have to provide written permission for these tests to be administered, and I will be happy to do so upon receipt of the proper forms and explanation of the process.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience so that we may begin the next steps in planning for an evaluation.

Sincerely,
Parent

TOOL

This letter comes from [*Making the System Work for Your Child with ADHD*](#), by Peter S. Jensen, M.D. (Guilford Press, 2004).

Introducing Your ADHD Child to a New Teacher

Start the year off right with a letter explaining your child's symptoms of ADHD, dyslexia, or other learning disabilities, his medication, and accommodations that have helped in previous grades.

To Zachary's Teachers:

Zachary Klein will be in your class this year. Over the years, we have found it helpful to give teachers some background about him, in addition to the IEP in his file. This often ensures a successful beginning to the year.

Zach has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). As a parent, I expect my child to behave in an acceptable manner at school and anywhere else. However, I have had to recognize that certain behaviors are characteristic of ADHD. (He is on medication, but it doesn't change who he is, and it is more effective at helping him focus than at controlling his behavior.) Some of these behaviors may be inconvenient or unexpected, but they are not necessarily unacceptable or "bad." They are simply different. Zach has a great sense of humor, and tapping into this early in the year usually works well. Zach takes criticism personally and hates being yelled at. He won't always let you know it, but he worries and is very sensitive. He might act cool and tough, but, if he has had a bad day, he falls apart at home.

Zach is excited about the new year. He wants to settle down and "be mature and responsible." Last school year was a difficult one, and Zach's self-esteem is pretty beat up.

Please keep these differences in mind as you teach my child. Correct when you must, and please accommodate—or tolerate—when you can. Below, we've listed of classroom strategies that have worked well in previous grades.

1 PRAISE. Zach responds to praise. When he receives positive reinforcement, his anxiety decreases, and he can better stay on task. It is best, when possible, to talk to Zach about misbehavior in private.

2 FLASH PASS. In the past, teachers have given Zach a "flash pass," so he can leave the room when he needs a break. He doesn't use it often, but knowing that he can helps him control anxiety. He may get up from time to time to get a tissue or sharpen a pencil, and this helps him settle down for the rest of the class. He gets anxious, almost to the point of claustrophobia, when he is in the same setting for too long.

Communication Keys

Educational consultant Ann Welch offers the following tips for communicating effectively with your child's teacher...

- Be positive
- Ask questions
- Use reflective listening
- Stay on topic
- Work toward a solution

3 QUIET SPACE. Zach has difficulty focusing for long periods of time when taking a test and when reading. During these extended periods, you might move him to a quieter, private space, such as a teacher's office or the hallway.

4 ENLARGED MATH PROBLEMS. Zach has trouble with taking math tests. He does better when tests are enlarged, so that one or two problems are on each page. He sometimes folds his math paper into quarters, with only one problem on each quarter, to help himself focus.

5 LIMITED IN-CLASS READING. It is nearly impossible for Zach to read in class for any extended period of time. It is best to send reading assignments home, where he can read quietly.

6 SCHEDULING FOR DIFFICULT CLASSES. If possible, Zach's hardest classes should be scheduled in the morning hours. Concentration becomes more difficult for him as the day progresses. Teachers in his later classes should be made aware of this.

7 LENIENCY FOR LATENESS. Unless he's given plenty of reminders, Zach's disorganization inhibits his ability to hand work in on time. While we strive to meet deadlines, we'd appreciate leniency for late assignments.

We welcome any ideas you have to keep Zach engaged in school, while boosting his self-esteem and helping him succeed. Please contact us at any time by phone or by e-mail. We have flexible schedules and are able to meet whenever it is convenient for you. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,
Zach's Parents

Teacher Teamwork

Learn how to better cooperate and collaborate with your child's teacher.

Dear Teacher

Encourage your child to write a letter, too, explaining what it's like for him to have ADHD. Here's a sample letter from an 11-year-old to his sixth-grade teacher.

Dear Ms. Smith,

My mom and dad asked me to write you a letter to introduce myself. Even though I have ADD, I think I am a pretty smart kid. In school, I keep trying to improve. I am doing my best to listen rather than doze off in class when it is boring. I also keep practicing not blurting out.

To learn best, I like to get straight to the point. Just tell me how it works, then if I don't understand it, I'll ask a couple of questions about how to do it. It's best if you help me right then and not wait until after school. By that time, I will have forgotten what I was confused about.

My teacher last year never gave up on me. When I was good, she was really proud of me. Slowly I became more aware of it, and then I changed. I hope the same thing will happen this year.

Very Best,
Zach

Record Keeping Tips for Parents of Children with ADHD *By Ellen Kingsley*

Keeping good records of your child's education is essential. Many parents rely only on records kept by the school. Schools are required to keep assessments, evaluations and other reports. Schools are usually very careful with student records, but folders or documents sometimes get misplaced, lost, or even destroyed by accident.

What Should Parents Keep?

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, parents are entitled to copies of all school records about their child. (Schools are allowed to charge a "reasonable fee" for copies.) Parents also have the right to correct any official records by having the school amend it or by placing a statement in the record.

Some equally critical papers aren't required to be kept on file at your child's school. For example, did the school keep that fascinating story your child wrote in second grade, the one that clearly demonstrates that, given the proper motivation and encouragement, he can communicate through written language? Those papers are important.

Start a student portfolio for your child's work. You don't have to keep everything the kid ever handed in, but you should keep samples of daily work, tests, and any other papers that show his or her ability and/or needs in the classroom. This is especially important for families who move or change schools often.

What Else Do I Need?

Use labels to organize an accordion file by grade. As you acquire more academic papers, you may want to use several sections for each grade and mark them "7th Grade—Reading" and "7th Grade—Speech," etc.

Also make a master list of all records; including the title, date, and a brief description of each document for future reference.

Must-Keep Papers

Organize these items in an accordion file or binder for your child:

- All Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan forms
- Report cards
- Notes or letters from teachers
- Notes or letters from specialists (speech, hearing, occupational therapy, and any other areas)
- Any other letters you may have received from the school
- Notes you have taken during or after phone calls or visits to the school
- Copies of letters you have sent to the school
- Medical records
- Reports from any camps or other activities that apply to your child
- Letters written on your child's behalf from doctors, lawyers, or other professionals who work with children
- Any special records or reports

Checking Up on School Accommodations in 4 Simple Steps

How to take stock of your child's special education plan and make changes to her ADHD accommodations that will help her continue to achieve success at school. *By Karen Sunderhaft*

If your child has an IEP, you'll meet with the multidisciplinary team at least once a year to review progress and update the goals. If your child receives special services under Section 504, the school isn't legally required to hold an annual review or to involve parents in meetings. However, you may request a meeting at any time, and many schools invite parents to participate. Use these tips for your next IEP or 504 meeting to ensure that your child's accommodations are still on track.

1. Review Your Child's Progress

Read the current IEP or 504 Plan, and consider whether it has been meeting her needs. Look over the year's report cards, test results, and notes from teachers. Use the spring parent-teacher conference to discuss which techniques and accommodations have been most effective. Review your child's schoolwork to see which academic skills have improved, and note any continuing trouble spots.

2. Be Specific About Your Goals

Use the phrase "I'm requesting" to indicate the skills you'd like your child to get help with. It's best to leave specific teaching methods to the professionals, although it's reasonable to request a change if you feel a particular approach isn't working.

3. Press for Details

Make sure the plan specifies who will implement each provision, how often services will be provided, and how the IEP or 504 Plan will be monitored. Build in a feedback loop—like weekly e-mails from teachers—to inform you of your child's progress.

4. Create a Paper Trail

Take notes or audiotape the meeting, and take the plan home if you need more time to digest it. Sign only the parts you agree with, and share the results of the meeting with your child. When you're satisfied, send thank-you notes to team members.

A Parent's Guide to Special Education

A resource to help parents navigate the maze of evaluations, accommodations, and laws for special education.

Update the School

Provide team members with new test results if you've had your child assessed privately since the last meeting.

Secure Backup

Arrange for a friend or family member to accompany you to listen, take notes, and lend support. If you'd like the assistance of an educational advocate (some provide free services; others charge a fee), find one through the Learning Disabilities Association of America (ldanatl.org), CHADD (chadd.org), or the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (copaa.org).

APPENDIX

SPECIAL-ED GLOSSARY AND RESOURCES

What does that mean?

Our ADHD/LD glossary deciphers the language of special education.

If your child has been diagnosed with ADHD or a learning disability, you've entered a new world of special-ed acronyms, abbreviations, and terms. This glossary will help you penetrate the jargon to get your child the educational help he or she needs.

Accommodations — Techniques and materials that help AD/HD or LD students learn or perform schoolwork more effectively. Accommodations include extra time on tests, a lighter homework load, and permission to tape-record assignments.

Assistive Technology —

Equipment or software that helps children compensate for learning impairments. Examples include electronic spell-checkers and audiobooks.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) — A neurological disorder that causes problems with attention span, impulse control, and activity level.

Behavior Intervention Plan

(BIP) — A set of strategies developed by school personnel to help a child behave in a way that is appropriate to the classroom and that allows him to learn.

Developmental Behavioral

Pediatrician — A physician who specializes in childhood behavioral problems, such as AD/HD and aggressive behavior, as well as difficulties at school.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition (DSM-IV)

— A publication of the American Psychiatric Association that is used to diagnose psychiatric disorders, including AD/HD. Educational Advocate - A professional who works with families to secure appropriate educational placement or services for children with AD/HD or LD.

Educational Psychologist — A psychologist who specializes in learning and in the behavioral, social, and emotional problems that interfere with school performance.

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

— Under IDEA (see below), public schools are required to provide disabled students with appropriate educational services at no cost to the parents.

Formal Assessment — A school-based evaluation of a student's learning difficulties using standardized tests and other tools. A team of school professionals uses the assessment to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services.

Independent Educational

Evaluation (IEE) — An evaluation conducted by a qualified professional who is unaffiliated with a public school district. Schools are required to consider the findings or recommendations of an IEE.

Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act (IDEA) — The federal law that guarantees special education and related services to students with disabilities. AD/HD is not listed among IDEA's disability categories, but children with AD/HD often qualify under a category called "Other Health Impairments."

Individualized Education

Program (IEP) — The formal, written plan that guides the delivery of special-education services to a child who qualifies for such assistance under IDEA.

Learning Disability (LD) — A neurobiological disorder that impairs a person's ability to read, write, or do math by affecting the way he receives, processes, or expresses information.

Least Restrictive Environment

(LRE) — Under IDEA, school districts must provide special-ed services in a general education setting, rather than in separate classes or schools, whenever possible. A regular classroom is the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities.

Modification — An adjustment in the curriculum that creates a different standard for students with disabilities, as compared to others in the class.

Multidisciplinary Team — A group of people who work together to develop and review a child's IEP. The team might include the child's classroom and special-education teachers, school administrator, school psychologist, therapist, educational advocate, and parents.

Neuropsychologist — A psychologist who specializes in the relationship between brain function and behavior.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation

Act of 1973 — The federal law that grants children with disabilities the right to an appropriate public school education. Children with AD/HD or LD who are ineligible for special-education services under IDEA may qualify for accommodations and services under Section 504. The written plan outlining these services is called a 504 Plan.

Special Education (SPED) —

Specially designed instruction for children whose educational needs can't be met in a regular instructional program.

Recommended Resources

Reliable sources to find more information about ADHD and learning disabilities.

Websites

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

chadd.org

CHADD offers local support services to parents, teachers, and other professionals. Its website features an online community, an ADD directory, and information about your child's legal rights at school.

The Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA)

copaa.org

COPAA helps parents secure high-quality educational services for children with disabilities. Search its website for member attorneys and advocates in your area.

LD OnLine

ldonline.org

Parents, teachers, and kids will find a wealth of information about learning disabilities. The site features FAQs, expert advice, and several forums.

Learning Disabilities Association of America

ldanatl.org

The LDA site offers a four-hour special-education training course for parents, plus advice on a range of topics, from finding tutors to helping a child choose a career.

Wrightslaw

wrightslaw.com

This website focuses on special-education law and advocacy for children with disabilities. It offers thousands of articles and cases, breaking news, and a newsletter.

Books for Parents

Wrightslaw: From Emotion to Advocacy, by Pam Wright and Pete Wright (Harbor House Law)

This definitive guide to special-education law will help you make sure your child receives the accommodations and services he needs. Read it before your next IEP or 504 meeting.

Making the System Work for Your Child with ADHD, by Peter S. Jensen, M.D. (Guilford Press)

This practical, must-have

resource includes sample letters to your child's school, guides for talking with his teacher, advice on navigating the health-care system, and more.

The Organized Student, by Donna Goldberg and Jennifer Zwiebel (Fireside)

Want to transform your disorganized child into a student with a complete organizational system? With brief explanations and instructive photographs, this book ensures success for even the most chaotic student.

School Success for Children with Special Needs, by Amy James (Jossey-Bass)

This comprehensive guide takes the confusion out of the special-education system by explaining the ins and outs of the IDEA, IEPs, and all of the other acronyms that may be a part of your child's world.

A Parent's Guide to Special Education, by Linda Wilmschurt, Ph.D., and Alan W. Brue, Ph.D. (American Management Association)

The authors, both school psychol-

ogists, walk you through the special-education journey, from testing and psychological evaluations to your child's legal rights.

[The Misunderstood Child: Understanding and Coping with Your Child's Learning Disabilities](#), by Larry Silver, M.D. (Three Rivers Press)

This complete guide provides strategies and treatment options that you can use at home and at school to help your child with learning disabilities succeed.

Books for Teachers

[CHADD Educator's Manual on AD/HD](#), edited by Chris A. Z. Dendy (CHADD)

This is a must-have for teachers at any level! This manual offers easy-to-implement classroom strategies and valuable tips based on real-life input from researchers, teachers, parents, and mental-health professionals.

[How to Reach and Teach Children with ADD/ADHD](#), by Sandra F. Rief (Jossey-Bass)

After an in-depth overview of the disorder, Rief provides simple, effective classroom strategies that can help children succeed, from kindergarten through high school.

[Teaching Teens with ADD and ADHD](#), by Chris A. Z. Dendy (Woodbine House)

Any teacher of students with ADHD is sure to find the answers he or she seeks in this helpful resource.

Books for Children

[Learning to Slow Down and Pay Attention](#), by Kathleen G.

Nadeau, Ph.D., and Ellen B.

Dixon, Ph.D. (Magination Press)

The checklists in this fun, easy-to-follow workbook will help kids learn new skills for doing homework, staying focused, and making friends.

[A Walk in the Rain with a Brain](#), by Edward M. Hallowell, M.D. (HarperCollins)

Every brain finds its own way! That's the message Dr. Hallowell sends to kids through the colorful illustrations and simple, funny story.

[How to Do Homework Without Throwing Up](#), by Trevor Romain (Free Spirit Publishing)

Students with ADHD will find plenty of helpful strategies, like creating a homework schedule, in this entertaining book. It also imparts basic truths, like "Though it might feel good at the

time, throwing a fit will not make your homework easier to do."

[Annie's Plan](#), by Jeanne Kraus (Magination Press)

Kraus incorporates the basics of a behavioral plan to help kids reach daily and weekly goals into a story that's sure to hold a young reader's attention. Parents and teachers will find plenty of new ideas here, too.

[Get Organized Without Losing It](#), by Janet S. Fox (Free Spirit Publishing)

Fox provides tons of organization strategies for kids ages eight to 13, including tips on using a planner, creating a homework checklist, and getting ready for school and other activities on time.

[Learning Outside the Lines](#), by Jonathan Mooney and David Cole (Fireside)

Written by two "late bloomers," this book equips high school and college students with the tools they need to succeed in their academic careers. The authors remind students that education should be energizing, and that they should not let setbacks hold them down.

Software

Kidspiration and Inspiration

inspiration.com

Kids can use this visual learning tool at home and school to build comprehension, writing, critical thinking, and analytical skills.

Co:Writer 4000

donjohnston.com

This text-to-speech software pronounces words and whole sentences as a student writes. The word-prediction and dictionary functions help children improve spelling and understanding words they are using.

Dragon Naturally Speaking

nuance.com

Voice recognition software enables students to not only complete papers and projects, but conduct research, surf the Web, and much more, simply by speaking. Because Dragon's program is easy to use and doesn't require training, it's a good way to introduce your child to this technology.

Assistive Technology

Tape/iPod recorder

griffintechology.com;

belkin.com

Dictating notes or assignments into a handheld recorder can be an effective alternative for stu-

dents who have trouble writing. Recording lectures is an ADHD-friendly study technique for high school and college students.

Books on audiotape/CD

rfd.org; audible.com

Some individuals with ADHD have an easier time absorbing spoken, rather than written, language. Others find that listening to the book while following along on the page helps them stay focused.

Portable keyboards

alphasmart.com; quickpad.com;
perfectsolutions.com

Students who struggle with slow or messy handwriting will find it easier to take notes with these lightweight keyboards. Most have built-in spell-checks and enough memory to save several pages of notes. At the end of the day, simply plug into your computer to save or print.

Timers/reminder devices

watchminder.com;

brainaid.com; timetimer.com;

Time Tracker (available at amazon.com)

Alarms that beep or vibrate periodically, or devices that keep track of times for specific tasks, such as taking meds, can provide the gentle reminder a student needs to stay on track, in school

and during study time.

Electronic organizers/PDAs

franklin.com; palm.com

Handwriting difficulties can make it laborious to record assignments in a traditional paper planner. Let your middle or high school student keep track of events and deadlines electronically.

Visit **ADDitude's** website for even [more gadget recommendations](#). Find more book picks in the **ADDitude** bookstore: www.additudemag.com/bookstore.

ADDitude's Scientific Advisory Board

Page **96**

ADDitude magazine's Scientific Advisory Board includes some of America's most respected clinicians, researchers, educators and ADHD advocates. All scientific or medical information contained in the magazine, including this Special Report, is reviewed by one of our advisors prior to publication.

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Children's Mental Health
Columbia University College of
Physicians and Surgeons
New York, NY

Success at School: Learning Essentials for Children with ADD

A parent-teacher handbook from *ADDitude*.

This user-friendly handbook is full of essential information about ADHD designed to help parents and educators work from the same source and stay on the same page. This booklet contains eight tip sheets, each describing a behavior associated with ADHD, and each offering practical, time-tested strategies to manage it in the classroom. Share them with your child's teacher and help your child succeed at school.

Living With ADD

Great articles from the *ADDitude* archives.

32 pages of articles filled with real-life advice for managing ADHD in adults and children. With topics ranging from ADHD school accommodations to thriving in the workplace with ADD, and tips for good nutrition, better sleep habits, and raising happy, healthy children with ADHD, there's a useful article for everyone who's living with ADD.

ADDventures in Babysitting...with Ellen Kingsley

Tips and tricks for ADD childcare.

While parents of children with ADHD may have developed a sixth-sense for heading off trouble before it starts, babysitters and temporary caregivers may not be so savvy. Packed with information, this concise guide summarizes the condition and gives advice on settling squabbles, lessening separation anxiety, getting kids to bed, and more. Fill out the Babysitting Checklist in the inside back cover, offer this booklet to anyone looking after your children, and spend your time away with confidence and peace of mind.

To purchase additional copies of *ADHD at School* or other *ADDitude* eBooks, go to:

www.adhdreports.com

Free *ADDitude* Printables

7 Myths About ADHD... Debunked!

Many people continue to harbor mistaken beliefs about ADD. Here's the truth

25 Things to Love About ADHD

Why you should be proud of your ADD

9 Ways to Achieve Success at School

Our free back-to-school report for school children with ADHD and learning disabilities like dyslexia

Classroom Accommodations to Help ADHD Children

Proven techniques for better serving ADHD students at school

Letter to Your Child's Teacher

A sample note to the teacher detailing your child's strengths and weaknesses

Bring Your Bills Under Control

Gain control over your finances with this simple bill-paying system

Time Assessment Chart

A chart for tracking exactly where your time goes and how you can better utilize it

Find these and many more free ADHD Printables online at www.additudemag.com/resources/printables.html

FREE ADHD Newsletters from *ADDitude*

Sign up to receive critical news and information about ADHD diagnosis and treatment, success at school, adult ADD, and parenting strategies

Sign up for these free newsletters at: additudemag.com/adhd-community/newsletters.html.

Just Diagnosed

Treatment news, ADHD medication info, real-life inspiration

Success at School

Keep kids learning! Tips for parents and teachers of children with ADHD

Parenting ADHD/LD Kids

Strategies for behavior, nutrition, friends, and more

Adult ADHD/LD

Expert advice for organizing your life and career with adult ADHD

ADHD News & Research

The latest need-to-know information about ADHD and learning disabilities

More *ADDitude* Resources for Treating ADHD

Find these and other helpful treatment tools on ADDitudeMag.com

All About Treating ADHD

Visit the **ADDitudeMag.com** Treatment Channel for in-depth information about ADHD medications, alternative treatments, related conditions like anxiety and depression, treating children with ADHD, and fine-tuning treatment over time.

www.additudemag.com/channel/adhd-treatment/index.html

ADHD Treatment Forums

Talk with other *ADDitude* readers about finding the right ADHD medication, alternative treatments that work, fine-tuning prescriptions to decrease side effects, and treating kids.

www.additudemag.com/adhdforums/group/80.html

Spinning My Wheels: the ADD Treatment Blog

Ride along with former chef and restaurateur Bill Mehlman as he explores different treatments for his adult ADD: tae kwon do, diet, meditation, music, baseball, and more...

www.additudemag.com/adhdblogs/3/index.html

Tools & Checklists

Essential guides from *ADDitude* magazine about managing side effects, recognizing comorbid conditions like depression, getting children to sleep better, and finding effective alternative treatments.

www.additudemag.com/resources/tools.html

ADHD at School: Information and Resources for Parents & Teachers

www.additudemag.com/school