

Childhood is a time of growth, discovering our strengths and interests, and learning from those around us. For some children, however, challenges arise that interfere with the natural course of development, often making it difficult for them to learn from their environment and impacting their ability to be successful as they grow into adulthood.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) can be one of these challenges. Formerly referred to as ADHD or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), ADHD encompasses symptoms of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity that significantly interfere with someone's functioning or development. ADHD can result in significant barriers to behavior regulation, socialization, and learning at school—all of which are important and vital skills developed during childhood.

So, what should you be looking for if you are concerned that your child may have ADHD?

Early signs of ADHD:

- Dislikes or avoids activities that require keeping attention and focus
- Loses interest in activities quickly and starts other tasks
- Talks more or makes noise more than other children of the same age
- Climbs, runs, hops, or moves constantly or when told to stay still
- Encounters dangerous situations because of doing first and thinking later

If you notice these signs and they don't seem to respond to the typical parenting approaches, it may be time to seek help. Therapeutic intervention can be provided to children at very young ages—even in toddlerhood. Once you are linked with a therapy provider, further evaluation or treatment options may be discussed to ensure the symptoms of ADHD are fully addressed and supported. Some children respond to treatment early and may not receive a formal ADHD diagnosis as they age. Others may experience some symptom improvement, but the concerns continue to interfere at home and school or daycare. For these children it is likely time to consider comprehensive ADHD evaluation and diagnosis.