

Top Tips on approaches to learning for your child with ADHD in the home environment

Characteristics of ADHD include difficulty giving attention, hyperactivity and impulsiveness. This is NOT going to make learning at home easy for you or your child, but it is not impossible. Do not try to replicate a school style timetable of lessons— it will not work! Lots of learning can be done informally, for example through cooking, gardening, using music and your child's interests. However, if it becomes too hard, for whatever reason, step back and start again tomorrow. Your relationship with each other and everyone's mental health should be put first.

- **WHEN** - Design a rough schedule for the day **TOGETHER**, build in timings for breakfast, lunch and dinner and for appropriate (virtual) social contact with friends. Together plan the best time for your child to do some work, for many children this is late morning and the afternoon. Remember to also plan in some free time for your child.
- **WHERE** - Try to establish a dedicated space in the house to work. Places with the fewest distractions work best, for example **NOT** by a window.
- **WHAT** - Your child's school may have set some more formal work, try to break this work into 'chunks', for example 3 maths questions in a 'chunk' and/or use a timer (15-minute chunks) with short rest breaks after a chunk.
- Observe your child's body language and the early warning signs that your child needs to move. Schedule in physical activities, for example some star jumps or design a simple assault course inside or in private outside space.
- Build in some fun activities that you can do together, for example making play dough together and then building a 'set' for a well-known story such as Red Riding Hood or doing some Lego challenges, for example designing a zoo or taking a photo every day and doing some simple writing to keep as a 'diary'.
- Aim to make positive requests (e.g. **Aaron, come and sit down please**) rather than negative 'nagging' (e.g. **STOP running around now**)
- Practice deeper breathing with your child (for example breath in for 3 seconds, hold your breath for 3 seconds and let your breath out for 3 seconds) to help your child calm.
- Give encouragement and positive feedback over the effort your child makes, rather than the finished product e.g. 'I can see that you've tried really hard.'
- Recognise for child's efforts at working and sustaining attention by using a star chart or similar.

SENISS

Service Operational Managers: Alison Woodburn and Katie Roscoe
Postal Address: Cunard Building, Water Street, Liverpool, L3 1AH
T: 0151 233 5988 E: seniss@liverpool.gov.uk