

ADHD



Signs of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children can be similar to those of regular behavior in young kids. You might notice they're having trouble paying attention, or they might be hyperactive or do things you can't predict, without thinking first. It's also possible they might have all these behaviors or a combination of a couple of them.

ADHD symptoms in kids

ADHD symptoms usually show up when children are young—around school age. But you might notice them much earlier. Some kids have been diagnosed with ADHD as toddlers, by age 2 or 3.

You may notice your child squirming or fidgeting a lot, or for ADHD in toddlers, you may notice them not focusing when you or their teacher is talking to them. While a lot of these signs are common in younger children, if you see them in your kid, it's a good idea to check with Dr Taljaard to see whether they might be ADHD symptoms.

Research shows that 3-year-olds who show symptoms of ADHD are likely to have it when they're 13. Research also shows that teenagers who have it often don't outgrow it by the time they're young adults.

Children with ADHD can have trouble focusing on things like reading. They also may seem to be in constant motion and do things without thinking.

Symptoms can vary from child to child. In general, the kinds of children's ADHD symptoms include:

Inattention

You might not notice inattention—once called ADD (attention-deficit disorder)—until your child starts to go to school. They might put things off, not finish homework or chores, or go from one half-done task to another.

They might also:

- Be disorganised
- Lack focus
- Have a hard time paying attention to details
- Make a lot of careless mistakes
- Do messy work
- Have trouble staying on topic while talking
- Not listen to others
- Ignore social rules
- Forget about everyday activities (for example, missing classes or lessons or forgetting to bring lunch)
- Get easily distracted by little noises or things other people ignore
- Have a hard time getting along with others because they can't read people's feelings and moods
- Daydream a lot
- Be too wrapped up in their own thoughts to hear you



Hyperactivity

You might be able to notice hyperactivity in preschoolers. Sometimes, as kids get older, symptoms can get better.

Kids with hyperactivity may:

- Fidget and squirm when seated
- Get up often to walk or run around
- Run or climb a lot at the wrong time (In teens, this may seem like restlessness.)
- Have trouble playing quietly or doing quiet hobbies
- Be always "on the go"
- Talk too much

Toddlers and preschoolers with ADHD may seem to be constantly in motion—jumping on furniture and having trouble taking part in group activities that call for them to sit still. For instance, they may have a hard time listening to a story. School-age children can have similar habits, but you may notice them less often.

Hyperactivity in teens may make them appear restless or uneasy. They may also have a hard time doing quiet activities.

Impulsivity

You may notice your child is impatient and finds it hard to wait to talk or do something. That's not out of the ordinary for kids, but in children with ADHD, things like this happen a lot—at home and school or when they're with friends.

They also might:

- Blur out answers before someone finishes asking a question
- Have a hard time waiting their turn
- Interrupt others a lot
(This can happen so much that it can cause problems with other kids. Friends might get mad at them or get their feelings hurt because they may act without thinking.)
- Start conversations at inappropriate times

Impulsivity can lead to accidents, like knocking things over or banging into people. Kids may also do risky things without stopping to think about what might happen. For instance, they may climb and put themselves in danger. Acting first without thinking may also mess with the child's ability to behave like other children who are the same age or developmental level.

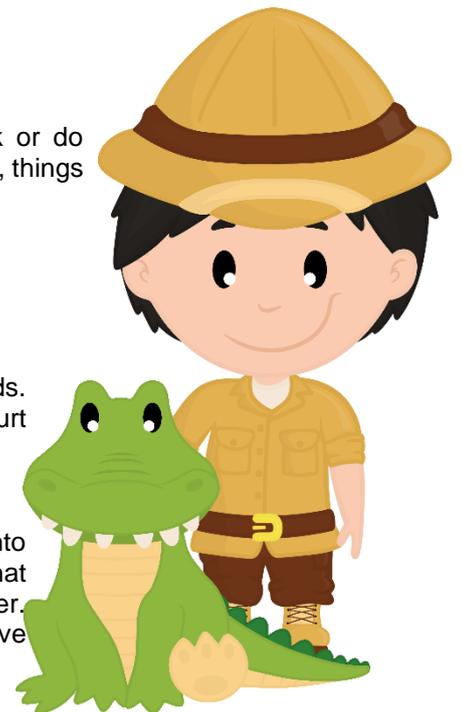
Combined ADHD

This type of ADHD usually happens when your child shows symptoms of being inattentive plus hyperactive and impulsive. In fact, it is the most common type because children often have different symptoms from the three groups.

ADHD Behavior vs. Neurotypical Behavior

Neurotypical means that a child doesn't have any brain differences that might lead to ADHD (or other neurological disorders).

In the brain of someone with ADHD, the size and functions of certain parts of the brain might be different from those of a neurotypical brain. And the chemical signals that the brain sends might also be different. Because of these differences, children with ADHD might find it harder to manage their emotions, focus, plan, and stay organized. The part of the brain that puts you in "daydream" mode—and not focused—is active more often in a child with ADHD. That means your kid may have trouble doing repeated tasks.



When to Talk to Dr Taljaard



It's hard to know whether the things you notice that could be signs of ADHD are really something else. That's especially true for very young kids. But if you notice that problems with paying attention, hyperactivity, or acting without thinking are starting to interfere with your child's daily life, it's good to talk with Dr Taljaard.

You can also complete the [ADHD Symptoms Test for Kids](#) at the end of this document as a guideline. The school's feedback will also be helpful to you in this regard.

Your local specialist in the treatment of ADHD

As a paediatrician, Dr Taljaard has a special interest in children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). He has more than 22 years of experience in this field and you need not look any further for expert advice.

If you think your kid may be showing childhood ADHD symptoms, it's important to speak with Dr Taljaard right away. Dr Taljaard would prefer if both parents and of course the child could be present during the consultation.

Your appointment will **only** be confirmed once the following documents were received at the rooms to allow Dr Taljaard time to prepare for your consultation:

- School report
- Report from the teacher
- Reports from a psychologist, occupational therapist and/or a speech therapist

Getting Diagnosed

There's no single test for ADHD. Dr Taljaard will want to know what your child's symptoms are and when they started.

Dr Taljaard might see these ADHD symptoms as possible language delays, a learning disability, or a health issue. He may suggest you take your child for therapy to a speech therapist/, audiologist or an occupational therapist to see whether there's another reason for the behavior you're seeing. He may want to do some tests to rule out other health problems. He might also want to send your child to a children's mental health specialist, like a child psychologist or psychiatrist, for a more detailed checkup. Dr Taljaard may ask to speak to other adults in your child's life, like coaches or teachers.

Dr Taljaard will check for behaviors that:

- Are not usual for your child's age
- Make it hard for them to function at home or in social environments, like school
- They also have to consistently show at least six of the symptoms of ADHD for at least 6 months and in at least two settings, such as at home, school, or public places

If your child meets the standards for ADHD, only then they will be diagnosed.

If an ADHD diagnosis is confirmed and treatment started it is of utmost importance that parents adhere to the treatment plan and keep Dr Taljaard updated about the child's progress. Follow up visits every six months is also required to update the medication according to your child's needs. Dr Taljaard considers this a long-term partnership between himself, the parent and the child.

Please advise the receptionist that you are bringing your child for an ADHD evaluation when you make the appointment, as a longer time slot needs to be set aside.



Long-Term Outlook

Overall, hyperactivity can become less serious once your child gets older. But inattention can last into adulthood.

Treatment can help. And many children with ADHD do improve at some point. About 20%-30% have learning problems that ADHD treatment may not help, though.

A child with hyperactive behavior may get symptoms of other disruptive disorders, like oppositional defiant disorder. These children are more at risk to drop out of school. If you're concerned, talk to Dr Taljaard about your treatment options. Medications, behavioral therapy, and other treatments can help.

As they grow older, some teens who've had the disorder since childhood may have periods of anxiety or depression. When there are more demands at school or home, ADHD symptoms may get worse. Dr Taljaard will continue to see your child during his/her teenage years and is well prepared for this phase.

Takeaways

ADHD symptoms can affect each child differently, depending on a number of things not limited to but including age, gender, and type of ADHD, as well as the parent and child's commitment to therapy and treatment.

Symptoms of ADHD—not paying attention, being in constant motion, and doing things before thinking—are easy to confuse with how young children often behave. Some kids will outgrow their ADHD, but for others, their ADHD symptoms can last into young adulthood and even beyond.



ADHD Symptom FAQs

- When do the first signs of ADHD show up? ADHD can come on as early as 2 or 3 years. But more commonly, you may notice the symptoms when your child is of school age. Hyperactivity is often the first sign in kids with that type of the condition. But it's not uncommon to see inattention or impulsivity first, especially if your child has the combined ADHD type.
- Can people with ADHD have a happy, healthy life? Long-term treatment with behavioral therapy and medications can help kids with ADHD have a good quality of life. If it's left untreated, ADHD can cause problems later, including bad grades and not getting along with others. ADHD can reach into adulthood and cause problems with keeping a job or even run-ins with authorities.
- What's the biggest issue with ADHD? Some learning disorders and mental health issues may sometimes appear with ADHD. But the main symptoms of the condition—acting without thinking and not paying attention—could cause behavior that puts your child's health at risk. Some of the biggest concerns are getting hurt because they don't think about the results of their actions or having problems because they forget healthy habits. Kids with ADHD are also at a risk of being overweight or having obesity.

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE...

ALLOW DOC TALJAARD TO HELP YOU NAVIGATE YOUR JOURNEY.
013-7457544/5 drtaljaard@wol.co.za <https://www.pediatrician-nelspruit.co.za/>



If you suspect that your child has symptoms of hyperactive, impulsive, or inattentive ADHD, take this ADHD test for kids. This questionnaire is designed to determine whether your child demonstrates symptoms similar to those of attention deficit disorder (ADHD). If you answer "often" or "very often" to a significant number of these questions, share the results with Dr Taljaard when requesting a thorough evaluation. **REMEMBER:** An accurate diagnosis can only be made through clinical evaluation. Only after your child's consultation with him, will he be able to tell for sure whether symptoms of distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity are severe and persistent enough to suggest a positive diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

ADHD Symptoms Test for Kids

Based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), published by the American Psychiatric Association.

My child has difficulty waiting patiently to take turns, and butts ahead in lines or grabs toys from playmates.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child is disorganized and, even with my help, can't seem to learn how to become organized.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child makes careless mistakes.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child talks a lot, even when she/he has nothing much to say.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child has problems remaining seated even when she/he is supposed to.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Even the smallest distractions can throw my child off task.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never



My child interferes in the classroom because she/he has difficulty engaging in quiet activities without disturbing others.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child tries to avoid activities that require sustained concentration and a lot of mental effort

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Even when spoken to directly, my child seems to not be paying attention.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child forgets to do things, even when constantly reminded.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child acts as if she/he is driven by a motor.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

It's very difficult for my child to stay focused on homework or other tasks.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child loses things like homework and personal belongings.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child interrupts other peoples' activities and conversations.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never



My child fails to complete an activity before moving to the next activity.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

My child constantly seems to be fidgeting.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

In class or at home, my child blurts out answers to questions before they are fully asked.

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

THIS IS A LONG-TERM
COMMITMENT.
THERE IS HOPE – THERE IS HELP.

<https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-symptoms-test-children/>



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