

ADHD in children



(Cardiff university, 2009)

Introduction.

NHS (2021) state that ADHD is a condition that will have an impact on children’s behaviour. However, Childline (No Date) highlights that people are too quick to judge and think that people who suffer with ADHD will always have behavioural problems when in fact overall it means that a child’s brain may work differently from others. An estimated 4% to 12% of children in the united kingdom have been diagnosed with ADHD and boys are 2 to 3 times more likely to suffer over girls (Hopkins Medicine,2023).



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Word Count:1075
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Identification and Diagnosis

ADHD is known as a mental disorder that can affect a child and an estimated 8.4% of children suffer from ADHD as stated by Spencer and Wilens (2010).

Banerjee (2013) states that early diagnosis of ADHD is crucial as if left undiagnosed this can lead to other forms of mental disorder which include depression, oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder and can also lead to addiction and substance abuse later in life.

ADHD symptoms start before age 12 and in some cases, symptoms are noticed in children as early as 3 years old (Mayo Clinic,2023).

Nhs foundation trust (2021) state that girls have a less likely chance to be diagnosed with ADHD than boys, this is because girls can be less hyperactive than boys and will present more inattentive symptoms and will often lead to them not being a problem. However Ginsberg et al (2014) suggest that if ADHD is misdiagnosed on girls this can have an impact on the rest of their lives and without the right treatment this can lead to an increase on how a child can develop their social and emotional skills and anti-social behaviour. Symptoms of ADHD can be mild, moderate or severe and can carry on later in life into adulthood (Clarke,2022).

ADHD causes symptoms related to hyperactivity, impulsivity or both combined these symptoms may

Include trouble focusing on a activity, squirming, fidgeting, struggling to keep still and being overly loud when taking part in an activities (Heathline,2022).

Although a child may show signs of having ADHD this may not mean that they have it as at a younger age a lot of children struggle to pay attention and will get easily distracted this means that a child will not receive an ADHD

diagnosis unless they have shown signs of several symptoms for at least 6 months or more even then some

health care professional will not diagnose a child with ADHD until they are in school (Athanasiadou,2020).

However Hamed, Kauer and Stevens (2015) highlights how the issue with late diagnosis in children can lead to other forms of mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression and increased risk of dropping out of education.

Barriers

There are a number of different treatments that can be provided when helping a child with ADHD. One of the main treatments offered is using medication to reduce the symptoms of ADHD and by prescribing medication this will allow a child to function a lot easier than without it (Corkham,2015).

However, (Boorady,2021) highlights how providing children with medication can lead to side effects that will effect on a child’s wellbeing as these symptoms can include:

- Delayed Growth
- Stomach aches
- Sleep problems
- Tics

However (ADHD online,2022) highlights how parents become reluctant to allow their children to take prescribed medication as there is a stigma around this. They become hesitant because they feel that their child may become dependant on prescribed medication leading to addiction later in life.

Coletti (2012) suggest that another fear a parent has when dealing with ADHD medication is that it can have an impact on their child’s education when in fact studies have shown that ADHD medication can help reduce symptoms that a child has and can minimize any affect these symptoms have on a child’s education.

People use social skills in their everyday lives to interact and build relationships. This is used by not only verbal communication but by body language also by using facial expressions, eye contact and body language as highlighted by (Gill and Hosker,2021).

Children who suffer with ADHD have trouble implementing these skills when building new relationships in fact (Hoza et al,2005) states that 56 percent of children with ADHD struggle to maintain friendships this is due to their brain impairment leading children with ADHD not being able to part take in activities without getting distracted or being able to control their emotions children with ADHD social interactions can be delayed up to 30% as highlighted by (Mikami,2013).

Strategies

There are several different interventions that can help support a child with ADHD as suggest by Connors (2008). Studies have shown that the most effective training strategies that can help not only a child with ADHD but support the parents who have to help that child everyday include

Parent Training

As children with ADHD are prone to outbursts, tantrums and ignoring instructions from their parents it is important for a child’s well being for their parents to have access to appropriate training that can support them in learning how to approach their child (Miller,2022).

Ellis (2022) highlights how parent training is the best for of therapy for young children with ADHD as they are at the age where it is hard for them to cope of change their behaviour without the support of an adult.

Evidence suggest that parent training will help and improve a child with ADHD behaviour and having group parent training session can help improve a child three years old or youngers emotional and social development as highlighted by Dennis et al (2009).

Conclusion

To conclude ADHD is one of the most common mental disorders affecting children. Symptoms of ADHD can include squirming, fidgeting, trouble focus and being overly loud. Children who show signs of ADHD may not always have this disorder as younger children can often show certain signs of ADHD and this is why children must show signs for at least 6 months before having a diagnosis. Once a diagnosis has been made there are different types of medication and therapies that can help reduce symptoms of ADHD but some medications can lead to side effects including tics, sleep problems, stomach aches and headaches and finally Parent training and Lego therapy are two common therapeutic interventions that can help a child with their social skills and building relationships and allow parents to find support in helping them deal with their child’s behaviour.

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