

PLAN FOR SUCCESS



CompanionBenefitAlternatives.com

Parent Resource Guide for ADHD

 **Companion**
BENEFIT ALTERNATIVES

Welcome to Plan for Success

Parenting children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) brings unique challenges. It also brings questions.

Most parents wonder what steps they can take to help their children succeed. Working with your child's doctor and learning more about ADHD are some important first steps.

With this in mind, Companion Benefit Alternatives, Inc. (CBA) developed this guide to assist you. Plan for Success includes general information about ADHD, helpful tips for managing your child's ADHD symptoms and tools for monitoring progress.

We hope this information helps your child succeed. CBA welcomes your feedback. Feel free to email us at CBA.Quality@CompanionGroup.com, or call us at 800-868-1032, ext. 25331.



Visit us at CompanionBenefitAlternatives.com

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a condition that makes it hard for children to pay attention or sit still. It is one of the most common childhood conditions.

Symptoms of ADHD include inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. If left untreated, these behaviors can cause difficulty at school, at home and with other activities.

A child diagnosed with ADHD may

- Talk constantly
- Have a hard time paying attention
- Become easily distracted
- Have difficulty listening
- Forget things
- Be unable to stay seated
- Squirm or fidget
- Act and speak before thinking

There are three types of ADHD. Symptoms and behaviors vary for each.

1. Predominantly Inattentive Type

The child finds it hard to organize or finish a task, to pay attention to details, or to follow instructions or conversations. The child is easily distracted or forgets details of daily routines.

2. Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type

The child fidgets a lot and has difficulty sitting still for long periods. The child will also talk a lot, feel restless and have trouble with impulsive behaviors. Impulsivity may include interrupting others, grabbing things from people or speaking at inappropriate times. It is difficult for the child to wait his or her turn or listen to directions.

3. Combined Type

The child has symptoms of both types.



CHILDREN WITH ADHD CAN GET BETTER WITH TREATMENT, BUT THERE IS NO CURE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT TREATMENTS ARE NOT “ONE SIZE FITS ALL.” WHAT WORKS FOR ONE CHILD MAY NOT WORK FOR ANOTHER.

Good treatment plans will include close monitoring by qualified professionals, follow-up care and any changes needed along the way. The most common treatments include medication, therapy or a combination of the two.

Medication: Medication can be very helpful to a child with ADHD. Stimulants are the most common type of medication used to treat ADHD. They have been shown to yield positive results in a majority of children diagnosed with ADHD.

Medications can affect children differently. Again, while one child may respond positively to one medication, another child may have a different response. Your child may need to try a few medications to see which one works best. Supervising your child’s medication is critical. Medication should only be given by a parent or other responsible adult.

Communicate with your child’s doctor to find the right treatment plan for your child. It is important to understand the medication the doctor prescribes. Ask questions and read the information from the pharmacy.

Your child should see his or her doctor within a few weeks after beginning medication for ADHD. The doctor will make sure the medication is working. Once your child has a good medication routine, he or she should see the doctor at least every three months.

Therapy: Behavioral therapy is another treatment option that can help reduce behavioral problems related to ADHD. It should be started soon after a child is diagnosed.

Behavioral therapy can help teach children to control their behavior so they can do better at school and at home. Some examples that may be effective in your child’s therapy include creating routines, getting organized, limiting distractions and using goals and rewards.

Combination: Many children do well with both medication and behavioral therapy.

ALTHOUGH YOUR CHILD'S DOCTOR WILL BE ASKING MANY QUESTIONS DURING APPOINTMENTS, YOU SHOULD ALSO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONVERSATION. DON'T HESITATE TO ASK QUESTIONS.

Asking the right questions can help you learn to better manage your child's ADHD symptoms. Open communication between you, your child and your child's doctor can lead to developing the best treatment plan for your child. Here are some tips to get you started:

- Communicate with your child's doctor regularly. Clinical guidelines recommend your child visit his or her doctor within one month after starting a medication for ADHD, with at least two follow-up visits within the following nine months (www.ncqa.org/portals/0/Follow-Up%20Care%20for%20Children%20Prescribed%20ADHD%20Medication.pdf.)
- Talk with your child's doctor about an overall plan of treatment. Over time, the treatment plan may change. As your child grows, the doctor may change or adjust medication.
- Also, a new school year may present different challenges requiring a specific behavior plan.
- Learn all you can about ADHD. It's a good idea to do your own research before your child's appointment.

Through research, you may be able to answer many of the questions you have about ADHD. At the appointment, ask your child's doctor about recommended websites, books and other available tools.

- Write down a list of questions or points you want to discuss before going to doctor visits. Consider keeping a journal of your concerns or questions between visits. Keep track of things such as changes in your child's behavior or reactions to medications.
- Keep progress charts to track symptoms and improvements and share these at doctor visits. Be sure to include grades and feedback from teachers.
- Inform your child's doctor of any treatments or medications your child receives from other doctors or therapists.
- If you notice side effects from the medication or have questions about your child's treatment, contact the doctor.

Questions You May Want to Ask Your Child's Doctor or Therapist

- Which treatment do you think is best for my child and why?
- How do you determine the recommended treatment?
- How will ADHD affect my child over the long term?
- Should we try both medication and therapy?
- Does my child need medication, or can she/he be treated effectively without it?
- What are the pros and cons and possible risks or side effects of this treatment?
- What type of medication are you prescribing for my child and how does it work?
- How will the medication make my child feel, and how will we know if it's working?
- How long before we see improvements?
- What is behavioral therapy and how can it help improve my child's behavior?
- How will my child be monitored during treatment?
- What kind of impact can ADHD have on my child's self-esteem and relationships?
- What can we do to improve these things?
- What kind of ADHD education and support resources are available for parents and family members?
- Are there any daily lifestyle changes that can help better manage my child's ADHD?
- How do I effectively discipline my child?



Routines and organization play a large role in the success of children with ADHD. Children with ADHD need structure. Routines are only helpful if you maintain them and use them frequently.

Steps to developing routines:

1. Make a checklist of what tasks must be done and prioritize them.
2. Post the checklist in a place where you and your child can see it.
3. Use rewards to reinforce completion of tasks.

Other helpful tips for using routines:

- Get specific. Make sure the tasks are clear and measurable. For example, if you want your child to put up his or her toys, state exactly where the toys should go.
- Put tasks in order and make sure your child completes each task before moving to the next item on the list. A schedule or calendar can be helpful in keeping your child on track. Schedules allow for predictability and structure – both very important in preventing negative behaviors in children with ADHD.
- Remember that your main goal is to get your child to assume responsibility for himself or herself and to complete tasks.
- Be patient. New habits and skills take time to learn.

Getting your child to follow directions:

- Directions should be direct, simple and clear.
- Give specific, step-by-step instructions and allow time for your child to complete one step before giving more instructions.
- Be firm and consistent.
- Make eye contact with your child when giving instructions.
- Follow up with appropriate reinforcement.

- Rewards or incentives can be powerful tools in helping your child succeed. Talk with your child's doctor or therapist about ways to reinforce desired behaviors.
- Rewards can be small, but should be something your child wants, such as an extra 15 minutes of video game time.
- Try behavior charts. Completing these types of charts can help your child learn to track and monitor his or her own behavior. Behavior charts can be used to break down large jobs into smaller tasks, or can be a way for your child to keep up with daily chores.
- Take small steps. Choose a few behaviors you would like to encourage. Explain to your child exactly what you expect from her or him to earn a reward.
- Provide opportunities for success. Be consistent with house rules and routines. Communicate these clearly to your child.

Positive Reinforcements

Tangible rewards (e.g. toys)

A trip

A movie

Favorite food or meal

An IOU

Negative Consequences

Missing a TV show

Timeout

Loss of privileges

You will find several behavior and reward charts for your use in this resource guide. They are also available on our website at CompanionBenefitAlternatives.com.

There are several ways your can tell your child that he or she has done a good job. Remember, positive reinforcement should be given soon after your child has completed the task.

Instead of always saying “good job,” you could say:

Awesome job!

Good work!

I’m very proud of you!

Nice work!

Fantastic!

I appreciate your hard work!

You did a great job!

I knew you could do it!

You outdid yourself today!

You’re doing much better today!

Excellent!

Outstanding!

Way to go!

Terrific!

Right on!

Wonderful!



Although many children with ADHD face challenges in school, your child's ADHD does not have to interfere in the learning process. As you partner with your child's teacher to develop helpful strategies for your child, school can be a positive experience.

- Ask about school programs. Take advantage of special programs the school may offer specifically for children with ADHD. Schools are required by law to have programs and provisions in place for children who have a disability that interferes with learning.

Your child may qualify for services offered under Section 504 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). You can find more information on each of these programs through the U.S. Department of Education (www.ed.gov/parents) or your state's own education website.

Stay in communication with your child's teachers. Start the year by requesting a conference with the teacher to discuss your child's strengths and needs. Try to attend open house and scheduled parent-teacher conference days, but don't feel that you must wait for these days to talk with your child's teacher.

- Spend time at your child's school. Volunteer. Developing relationships at the school will expand your child's support system.
- Partner with your child's teacher and be open to his or her suggestions. Support his or her efforts to help your child. Request that the teacher closely monitor your child's work and provide feedback.
- Make notes on topics to explore with your child's teacher. Some ideas for discussion include:
 - Set times for the class to write down assignments.
 - Classroom strategies that have worked or not worked for your child in past grades.
 - Class seating arrangements. Does your child need to be seated in the front of the classroom and/or away from doors or windows?
 - Classroom routines.
 - Important test dates and project due dates.
- Find out what method of communication works best for you and your child's teacher and use it regularly. Emailing is becoming increasingly popular with teachers to communicate with individual parents or about a class. Phone calls and notes in student planners are also options.

Working Through Assignments and Homework

- If getting your child to focus during homework time is a problem, you may want to consider asking your child's doctor to schedule a medication for later in the day so that it lasts during the late afternoon and evening hours.
- Ask the school if you can have an extra set of books for home. Forgetting to bring books home (or the correct books home) happens often with many children with ADHD.
- Check if the school has a website for posting assignments and/or grades. Many schools also have a telephone "hotline" to check for homework assignments.
- Encourage your child to use a daily planner to write down assignments. Take time to review the schedule and assignments each day.
- Assign a color code for each subject. If your child selects blue for math, only his or her math binders, notebooks, book covers and folders would be blue.
- Ask your child to file papers in binders and notebooks daily. One way to use folders is to have assignments to be completed on one side, while completed work ready to turn in is on the other side of the folder. This will help your child organize assignments and tasks.
- Take time each evening to organize all school materials, pack book bags and place them in their designated area for the next day.
- Set up a place for a permanent study/homework area in your home away from distractions. Assign a specific time for homework and have needed supplies on hand.
- Come up with homework rules; for example, no television or phone calls during homework time.
- Make a habit of using timers during homework time. Timers allow students to monitor their own use of time.
 - For example, once your child gets home from school you may want to allow him or her 30 minutes to eat a snack and relax. After that 30-minute break, set the timer for 30 minutes of homework time. When the timer goes off, allow your child a break of about 10-15 minutes before starting another 30 minutes of homework.



SPEAK TO YOUR CHILD'S DOCTOR ABOUT YOUR SUMMER PLANS OR VACATIONS BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S MEDICATION. THERE ARE SEVERAL THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER BEFORE MAKING ANY BIG CHANGES – LIKE STOPPING MEDICATION TREATMENT FOR THE SUMMER.

Keep in mind that while routines are important for children with ADHD, summers and vacations can be fun and flexible and still have structure. Make an effort to have plenty of free time but also plan some scheduled activities.

Whatever your plans, remember that the ultimate goal is to make sure that your child has a positive and fulfilling summer or vacation.

Here are some things to consider:

- Talk to your child's doctor about adjusting your child's medication schedule.
- Don't stop all of your set routines. Keep some in place to keep structure and predictability in your child's day.
- Take advantage of educational and recreational activities offered in your community. Check your local library or recreation center for available activities or camps your child can attend. Be sure to also include physical activities, such as walking, swimming and bike riding.



Caring for a child with ADHD can be challenging for the entire family. Marriages and sibling relationships are often strained by the stress associated with ADHD. There are many resources available that may help you and your family cope with the stress and other difficulties.

- If you and your spouse are frustrated about how to handle your child's behavior and care, do your best to get on the same page. Make sure that both of you are involved in your child's treatment plan. Sit with your child's doctor and come up with a treatment plan and other ideas that both of you can agree with.
- Remember you are a team, so you must think like a team. Communicate with each other and support one another. Take time to nurture your relationship and keep it strong.
- It's OK to be frustrated. Schedule time with a mental health counselor or social worker to discuss your frustrations. He or she can also provide advice on raising a child with ADHD and coping with stress.
- Find a support group for parents raising children with ADHD. Talking with those who share your experiences can be very beneficial. Support groups are another way to find other available resources.
- Don't forget about your other children. If there are siblings in the household, make sure they get individual attention and quality time as well. They may not say anything or show how they are feeling, but making an effort to spend time with the other children can have a huge impact.
- Take a break. Be sure to give yourself some time off every now and then. You need time to relax and get some rest. Ask family and friends for help.

Publications:

Taking Charge of ADHD, Russell A. Barkley, PhD. New York: The Guilford Press, 2000.

ADHD: Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Children and Adults, Paul H. Wender, MD. Oxford University Press, 2002.

Straight Talk about Psychiatric Medications for Kids, Timothy E. Wilens, MD. New York: The Guilford Press, 1999.

Websites:

ADHD Parents Medication Guide (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and American Psychiatric Association, www.parentsmedguide.org/ParentGuide_English.pdf)

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (www.aacap.org)

Attention Deficit Disorder Association (www.add.org)

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (www.chadd.org)

Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health (www.ffcmh.org)

Medline Plus ADHD Information Page (www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/attentiondeficithyperactivitydisorder.html)

Mental Health America (www.nmha.org)

National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org)

National Institute of Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov)

National Resource Center on AD/HD (www.help4adhd.org)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov)

U.S. Department of Education (www.ed.gov/parents)

TOOLS FOR SUCCESS



Progress Tracker

This tool can be used to track your child's symptoms on a weekly basis and to discuss your child's progress with his or her doctor or therapist.

Tips for Doctor's Visits

This form provides a place to record all medications your child is taking, as well as topics you may want to discuss with your child's doctor at the next visit.

Behavior Charts

These charts can help your child in setting goals, keeping up with daily activities, and earning rewards for desired behaviors.

Weekly Progress Charts

These charts can be used to remind your child about his or her daily activities. These can also be used for setting goals and earning rewards for desired behaviors.

Reward Coupons

These coupons can be used as rewards your child can earn for completing the daily behavior, homework and weekly progress charts.

If you need copies for future use, these tools and other information can be found on our website at CompanionBenefitAlternatives.com.

Symptoms of ADHD can affect many areas of your child’s life — from home to school to getting along with others. This tool can help you keep track of how your child is doing while on treatment.

Before you fill in the tracker, make copies for future use. Each week, set aside some time to think over how your child has been doing. Ask your child how he or she is doing in these areas. Talk with the teacher. Then, fill in the tracker. Over time you can track how well the treatment plan is helping your child. Be sure to share the progress and concerns with your child’s doctor. If symptoms are not getting better, your child’s doctor can help by changing your child’s medicine, dosage or behavior therapy.

Child’s name _____

Date _____

Check off how your child’s symptoms have been. (Think about home, school and getting along with others.) Use the blank spaces to make notes about when and where symptoms occur. Or, note any changes or concerns.

Medicine _____

Dosage _____

Child’s weight _____

Symptoms related to attention	Rarely/Never	Occasionally	Often	Notes
Has trouble paying attention				
Has trouble listening when spoken to				
Has trouble getting organized				
Makes careless mistakes				
Loses things				
Is often forgetful				
Is easily distracted				
Symptoms related to activity				
Fidgets and squirms in seat				
Has trouble playing or working quietly				
Talks a lot				
Walks, runs, or climbs when remaining seated is expected				
Is often “on the go”				
Symptoms related to self-control				
Has trouble waiting in line or taking turns				
Interrupts conversations or games				
Blurts out answers				

Important: Not every ADHD symptom is listed here. You may want to add some that your child has.

Before the next visit to your child's doctor:

- Give your child medicine as directed. Supervising your child's medicine is critical. Medicine should be given only by a parent or other responsible adult. Read the label before you give the medicine.
- Keep a record of all medicine your child is taking. (A sample record is provided.) Share this with all your child's doctors and therapists.
- Follow the treatment plan. If your child has side effects from the medicine, or if you have questions about treatment, contact your child's doctor right away.

At the next visit, discuss any questions you have about medicine or treatment, such as:

- What are the brand and generic names of the medicine?
- What symptoms will this help?
- How soon should I see results?
- How long will my child have to take this medicine?
- When should this be taken?
- What is the dosage prescribed for my child?
- What should I do if my child misses a dose?
- How and where should I keep this medicine?
- Are there things my child should avoid while taking this medicine? Activities, foods, other medicines?
- What side effects might my child have and what should I do about them?
- Can the prescription be refilled? How often? How do I get future prescriptions?
- Is there any written information I can take with me?

Medicine Record: List all medications your child is currently taking, prescription and over-the-counter, to share with your child's doctor.

The chart on the next page can help you keep up with your child's medications.

Have a Happy Day!



I got out of bed on time.



I followed directions.



I took my medicine.



I did my homework.



I did my chores.



I went to bed on time.

If I color in six smiley faces, I earn

_____.

You are a star!



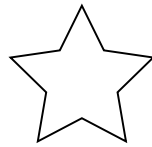
I got out of bed on time.



I followed directions.



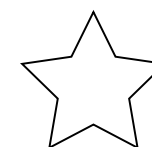
I took my medicine.



I did my homework.



I did my chores.



I went to bed on time.

If I color in six stars, I earn

_____.

Have a Happy Day!



I got out of bed on time.



I followed directions.



I took my medicine.



I did my homework.



I did my chores.



I went to bed on time.

If I color in six smiley faces, I earn

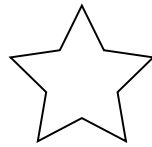
You are a star!



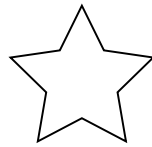
I got out of bed on time.



I followed directions.



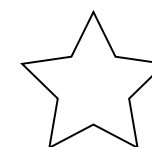
I took my medicine.



I did my homework.



I did my chores.



I went to bed on time.

If I color in six stars, I earn

Activity	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend
Got up and got dressed on time						
Took my medicine						
Followed directions						
Finished homework						
Did my chores						
Went to bed on time						

If I earn _____ stickers for the week, I can _____ .

Activity	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend
Got up and got dressed on time						
Took my medicine						
Followed directions						
Finished homework						
Did my chores						
Went to bed on time						

If I earn _____ stickers for the week, I can _____ .

Behavior: _____

Consequence: _____

Strike 1



Strike 2



Strike 3



Behavior: _____

Consequence: _____

Strike 1



Strike 2



Strike 3



Behavior: _____

Consequence: _____

Strike 1



Strike 2



Strike 3



Comments:

Day: S M T W Th F S

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Got up and got dressed on time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Took my medicine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Followed directions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finished homework	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did my chores	<input type="checkbox"/>
Went to bed on time	<input type="checkbox"/>

Day: S M T W Th F S

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Got up and got dressed on time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Took my medicine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Followed directions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finished homework	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did my chores	<input type="checkbox"/>
Went to bed on time	<input type="checkbox"/>



I WILL:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Get up on time and get dressed					
Take my medicine					
Eat a good breakfast					
Gather my school stuff					
Get settled in class					
Turn in homework					
Follow directions					
Finish class work					
Write down assignments					
Bring books home					
Finish homework					
Get school papers signed by parent					
Go to bed on time					
OTHER THINGS I NEED TO DO:					

Name: _____

Date: _____

These are my goals:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

These are my consequences if I don't meet my goals:

These are my rewards if I meet my goals:

My contract will be reviewed on: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

I was not (circle all that apply):

Following Rules

Following Directions

Being Nice

Listening

Being Cooperative

As a result (describe what happened):

I should have:

From now on, I will:

My signature: _____

Teacher: _____

Parent(s): _____

Name: _____

Week: _____

MONDAY:

	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:

TUESDAY:

	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:

WEDNESDAY:

	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:

THURSDAY:

	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:

FRIDAY:

	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:
	Teacher Initialed: Parent Initialed:

COMMENTS

**Good for 15 minutes
of extra playtime.**

**Good for reading one
extra bedtime story.**

**Good for playing a game
with Mom or Dad.**

**Good for one trip
to the park.**

**Good for baking your
favorite cookies.**

**Good for one
big bear hug.**

**Good for 15 minutes
of extra video
game time.**

**Good for purchase of
five songs online.**

**Good for playing a game
with Mom or Dad.**

**Good for popcorn
and a movie.**

**Good for skipping
one chore.**

**Good for one
big hug.**

