



Managing Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder



What are some strategies to help children with ADHD manage their routines at home and in school?

We recommend the following strategies to manage a child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). These can be applied across various settings such as the school or at home.

Home

- + **Have an assigned area to do homework**
Remove clutter from the work space.
- + **Adopt a healthy lifestyle and get sufficient sleep**
Adopting a healthy lifestyle that includes a balanced diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids (e.g. fatty fish like salmon), regular exercise and sufficient sleep can help in managing ADHD symptoms.
- + **Focus on the positive**
Praise your child often for good behaviours (e.g. "Thank you for keeping your toys"). Don't just focus on negative behaviour. Positive comments should ideally outnumber negative behaviours by 4:1.
- + **Try to redirect your child's behaviour**
Consider redirecting your child's energy to other more purposeful activities such as sports and exercises. It is also good to involve them with other home activities or chores and responsibilities to keep them engaged.
- + **Have a routine at home and familiarise your child with it**
Build a daily routine around your child's day (e.g. before/after school, sleep, meals or play time). This may help your child learn to organise and structure his/her time and reduce behaviour difficulties.

- + **Make it very clear to your child what your expectations are**

Remind your child when needed periodically. You may say, "walk next to me" rather than "don't run".

- + **Create behaviour charts**

Agree with your child about a target behaviour and note how often your child should achieve the target behaviour (e.g. to complete a homework assignment with only two reminders from you over the course of a week).

- + **Dealing with problem behaviours through a range of graded responses**

Consider ignoring the behaviour, having natural consequences (e.g. a toy gets lost when forgotten in school), logical consequences (e.g. upon completion of school work, child gets play or TV time) and time out.

- + **Get your child's attention when giving instructions**

Make eye contact with the child before giving important information. Keep the instructions brief and clear, and repeat if necessary.

Teaching Strategies

Here are some strategies that teachers may use in class to help a child with ADHD.

- + **Preview previously learnt information before introducing a new lesson**

A good strategy to help retain learning is to review previously learnt information. Clearly state the content that will be covered next.

- + **Provide advance warning before the lesson ends**

Give a 10-minute warning before your child is due to hand in the work. Tell him or her how much time he or she has left to complete the work.

- + **Inform students how to prepare for the next lesson**

Instruct them on what to do for the next lesson (e.g. To come to the front of the classroom for English instruction).

- + **Break tasks down into smaller parts and give sufficient time for completion of tasks**



Organisational Skills

Children with ADHD can lack executive functioning skills, which help them organise themselves and multi-task. Children with ADHD underachieve academically due to a variety of causes, such as problems with work productions and consistency. Below are tips to help your child stay organised:

+ Have a notebook

Your child can note down his/her tasks and be able to track it.

+ Colour-coded folders

Help your child organise assignments for different subjects into different coloured folders. For instance, red for Maths, orange for English.

+ Assign a buddy

A fellow classmate can help redirect your child's attention to stay focused in class.

+ Teach your child to read the time on a watch

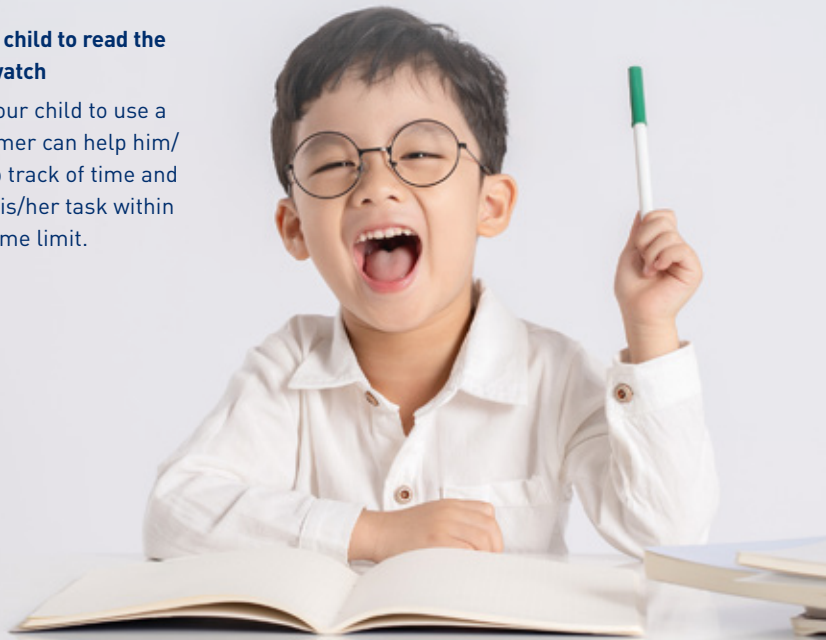
Teaching your child to use a watch or timer can help him/her to keep track of time and complete his/her task within the given time limit.

+ Allow your child to break up long assignments

It can be challenging for the child to sustain him/herself for prolonged period. Taking breaks can help the child to rest and feel better. For example, simple physical activities such as stretching and walking to get something, can be helpful.

+ Create a timetable

Ensure that a display of the tasks and schedule is placed in a prominent place.



Behavioural Management

Children with attention difficulties or hyperactivity need frequent reminders to reinforce appropriate behaviour and to stop inappropriate behaviour.

+ Regular Feedback

Providing regular feedback on the child's behaviour and performance can help them to monitor their behaviour. When the child engages in appropriate behaviour, praise him/her with simple phrases such as "good job". If they are not, remind the child of the appropriate behaviour to help redirect his/her actions.

+ Ignoring

In some instances, it is helpful to ignore the child's behaviour, especially if he or she is misbehaving to get your attention.

+ Establish simple non-verbal cues

Giving the child the "look" can help remind your child to refocus on his or her work.

+ Proximity during interaction

Consider moving closer to your child when you are speaking to or teaching him or her so that he or she can focus on you.



Improve Self-Esteem

Children with ADHD may have low self-esteem. They may have experienced stigma as not everyone believes ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition. Some people have the misconception that it is the fault of the child or that it is due to poor or bad parenting.

Children with ADHD may also suffer from anxiety or depression, which may undermine the efforts they make to build their confidence.

Encourage the child to do things that he or she will experience success in and praise the child often to improve his or her self-esteem.



NUH Child Development Unit

NUH Child Development Unit is part of the Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute at National University Hospital. The clinic provides multidisciplinary assessments, therapy and holistic management of children with developmental & behavioural disorders from birth to 7 years old. Please make an appointment if you would like to see our paediatricians.

For health information and resources relating to child development, visit:

<https://www.nuh.com.sg/cdu-resources>

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About the National University Centre for Women and Children

National University Centre for Women and Children (NUWoC) is a national university specialist centre that aims to empower women, children and their families to lead healthier lives. We provide comprehensive medical and surgical services ranging from pre-conception to child and maternal health.

NUWoC comprises the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology (O&G) and Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI) of National University Hospital. It focuses on the right-siting of appropriate services in the community and builds complementary services in National University Health System’s (NUHS) centres of excellence – Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Alexandra Hospital.

Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, KTP-NUCMI established an integrated outpatient facility with medical, diagnostic and rehabilitation services for children. We are also the only public specialist centre in Singapore that offers paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes.

For more information about us, visit www.nuh.com.sg/NUWoC

Children’s Emergency (24-hr)

Location NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1
Contact +65 6772 5000

KTP-NUCMI

Location NUH Main Building, Zone E, Level 2
(Accessible via Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 2, Lift Lobby C)
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)
General Enquiry +65 6772 5736
Appointment Line +65 6908 2222
Email ktpnucmi_appt@nuhs.edu.sg

9a Viva-University Children’s Cancer Centre

Location NUH Medical Centre, Zone B, Level 9
Operating Hours 8am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6772 5030
Email cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Children’s Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang

Location Junction 10, #01-22
Operating Hours 9am – 11pm daily (including public holidays)
General Enquiry +65 6219 1538
Email childreucc@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Child Development Unit @ JMC

Location Jurong Medical Centre, Level 2
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6665 2530 / 2531
Email cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Child Development Unit @ Keat Hong

Location Keat Hong Community Club, #03-01
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6769 4537/4637
Email cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Clinic A22 NUWoC Children’s Clinic @ NTFGH

Location Ng Teng Fong General Hospital
Tower A – NTFGH Clinics, Level 2
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6908 2222
Email appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Our Patient Care Institutions

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Ng Teng Fong General Hospital &
Jurong Community Hospital
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National University Polyclinics
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National University Centre for Oral Health, Singapore
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