



## Classroom Strategies for ADHD Students

1. Extra time. Give extra time for certain tasks. ADD students may work more slowly. Don't penalize for needed extra time.
2. Desk placement. Place it in location away from distractions. Provide alternative work location for sustained attention.
3. Avoid distractors. Try to keep the child's desk away from auditory and visual distractors, such as pencil sharpeners, windows, high traffic areas, and other ADD kids!
4. Desk top organization. Help the student organize his activities. When he is working, try to see that only the necessary materials needed are out on his desk. May need visual reminders.
5. Ensuring attention. Establish eye contact when giving instructions. Directions and other comments should be crisp, to the point, and never wordy. Give directions auditorily and visually and repeat them. Have the child repeat directions back.
6. Structure. ADD children do not handle change well. Keep consistent rules, subjects at the same time, etc. They go from structured to unstructured activities well, but not the reverse.
7. Division of work. Divide the student's work into little pieces. Fold a work sheet in half; keep out only those papers that need to be worked on at the time; allow brief breaks between jobs.
8. Rewards. They respond well to positive rewards, but they need to continue to receive them to be successful.
9. Secret signals. Arrange to use a nonverbal signal that doesn't embarrass the student and is known to only the two of you when he is off task.
10. Assignment sheets or notebooks. If daily assignment sheets aren't provided, monitor that student has correctly copied assignments. There should be a consequence at home (no TV for a night) if the sheet is not taken home.
11. Daily sheet. Send home daily a sheet, which describes behavior and academic performance in each subject for that day on a five-point scale. The student has a short five-minute meeting with his parents - no nagging, lecturing, or arguing - in which the items are discussed with a positive, negative, positive comment.



12. Legitimate movement. Allow the student to move around at appropriate times during the day, by taking note to office, going to the restroom or erasing the board to work off energy.
13. Capitalize on strengths. Recognize the student for some special positive qualities.
14. Discipline. Must be crisp, not wordy, and have clear rules and consequences. It should be applied without lecturing, nagging, or screaming. Allow him to maintain his self-esteem.
15. Alternative methods. Allow alternative methods for the student to prove that he has mastered information and skills, such as through the use of tape recorders, computers, and calculators.
16. It is also advisable to give specific directions for the use and placement of the child's hands when they are temporarily idle.
17. It is important not to have unnecessary materials within the reach of the child or even within his visual field. Closed cupboards for storing material not in use are essential for controlling this kind of behavior.
18. The child should be given tasks, such as passing out papers, sharpening pencils etc., which permit him to be out of his seat more often than usual. Running errands for the teacher may also provide a useful reinforcement for the child for finishing assignments and seatwork.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADHD CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

1. Ask the child what will help. These kids are often very intuitive. They can tell you how they can learn best if you ask them. They are often too embarrassed to volunteer the information because it can be rather eccentric. But try to sit down with the child individually and ask how he or she learns best.
2. Remember that ADD kids need structure. They need their environment to structure externally what they can't structure internally on their own. Make lists. Children with ADD benefit greatly from having a table or list to refer back to when they get lost in what they're doing. They need reminders. They need previews. They need repetition. They need direction. They need limits. They need structure.
3. *Remember the emotional part of learning.* These children need special help in finding enjoyment in the classroom, mastery instead of failure and frustration, excitement instead of boredom or fear. It is essential to pay attention to the emotions involved in the learning process.
4. Post rules. Have them written down in full view. The children will be reassured by knowing what is expected of them.



5. Repeat directions. Write down directions. Speak directions. Repeat directions. People with ADD need to hear things more than once.
6. Make frequent eye contact. You can “bring back” an ADD child with eye contact. Do it often. A glance can retrieve a child from a daydream or give permission to ask a question of just silent reassurance.
7. Seat the ADD child near your desk or wherever you are most of the time. This helps stave off the drifting away that so bedevils these children.
8. Have as predictable a schedule as possible. Post it on the blackboard of the child’s desk. Refer to it often. If you are going to vary it, as most interesting teachers do, give lots of warning and preparation.
9. Allow for escape valve outlets such as leaving class for a moment. If this can be built into the rules of the classroom, it will allow the child to leave the room rather than “lose it”, and in so doing begin to learn important tools of self-observation and self-modulation.
10. Go for quality rather than quantity of homework.
11. Monitor progress often. Children with ADD benefit greatly from frequent feedback.
12. Break down large tasks into small tasks.
13. In the classroom, in order to address the child’s attentional difficulties, and in order to maximize learning and minimize distractions, it is suggested that he:
  - a) Consistently be seated in a quiet area, near the teacher and/or chalkboard as well as away from windows and doors
  - b) Receive brief, one or two step instructions
  - c) Have lessons simplified and shortened into smaller segments
  - d) Be paired with a positive peer role-model/buddy during classroom instructions
  - e) Be cued to stay on task via a private signal agreed upon by his teacher and discussed with the child
  - f) Given occasional “activity breaks”, e.g. sharpening his pencil, when assignments are completed
  - g) Reinforcement/praise for these behaviors
14. When your child has difficulty completing assignments:
  - a) Help him break down the steps necessary to complete the assignments and perhaps write out the steps
  - b) Reduce the assignment into manageable portions



15. When your child has difficulty with any task that requires memory:
  - a) Combine seeing/saying/writing/and doing. Student may need to subvocalize to remember
  - b) Teach memory techniques as a study strategy, such as mnemonics, visualization, oral rehearsal, and numerous repetitions
  
16. When your child has difficulty following through on instructions from others:
  - a) Gain child's attention and eye contact before giving directions
  - b) Give one direction at a time
  - c) Refer to a sequence of expectations or directions that are placed on charts around the room
  
17. When the student becomes too dependent, asking questions too frequently, respond by asking them a question. Even if the student is able to cite a partly right answer, they should be reinforced.