



# EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PARENTING A CHILD WITH ADHD

Practices, Perspectives and Multicultural  
Considerations.





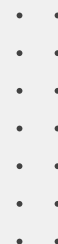
Does your child have ADHD? Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, is a common childhood mental health disorder that affects about 5% of children in America, according to the American Psychiatric Association.

However, the diagnosis of ADHD has been on the rise for the last several years and it's an issue that parents, educators, and doctors all have to contend with.

ADHD is characterized by impulsivity, a lack of focus, and distractibility that are also sometimes intertwined and co-existing with other behavioral and/or developmental challenges.

Dealing with an ADHD child can be frustrating, challenging, and confusing for parents as they try to grapple with the question of why their child just won't "behave."





# I. TRY THESE TECHNIQUES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ADHD AND HOW YOU CAN COPE

## Realize that the ADHD Brain is Different

Researchers and scientists have shown that the brain of children afflicted with ADHD has different characteristics which are responsible for the child's symptoms.

- **Once you accept that your child's brain is simply wired differently, it becomes much easier for you to keep yourself in control** when faced with difficult and challenging behaviors.
- Imagine for a moment that you have a hundred different things vying for your attention without the self-control to devote your attention to just one of them.
- The result is what a child with ADHD experiences: something grabs their attention and they go after it. This isn't their fault, but it's the distractibility that scrambles their brain and makes it more difficult to focus.



## Respond consistently

One of the most important things you can do when parenting your ADHD child is to use consistency when communicating with your child.

- This is sometimes tough for parents because this assumes that we're always going to have the same tone of voice and not allow our own emotional states to affect what we're trying to communicate.
- However, **ADHD children need to hear the consistency in what we say and in our tone of voice.**
- With an ADHD child, we cannot express our expectations about something on just one occasion. Rather, we need to communicate our expectations on every occasion in just the same manner.
- For example, instead of saying, "Would you please turn off the TV?," a more effective approach would be to use the child's name so they recognize that they are being told to do something. **Use this same technique every time you want them to do something.**



## Use token economies for incentives

This is a simple, yet consistent, behavior management approach that uses a token economy system to encourage appropriate behaviors.

- This will also let your ADHD child begin to learn what's expected of him and see that he gets rewarded when achieving those expectations.
- The basic idea behind this behavior management system is that **the child receives a token for following a demand and then he can turn in those tokens for rewards.**
- A token economy system can be as elaborate or as simple as you want it to be. You can use pennies, buttons, colored popsicle sticks, reward dollars, or any other number of objects as the tokens.



- The frequency of the rewards that you give out will depend on the nature of your individual child. A child that has immense difficulty following-through, for example, will require more rewards in the beginning to achieve the desired outcome.
- **The idea is to eventually phase out the rewards or to spread them further apart so that the child doesn't become dependent on them.**

Parenting a child who has been diagnosed with ADHD is no easy task. It often requires help and assistance from multiple professionals, such as counselors and therapists, school staff, and special education teams.

Consistency, communication, and a behavior management system are all important keys to parenting success with an ADHD child.

## II. NAVIGATING ADHD WITH MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY: PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF MULTICULTURAL PARENTS

Embracing the journey of parenting a child with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is nuanced, and when combined with multicultural backgrounds, it adds a layer of unique challenges and opportunities. Multicultural parents often bring a wealth of diverse perspectives to the table, influencing their approach to understanding and managing ADHD in their children.

### Perspectives

#### ○ Cultural Awareness and Stigma:

Multicultural parents may approach ADHD within the context of cultural beliefs and values. Some cultures may stigmatize mental health issues, and understanding and overcoming these cultural barriers is crucial for effective management.

- **Collective Decision-Making:** In many multicultural families, decision-making is a collective effort involving extended family members. Open communication and collaboration are vital as parents navigate treatment options and educational strategies for their child with ADHD.

#### ○ Cultural Celebrations and Challenges:

Cultural celebrations can be both a source of joy and stress for children with ADHD. Finding a balance between accommodating ADHD-related challenges and embracing cultural traditions is a delicate yet crucial aspect of parenting.



## Practices

- **Customized Treatment Plans:** Tailor ADHD management strategies to align with cultural values and practices. This may involve collaborating with healthcare professionals who understand and respect the cultural context, ensuring that treatment plans are effective and culturally sensitive.
- **Bilingual Communication:** Multicultural children may navigate between languages and cultural contexts daily. Ensure that communication about ADHD, both within the family and with educators or healthcare providers, is accessible and can bridge language and cultural gaps.
- **Culturally Responsive Education:** Advocate for a culturally responsive approach to education. Work with teachers and school administrators to create an inclusive environment that accommodates the unique learning styles and challenges associated with ADHD, taking cultural differences into account.





## 5 Tips for Parenting Multicultural Children with ADHD

- **Cultural Competence in Healthcare:** Seek healthcare professionals who demonstrate cultural competence and understanding. A provider who respects and values the cultural background of the child can provide more effective and empathetic support.
- **Create a Supportive Community:** Connect with other multicultural parents facing similar challenges. Building a supportive community can provide invaluable insights, emotional support, and a sense of shared experience.
- **Balance Structure and Flexibility:** Find a balance between structured routines and flexibility. ADHD management often involves routine, but it's essential to allow room for cultural events, traditions, and spontaneous activities that contribute positively to a child's development.
- **Advocate for Inclusive Education:** Advocate for inclusive educational practices that respect and accommodate diverse learning styles. This may involve collaborating with educators, attending parent-teacher conferences, and participating in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.
- **Celebrate Progress:** Celebrate small victories and progress. Parenting a child with ADHD can be challenging, but acknowledging and celebrating achievements, no matter how small, fosters a positive and supportive environment.

Remember, every child is unique, and combining cultural awareness with evidence-based ADHD management strategies can create a more holistic and effective approach to parenting multicultural children with ADHD.