

Module 6:
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity
Disorder (ADHD)

Understanding ADHD

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder (ADHD/ADD) is a medical/neurobiological condition which means it affects how the brain works and affects behaviour.
- Individuals with ADHD may have difficulties relating to behaviour, learning and self-regulation.



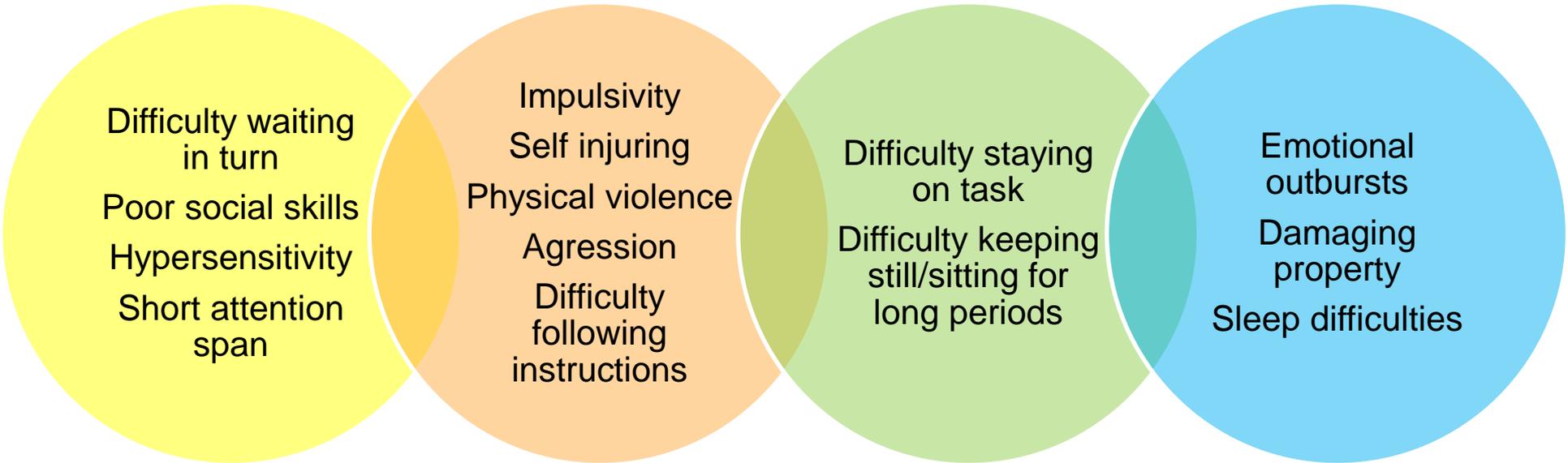
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Understanding ADHD (continuation)

Impulsivity, hyperactivity and inattentiveness are common with ADHD.

- ✓ Impulsiveness causes the person to react before thinking of what the outcome might be for example crossing a busy road without checking how safe this is.
- ✓ Hyperactivity means that the individual may find sitting still very difficult and may feel the need to jump, run around or move constantly.
- ✓ Inattentiveness means that the person may have difficulty focusing on something for a long time, or staying focused for long enough to complete a task.

Behaviours to Expect



(ADHD Ireland, 2019)

Behaviours to expect



- Accidental injury and intentional self-injury are more common in people living with ADHD.
- Your loved one may find it difficult to express themselves calmly if they are upset, and may display aggressive or violent behaviours.
- Interacting socially can be challenging for the individual.

<https://freerangestock.com/photos/74930/abstract-person-with-cogwheels-thinking-fast-and-slow--with-cop.html>

Concerns

Accepting the Diagnosis:

- Common reactions
- Stigma

Care givers may also worry that accepting the diagnosis of ADHD may cause more difficulties for the person they care for and they may refuse to accept the diagnosis.



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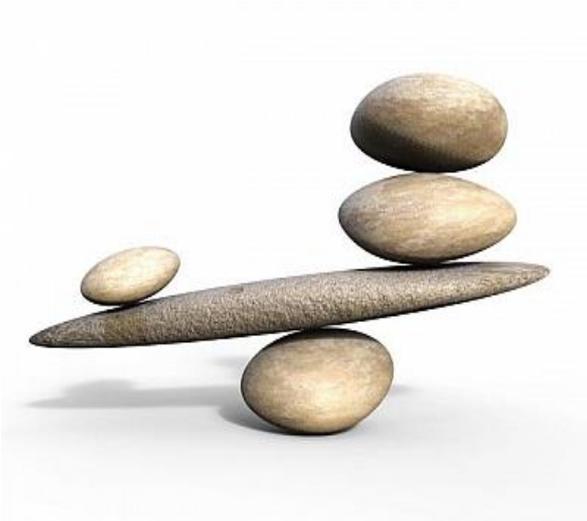
Concerns

- Individuals with ADHD may have aggressive behaviours or violent outbursts.
- This can create challenges for the caregiver in coping with and responding to these outbursts
- Sleep disturbance is common for both children and adults living with ADHD
- The person you are providing care to may take hours to fall asleep and may wake frequently throughout the night.

Concerns

- ❑ Whether or not to medicate your loved one can be concern for many caregivers
- ❑ Caregivers may fear that medication could make problem solving more difficult for the person with ADHD.
- ❑ Side effects of medication such as loss of appetite, sleep disturbances and a “zombie like” state make the decision whether or not to try medication even more challenging
- ❑ Parents providing care to a child with ADHD can be concerned about the effects of this on their other children
- ❑ The symptoms of ADHD can sometimes result in a chaotic and stressful home environment
- ❑ Caregivers may suffer from stress and burnout as they respond to the needs of their loved one and possibly provide care to other children

Strategies for the Individual

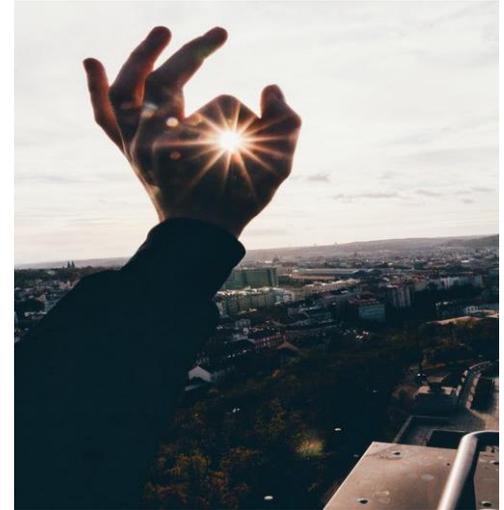


<https://freerangestock.com/photos/50390/spa-stones-shows-equal-value-and-balance.html>

- Creating social opportunities for your loved one can help them to feel included and more accepted by their peers
- Each social opportunity can lead to more opportunities!
- Try to support the individual when they are with other people and help them to remember taking turns and listening when other people are speaking.

Responding to Aggressive and Violent behaviours

- The most important things a caregiver can do when responding to aggressive or violent outbursts is stay calm.
- Speak in low and calm tone of voice and remove any other children or vulnerable people from the situation.
- Ask the person why they are upset. Repeat what they have told you so they know that you are listening and you have heard them.
- Ask the person to come to a different room or outside to talk about how they are feeling. A change in environment can help to calm the situation.



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/architecture-backlit-buildings-city-671549/>

Other Useful Strategies

Safety planning can help caregivers to support the person with ADHD to cope when a dangerous situation occurs.

What can you do to keep the person you provide care to safe?

- Practical tips to make your home a safer place include:
*locks on windows and doors *safety gate for stairs *the use of plastic cutlery and plates and cups *keep sharp or dangerous objects such as medications safely locked away (ROSPA, 2019)

Creating a good sleep routine for your loved one can help them to get the rest they need and be less tired and perhaps irritable the next day

- 2 hours prior to sleep any screen time, caffeine or high sugar drinks/snacks and intense physical activity should be avoided.
- Lighting should be dimmed and quiet and calming activities should take place in the hour before bed time.
- The temperature and lighting in the bedroom should be adjusted to suit the person's needs (Dodson, 2019)

Do you want to learn more?

Our interactive Resource Pack will give you information about

- concerns that you as caregiver might have
- what can be done
- useful tips how to handle the burden of care
- how to avoid stress and burnout
- how to deal with your emotions
- acceptance of the disorder
- and more!

You will also find exercises and activities for YOU and for the care receiver!



**More information is available in the
Resource Pack:**

https://developfc.csicy.com/?page_id=11708