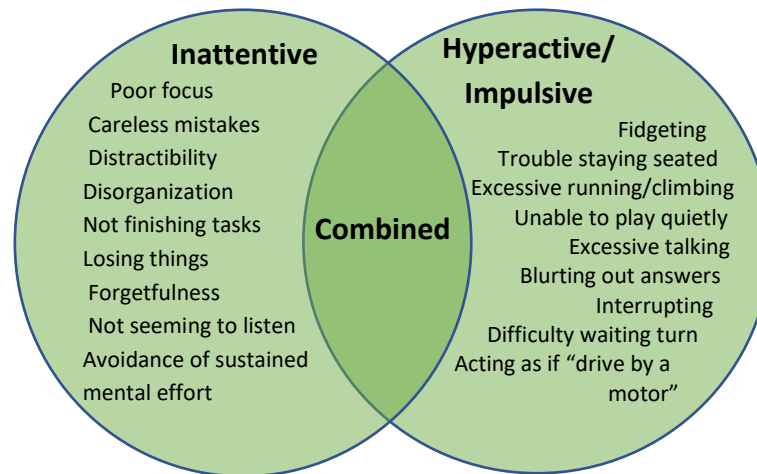


Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

What is ADHD?

ADHD is one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders of childhood, affecting about 10% of children aged 3-17. It affects executive functions, which are essential for regulating one's behavior, thinking, and emotions. There are three different types of ADHD:



ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder with associated differences in brain structure and function (e.g., frontal-striatal networks) and neurotransmission (e.g., dopamine, norepinephrine). In addition to genetics, risk factors for ADHD include premature birth and low birth weight, prenatal exposure to tobacco and alcohol, and environmental exposure to toxic substances such as lead in early development.

Common Co-occurring Disorders

- Learning Disorders
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Anxiety
- Depression

Diagnosis

There is no medical test for ADHD. A specialist can make the diagnosis by collecting information about a child's behavior through clinical interviews and behavior rating scales completed by caregivers and, oftentimes, teachers and the child. For ADHD to be diagnosed, there must be significant symptoms that are unexpected for the child's developmental level. The symptoms have to be seen in multiple settings (e.g., home and school/work), and negatively impact the child's academic and/or social functioning. Other possible causes for symptoms, including other developmental, emotional, and physical conditions, must also be ruled out.

Neuropsychological assessment can be useful for identifying co-occurring developmental, emotional, or behavioral conditions and better understanding how symptoms impact a child's cognition and learning.

Treatments

While there is no cure for ADHD, there are behavioral and medication interventions available to help manage it. These interventions often work best when used together.

- **FDA-approved medications** for ADHD include both stimulant and non-stimulant options.
- **Home/family-based** interventions include parent coaching from a behavior specialist in effective behavior management strategies. These typically include methods for increasing structure and motivation and providing immediate reinforcement for desired behaviors.
- At **school**, behavioral classroom strategies can be used. Your child may also be eligible for academic accommodations (i.e., modifications to the environment or tasks that support equal access to learning) and/or special education services through a Section 504 plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Resources

- Children and Adults with ADHD (CHADD) - www.chadd.org
- Taking Charge of ADHD by Russell Barkley, Ph.D.
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry [ADHD Resource Center](#)

Additional Information

What is pediatric neuropsychology?

- ❖ Pediatric neuropsychology is a subspecialty of neuropsychology focusing on brain and behavior relationships in children.
- ❖ Visit (scn40.org/) for more information.

What is a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist?

- ❖ Board certification requires a clinician to have specialized training in neuropsychology. Each has also passed a rigorous written and oral examination demonstrating knowledge and skills in neuropsychology.
- ❖ Board-certified neuropsychologists have formal certification from the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) and the American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology (ABCN).
- ❖ A board-certified pediatric subspecialist has attained a formal certification in the subspecialty of pediatric neuropsychology by ABPP and ABCN.

How do I find a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist?

- ❖ You can search for a board-certified neuropsychologist or a pediatric subspecialist on the AACN website (theaacn.org/).