

Background

ADHD is a *neurodevelopmental* disorders that effects an individual's behaviour, commonly effecting their concentration levels and sometimes causing a person to portray impulsive behaviour and experiencing the feeling of restlessness. Centres for disease control and prevention (2021) state that ADHD is one of the most common *neurodevelopmental* disorders of childhood. It is usually first diagnosed in childhood and often lasts into adulthood.

Although research suggest that there is no evidence of anything specific that causes ADHD, it is understood to be combination of factors potentially responsible.

NHS (2021) state ADHD tends to run in families, and, in most cases, it is thought the genes you inherit from your parents are a significant factor in developing the condition.

However, research has identified several possible, differences in the brains of people with ADHD from those without the condition, although the exact significance of these is not clear. Certain people are also believed to be more at risk of ADHD, including people, who were born prematurely or with a low birthweight, with the condition epilepsy or with brain damage – which happened either in the womb or after a severe head injury later in life.

ADHD is believed to have been formally identified in 1902. British paediatrician Sir George Frederic

Still described “an abnormal defect of moral control in children.” He found that some affected children could not control their behaviour the way a typical child would, but they were still intelligent. However, Bhandari (2020) argues that in 1798 by a Scottish doctor, Sir Alexander Crichton who noticed some people were easily distracted and unable to focus on their activities the way others could. He reported that these symptoms began early in life, That's consistent with what we now call attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Boys are more than three times as likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than girls, but females are not necessarily less susceptible. According to the ADHD foundation (2018) Though both can have attentional problems, boys are often reported as exhibiting overactive features and as a result can be perceived as more difficult to manage. Though girls with ADHD can exhibit hyperactive and impulsive symptoms, a number with Inattentive symptoms are harder to detect in busy classrooms. As a result, their needs are often overlooked.

ADHD

Identifying and diagnosing ADHD

According to NHS (2021) Symptoms of ADHD tend to be noticed at an early age and may become more noticeable when a child's circumstances change, such as when they start school.

Most cases are diagnosed when children are 3 to 7 years old, but sometimes it's diagnosed later in childhood.

NHS (2021) states if you're worried about your child, it may help to speak to their teachers, before seeing a GP, to find out if they have any concerns about your child's behaviour. Although the GP cannot formally diagnose ADHD, but they can discuss your concerns with you and refer you for a specialist assessment, if necessary. If the GP thinks your child may have ADHD, they may first suggest a period of "watchful waiting" – lasting around 10 weeks – to see if your child's symptoms improve, stay the same or get worse. If your child's behaviour does not improve, and both you and the GP believe it's affecting their day-to-day life, the GP should refer you and your child to a specialist for a formal assessment. There's no simple test to determine whether you or your child has ADHD, but your specialist can make an accurate diagnosis after a detailed assessment. French, B. Et al (2018) suggest to receive an ADHD assessment and diagnosis if appropriate, children are referred to a psychiatrist or paediatrician through their GP, once a diagnosis has been made, GPs are then often involved in supporting the further management of children with ADHD and in liaising with parents and specialists. Diagnosing ADHD in children depends on a set of strict criteria. Children must have six or more symptoms of inattentiveness, or six or more symptoms of hyperactivity and impulsiveness.

Adler, A, et al. (2015) state that some of the symptoms must have been present before the age of seven and occur in at least two settings such as at home and or at school or work. Furthermore Adler, et al. (2015) also suggest that there must be clear evidence of impairment in developmentally appropriate social academic or occupational functioning.

Barriers

ADHD can affect a student's ability to focus, pay attention, listen, or put effort into schoolwork, which can potentially be detrimental to many aspects of their educational experience and life events. The ADHD foundation (2018) state that Students typically have a short attention span and so can find it hard to concentrate and learn, especially in group situations. This can impact on their education and many of these students underachieve at school. Furthermore, The CDC (2022) suggest that the symptoms of ADHD, such as inability to pay attention, difficulty sitting still, and difficulty controlling impulses, can make it hard for children with this diagnosis to do well in school.

Students with ADHD can sometimes become easily distracted by noises, passers-by, or their own thoughts thus often missing vital learning information. Sometimes children can find it difficult to stay focused on tasks that require sustained mental effort.

Additionally, unmanaged ADHD results in long-term impairments in many cognitive and behavioural domains.

Support methods and strategies

The struggles that child with ADHD face, such as difficulty paying attention, may become apparent once they start school. As such, parents and teachers will need to work together to help children learn to cope with their ADHD symptoms.

Identifying these difficulties and developing an effective plan is instrumental to ensuring a child is being supported as best as possible. Very well mind argues the importance of some suggested strategies.

- Maintaining a positive working relationship with families
- Establish Rules and Routines.
 - Limiting Distractions.
- Keep Expectations Consistent and realistic.
- According to NHS (2021) ADHD can be treated using medicine or therapy, but a combination of both is often best. However, NHS (2021) argues that These medicines are not a permanent cure for ADHD but may help someone with the condition concentrate better, be less impulsive, feel calmer, and learn and practise new skills. French, B. Et al (2018) state while there is no cure for ADHD, it can be managed with medication and non-pharmacological interventions.
- An additional strategy to support ADHD is therapy, some forms of these therapies are:

- ☐ Psychoeducation.
- ☐ Behaviour therapy.
- ☐ Cognitive behavioural therapy.

Conclusion

When people understand that ADHD is not an excuse but an explanation of why the student behaves in a different way, this provides an opportunity to develop new methods for improved learning and development. This co-operative effort between all teachers, parents and all concerned with the welfare of the student will be of great benefit

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