

I'M NOT NAUGHTY



Newsletter of the
Society for the Promotion of
ADHD Research and Knowledge

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SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF ADHD
RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE

Let's party but no shouting, please.



For the sake of new members or those who have forgotten, this is to remind you we are canceling our December meeting to “party” on November 20. It’s the end of the school year and I don’t think we need another talk.

Anyway, we deserve a break. So bring the whole family, not just your ADHD kids, especially your husbands. Before I say anything else, I think I better start by saying the party is a picnic. (Don’t want anyone turning up in her evening dress.) We are gathering from 2 to 6 pm at the adventure playground next to McDonald’s in West Coast Park. May be best to have lunch before coming but bring your own basket for later.

How can we make it special? I thought perhaps we can have no rules, save one, at the picnic – “No Shouting”. Something Emil, Gina’s son, once said has stayed in mind ever since. When asked what was the one thing ADHD kids hated most, he said it was shouting. Parents shout at them, teachers shout at them. So maybe, just for a day, can we not shout? I know it’s hard but let’s give it a try. Maybe the way to do it is to leave them alone. (There are student supervisors around.) We need to let go a little.

The picnic is as good as any time to make a start. While they play, we can relax, forget about school, homework and complaints, even if it is only for four hours. And share stories of how heavenly our children are.

All it takes is a little understanding.

Bella Chin, President



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Nobody Can Fail You, Only Yourself: Seven True Stories

The Four Tops

In 1962, four nervous young musicians played their first record audition for the executives of the Decca recording Company. The executives were not impressed. While turning down this group of musicians, one executive said, "We don't like their sound. Groups of guitars are on the way out." The group was called The Beatles.

Elvis the ex-Truck Driver

In 1954, Jimmy Denny, manager of the Grand Ole Opry, fired a singer after one performance. He told him, "You ain't goin' nowhere...son. You ought to go back to drivin' a truck." He went on to become the most popular singer in America. His named? Elvis Presley.

Making Light Work

When Thomas Edison invented the light bulb, he tried over 2000 experiments before he got it to work. A young reporter asked him how it felt to fail so many times. He said, "I never failed once. I invented the light bulb. It just happened to be a 2000-step process."

'Roe Model

In 1944, Emmeline Snively, director of the Blu Book Modelling Agency, told modelling hopeful Norma Jean Baker, "You'd better learn secretarial work or else get married." She went on and became Marilyn Monroe.

Call Him Amazing

When Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876, it did not ring off the hook with calls from potential backers. After making a demonstration call, President Rutherford Hayes said, "That's an amazing invention, but who would ever want to use one of them?"

Copy This Inventor

In the 1940s, another young inventor named Chester Carlson took his idea to 20 corporations, including some of the biggest in the country. They all turned him down. In 1947 – after seven long years of rejections – he finally got a tiny company in Rochester, New York, the Haloid company, to purchase the rights to his invention an electrostatic paper-copying process. Haloid became Xerox Corporation we know today.

Running On and On

Wilma Rudolph was the 20th of 22 children. She was born prematurely and her survival was doubtful. When she was 4 years old, she contacted double pneumonia and scarlet fever, which left her with a paralysed left leg. At age 9, she removed the metal leg brace she had been dependent on and began to walk without it. By 13 she had developed a rhythmic walk, which doctors said was a miracle. That same year she decided to become a runner.

She entered a race and came in last. For the next few years every race she entered, she came in last. Everyone told her to quit, but she kept on running. One day she actually won a race. And then, another. From then on she won every race she entered. Eventually this little girl, who was told she would never walk again, went on to win three Olympic gold medals.

The Moral

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved. You gain strength, experience and confidence by every experience where you really stop to look fear in the face. And remember, the finest steel gets bent through the hottest furnace.

Nobody can fail you, only yourself.

Hi! My name is C

And I am a lecturer at a local polytechnic. I have 3 degrees and many more successes than I do failures.

It is important to believe in your son, yourself, and all of your wonderful skills and abilities. One of the most important things for parents, children, and teachers to know is that many of the struggles and failures of ADD/ADHD children, and others, occur because the way in which they learn is incompatible with the way they're being taught.

Schools are filled with students who, as a result of their educational experience, convince themselves that they are "losers" or just "dumb". It's needless.

My own story is filled with challenges I've faced because the way my brain is "wired" and the way others brains are "wired" are different. Neither one is better than or worse than the other. It's just different.

What is important is for your child, yourself, and your child's teachers to take time and deliberate effort to become aware of how your child's mind is "wired". I also know it's painful for all (student, parent and teacher) to understand and overcome this challenge. Many times everyone is simply unaware of the fact that the demands and expectations created by traditional teaching styles and classrooms are not in sync with the "wiring" of a student's brain.

Telling a student "you can do better if you would just try harder" doesn't help much, especially if he is doing or has done his best. Punishing a student for an inability to complete a task in a particular way is also ineffective and often inappropriate. Encouraging feelings of humiliation and guilt due to circumstances not in your child's control is hurtful and unnecessary.

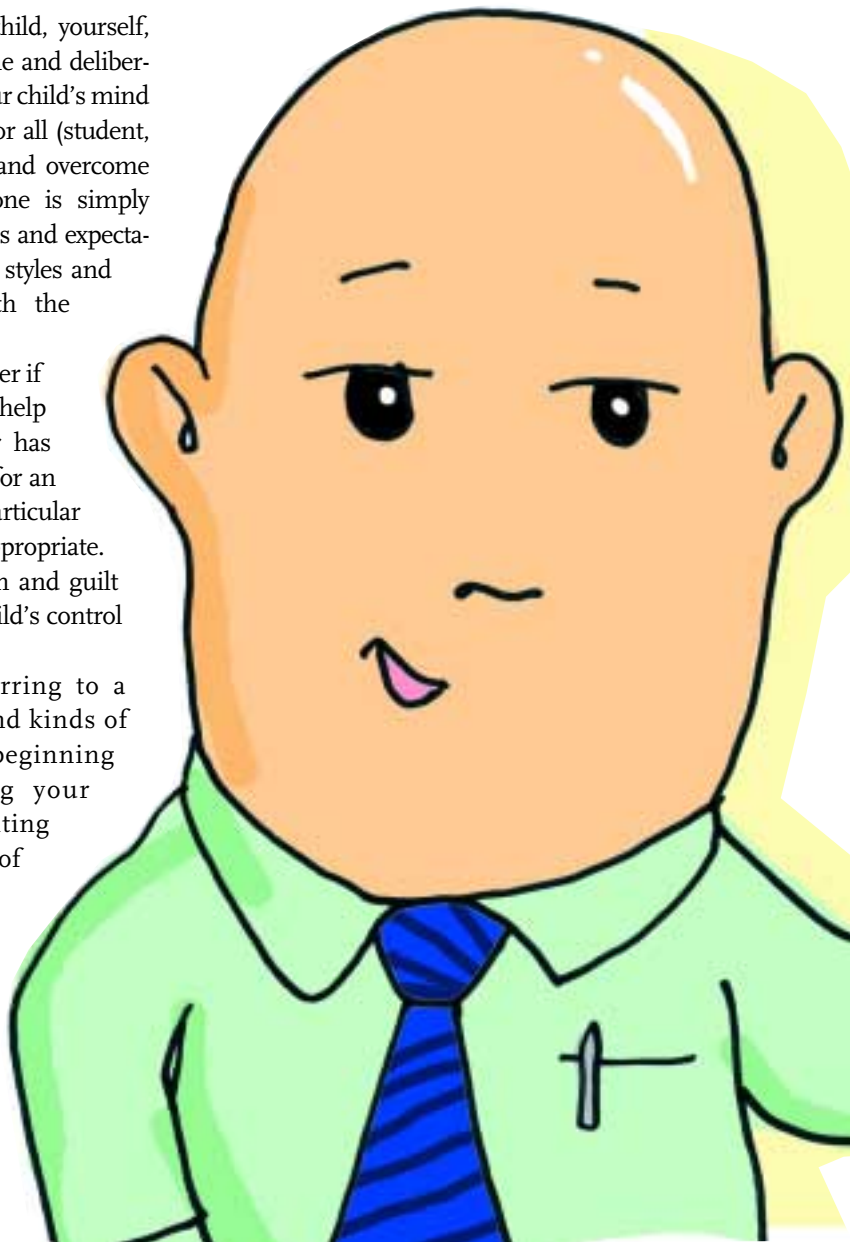
ADD/ADHD are terms referring to a very broad range of behaviors and kinds of minds. Diagnosis is helpful in beginning the journey to understanding your child but is inadequate in pointing more directly to specific areas of learning breakdowns.

Knowing I am ADD does not tell me, or others, what is going on in my mind when I am trying to understand a

mathematics problem or follow detailed instructions. Learning how to identify exactly where a learning breakdown is occurring when a student is falling behind begins with the teacher, parents, clinicians and the student himself working together.

We often leave children out of this extremely important process without acknowledging a child's wisdom and knowing. Once areas of weaknesses are identified work can begin on the development of a detailed learning plan.

Also, pay attention to and identify your child's strengths. Encourage your child and his teachers to focus on areas of strength as well as weaknesses.



Garth. I have ADD.

And remember, KIDS CHANGE OVER TIME. Learning demands and social demands change as well as your child's brain.

It is quite possible for your child to experience learning difficulties at one point in his education and experience learning success at another. All of us can point to someone who showed little signs of success at an early age only to have become a highly successful adult. And, vice-versa, we can all remember a student who was voted "most likely to succeed" and didn't.

Education is a multi-faceted and complex process. It is important for parents, teachers, and students to work together towards recognizing which learning situations are most difficult, when they occur, and reasons for them.

Is there a breakdown in language comprehension, memory, attention, fine motor skills, organizing information, social skills?

Imagine a child with wonderful organizational skills and creative abilities who has very poor handwriting skills. What happens when he is asked to draft an essay or write a paragraph or even a sentence? Most likely, frustration and disappointment for both student and teacher. Now, imagine giving the same assignment to a child with excellent writing skills and poor information organizing skills. Obviously, the approach to overcoming each child's challenges would be different.

Understanding as precisely as possible what is happening in the child's learning mind is vitally important.

In the first case the teacher and child would be better off with an approach that emphasizes

improving handwriting skills. Perhaps using a computer to create drafts. In the second case the teacher and child would experience a lot of frustration if the strategy to learning was kept the same. A better approach would be to help break the task into smaller, more specific steps or follow a checklist (tick off the steps as they finish).

There are all kinds of minds and using one approach to teach all

of them is foolish. ADD/ADHD is not a disease requiring a cure. It is an opportunity for all of us to better our understanding of how minds work and improve our strategies for teaching and learning.

Yes, students have a responsibility to learn. Yes, teachers have a responsibility to teach. To do this best requires students, teachers, and parents to deliberately understand how people learn (similarities and differences) and as many strategies for teaching as possible.

Create a log of when, where, and under what circumstances your child has the most difficulty. Ask the teacher to help. Ask your child what is happening (gently) and ask the teacher what is happening. When language turns to "blaming" either the child, teacher, or parent, stop...and take time to understand the differences and uncover approaches that work better.

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Create a log of when, where, and under what circumstances your child has the most difficulty. Ask the teacher to help. Ask your child what is happening (gently) and ask the teacher what is happening.

Compare all of the information you gather and look for "hot spots", areas that repeat themselves or stand out. Do research on learning styles, teaching approaches, learning challenges and strategies for both the learner and the teacher.

When language turns to "blaming" either the child, teacher, or parent, stop...and take time to understand the differences and uncover approaches that work better.



HELPING INFLEXIBLE & EASILY FRUSTRATED CHILDREN

Children with learning challenges are often frustrated by the demands made on them by school and family. They may be inflexible and have temper outbursts with verbal and physical aggression when they are unable to cope with such demands. In turn, interactions and relationships between child and family are impacted negatively.



On Oct 2, Dr Alefiya M. Nomanbhoy spoke on the root causes for such behaviors as well as strategies to improve these children's capacity for flexibility, frustration tolerance and self-regulation.

Children misbehave when they:

Don't feel well

When children don't get sufficient sleep, nutritious food, exercise and fresh air, they can feel tired, irritable, cranky, fussy, cross and/or sick. These make it difficult for them to manage their feelings and cope with the demands of their daily life.

Feel rejected

Children who feel unloved and unwanted may become resentful, moody and ill-behaved. Children need and want to be accepted.

Lack knowledge and experience on correct behaviour

Children are not little adults; they need time to learn and grow.

Are upset or feel insecure

Children need attention and the security it provides. Children need security and are upset by changes.

Are discouraged

Children feel discouraged if they don't hear praise for the good and positive things they accomplish. They may misbehave to get the needed attention and closeness from their parents. Give children sincere praise, compliments and encouragement.

Feel unloved

Children want to please those who love them. Without a loving relationship, children have no reason to behave in acceptable ways, except to avoid punishment. Love needs to be shown and demonstrated.

Lack confidence

Feelings of inadequacy may cause children to brag, boast or fight, or they may be unwilling to try new things and withdraw. "Put downs" make children feel worthless or scared or failure; encouraging words help children feel confident and build self-respect.

Dr Nomanbhoy highlighted the use of the Antecedent – Behaviour – Consequence technique to reduce undesirable behaviour. She also highlighted the importance of choosing the "right battle" to fight on as it is very difficult to correct many misbehaviours at the same time.

Inappropriate behaviour can be classified into the following categories:

1. Non-negotiable (e.g., safety related issues)
2. Negotiate on a possible solution
3. Drop for the time being (until the more important misbehaviours are better managed)

Often children's misbehaviour can be better managed by:

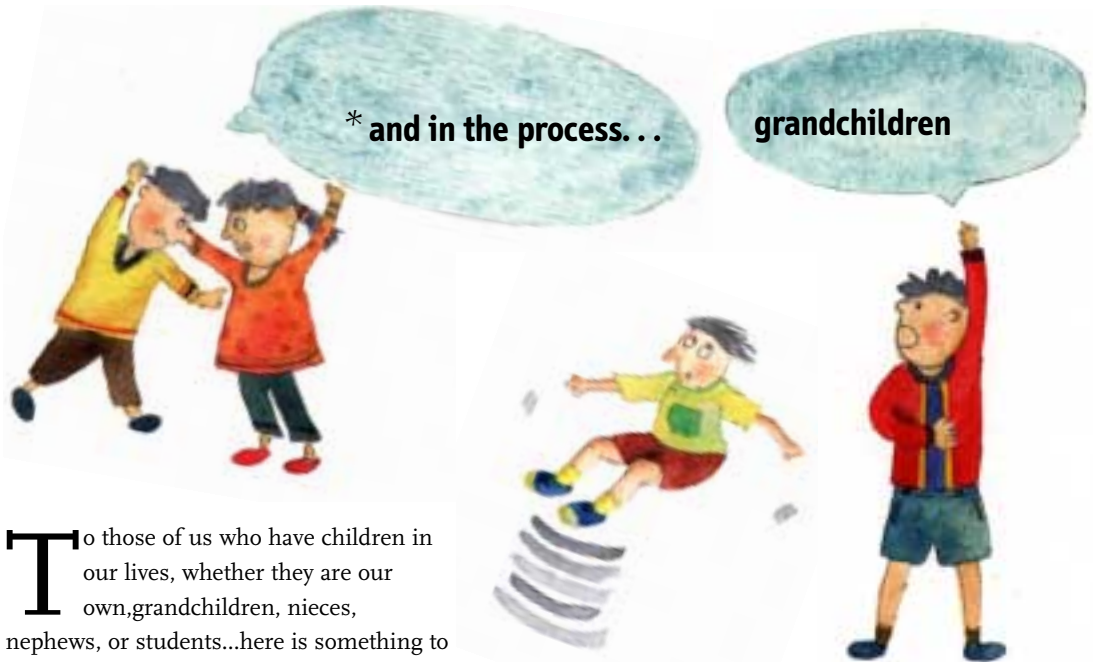
1. Pre-empting the misbehaviour (e.g., state expected behaviour just before a particular event)
2. Prioritising the misbehaviours to work on
3. Revising our expectations (e.g., comparing improvements against the child's current expected behaviour/performance instead of comparing with other children's behaviour/performance)

It was also highlighted that the following techniques are arranged in descending order of effectiveness in managing misbehaviour:

1. Reasoning with the child
2. Providing a role model
3. Reinforcing and acknowledging positive behaviour
4. Use of "contract" on appropriate behaviour
5. Extinction of bad behaviour
6. Punishment

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Why God created children*



To those of us who have children in our lives, whether they are our own, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, or students...here is something to make you chuckle. Whenever your children are out of control, you can take comfort from the thought that even God's omnipotence did not extend to His own children.

After creating Heaven and Earth, God created Adam and Eve. And the first thing he said was "DON'T!"

"Don't what?" Adam asked.

"Don't eat the forbidden fruit," God said.

"Forbidden fruit? We have forbidden fruit? Hey Eve..we have forbidden fruit!"

"No way!"

"Yes way!"

"Do NOT eat the fruit!" said God.

"Why?"

"Because I am your Father and I said so!" God replied, wondering why He hadn't stopped creation after making the elephants.

A few minutes later, God saw His children having an apple break and He was ticked! "Didn't I tell you not to eat the fruit?" God asked.

"Uh huh," Adam replied.

"Then why did you?" said the Father.

"I don't know," said Eve.

"She started it!" Adam said.

"Did not!"

"Did too!"

"DID NOT!"

Having had it with the two of them, God's punishment was that Adam and Eve should have children of their own. Thus the pattern was set and it has never changed.

But there is reassurance in this story. If you have

persistently and lovingly tried to give children wisdom and they haven't taken it, don't be hard on yourself. If God had trouble raising children, what makes you think it would be a piece of cake for you?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT!

1. You spend the first two years of their lives teaching them to walk and talk. Then you spend the next sixteen telling them to sit down and shut up.
2. Grandchildren are God's reward for not killing your own children.
3. Mothers of teens now know why some animals eat their young.
4. Children seldom misquote you. In fact, they usually repeat word for word what you shouldn't have said.
5. The main purpose of holding children's parties is to remind yourself that there are children more awful than your own.
6. We childproofed our homes, but they are still getting in.

ADVICE FOR THE DAY

Be nice to your kids. They will choose your nursing home one day.

AND FINALLY

If you have a lot of tension and you get a headache, do what it says on the aspirin bottle:

"TAKE TWO ASPIRINS" and "KEEP AWAY FROM CHILDREN"!!!

