

Tips for Involved Parents from Gwinnett County Public Schools

Be There is a national movement that inspires parents to become more involved in their children's education. Teachable moments are everywhere. Be your child's favorite teacher. Connect in meaningful ways and your simple actions will reap immense rewards at home, play, and school!

Support at home for your child with ADHD/ADD

Children (and adults!) with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and ADD tend to have difficulties with organization, planning, and managing their time and materials. These difficulties can make transitioning from the leisure of time away from school (whether for the weekend or an extended break) more challenging. Here are some simple strategies that can help your student become better prepared to learn:

Children with hyperactivity scored higher on tests

Serve a high-protein breakfast

of attention after eating a high-protein breakfast rather than a high-carbohydrate breakfast. Think eggs (even hard-boiled), cheese, lean meat, nuts and nut butters, orange juice, plain yogurt with fruit, and protein shakes. Steer away from pre-packaged breakfast foods and sugary cereal. High-protein after-

effective for adults as well. (ADD and ADHD are hereditary in many cases.)
So, if you're having a hard time getting through the day, it might be time to switch out that sweet cereal or sugar-laden breakfast drink for some Greek yogurt or a slice of peanut butter toast!

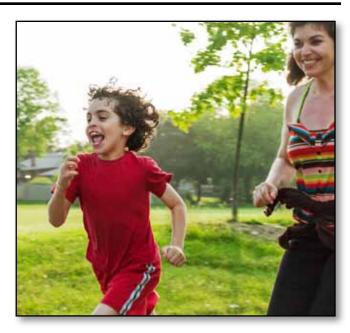
Encourage exercise before school

the game for homework.

school snacks also will help

your child keep her head in

If a child can engage in a few minutes of aerobic activity before school it may help improve his attention for a few hours. Again, some after-school



exercise will help your child clear the cobwebs and come back to homework with more attention.

Organize for success

Help your student set up an organization system that will work for her. While some students may be able to juggle a multi-folder organizational system, if your student's papers keep getting lost, try switching her to a one-folder system or a binder with a folder for each subject inside. Some kids do well with three folders that are more taskbased— for example, Work to Do Tonight, Stuff for Parents, Papers to Return to School. Work together to check folders before bedtime to make sure everything is where it's expected to be for the next day. You may find that a color-coordinated system— green for science, blue for math, and so on— works best for your child. Having a visual cue may make it easier for your student to locate and keep together important school papers. Be sure your child's teacher knows what system seems to work best so it can be reinforced at school.

Continued

Support for your child with ADHD/ADD (Continued)



Share strategies that work with your child's teacher and ask what strategies are working at school

Make sure the school is aware if your child has been diagnosed with ADHD/ADD. (Chances are good that your child's teacher is already aware but it's good that everyone be on the same page.) If you haven't already had a conference, ask to talk to your child's teacher about any concerns. Let the teaching team know what seems to be working at home and ask for any strategies that could help. Ask that your child be seated away from potential distractions, such as the window or another talkative student. For hyperactive children, providing frequent opportunities for movement can help improve concentration. If disruptive classroom behavior is an issue, ask if the teacher can accommodate the occasional break— whether it's delivering a note to a neighboring classroom, going for a sip of water, or checking in with the teacher at her desk between (or even during) activities. When your child begins to get off-task, a simple verbal reminder or discreet tap on his desk can often help re-focus a student's attention. Ask for help in sticking with the organizational system that works best for your child.

Offer 'bite-sized' instructions

You've asked a "hundred" times for your child to take out the trash, pick up his room, walk the dog, and finish his homework, but... If you are asking your child to do more than one task or need responses to multiple questions, discuss each separately. You may find that you have the most success when your student can focus on and complete one task before getting instructions for the next task. Break information down into separate steps if needed.

Whenever possible, make eye contact with your child when giving instructions. Consider posting "to do" lists on a dry-erase board in a handy spot and ask your child to erase or cross out the task as he completes the work. This also can be an effective strategy at school, with written instructions on the board or on a notecard taped to the desk serving as a "double-check" if your student gets distracted from the task at hand.

Be consistent with both rewards and consequences

House rules should be on display in a place where they are easily seen. Consistently reward positive behavior and work completion. A simple smile or compliment can be reward enough in many cases. A child with significant attention problems/hyperactivity may need a sticker chart or token system that provides frequent positive reinforcement in order to stay on track. Rewards may need to be changed frequently to keep them from losing their effectiveness. To be effective, consequences need to be immediate and consistent. Work with the team at school to ensure that your child knows and understands classroom rules and is getting positive reinforcement and appropriate consequences to stay focused.

Together, you and your child's teacher can support the development of strategies that will help your child stay focused, get organized, and be successful in the classroom.



Together, we will be there for our students— Gwinnett County Public Schools and YOU!

Make the ordinary extraordinary!