

EVIDENCE-BASED ADHD EDUCATION

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD'S PROVIDER ABOUT ADHD

A simple guide to explaining what's actually happening in
your child's daily life



NAOMI MYRICK, PMHNP
Cardinal Academy



YOU'RE NOT
OVERREACTING — YOU'RE
TRYING TO MAKE SENSE
OF WHAT YOU'RE SEEING.

Most parents walk into an appointment and say things like:

"They don't listen"

"They can't focus"

"They're all over the place"

And while those are real experiences...

they're often not specific enough for a provider to fully understand what's going on.



ADHD IS NOT DIAGNOSED BASED ON SYMPTOMS ALONE.

*It's diagnosed based on how those symptoms are affecting
your child's daily life.*

*This is called **functional impairment** —
and it's one of the most important parts of an evaluation.*

This guide will help you explain that clearly —
so you feel confident walking into your child's
assessment.

WHAT YOUR CHILD'S PROVIDER NEEDS TO HEAR

PARENTS OFTEN SAY:

“THEY DON'T
LISTEN”

“THEY CAN'T
FOCUS”

“THEY'RE
ALWAYS
OVERWHELMED”

WHAT YOU PROVIDER NEEDS TO HEAR

→ They need repeated instructions and still struggle to follow through

→ They start tasks but rarely finish them without constant redirection

→ Small responsibilities turn into shutdowns or emotional outbursts

The goal is simple:

Connect what you're seeing → to how it's impacting their daily life

LET'S MAP WHAT'S ACTUALLY HAPPENING

Use this quick framework during interviews:

1. **School**

- Are they missing assignments or falling behind?
- Do they need constant reminders to complete work?
- Have teachers expressed concerns?

2. **Home / Daily Life**

- Do simple routines feel like a struggle?
- Are tasks left unfinished?
- Does the day feel chaotic or exhausting?

3. Relationships

- Do they get easily overwhelmed or frustrated?
- Do they shut down or have big reactions?
- Do they seem discouraged or “down” about themselves?

4. Emotional Impact

- Do they get easily overwhelmed or frustrated?
- Do they shut down or have big reactions?
- Do they seem discouraged or “down” about themselves?

5. Safety / Impulsivity (if applicable)

- Do they act without thinking?
- Have there been risky moments or close calls?

I'M CONCERNED ABOUT ADHD, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, THIS IS HOW IT'S AFFECTING MY CHILD'S DAILY LIFE...

Example:

"They struggle with focus, but what's really happening is they're falling behind in school, routines are a daily battle, and it's creating stress for our whole family."



IMPORTANT NOTES

- *This guide is for education and preparation only*
- *It does not replace a medical evaluation*
- *A provider will consider multiple factors before diagnosing*

***You are not “missing something”
You are advocating for your
child — and that matters more than getting every word
right.***



NEED HELP ORGANIZING WHAT YOU'RE SEEING BEFORE YOUR
CHILD'S ASSESSMENT?

I OFFER SHORT, PARENT-FOCUSED SESSIONS WHERE WE:

- clarify your concerns
- organize real-life examples
- help you feel confident walking into the appointment

YOU CAN FIND IT HERE



EDUCATION ONLY – NOT MEDICAL ADVICE