

Tips for Parents of Children with ADHD

- 1. Learn about ADHD and how it works. It's important to understand that this is a neurodevelopmental disorder with potentially lifelong implications for children.**
- 2. Talk to your pediatrician and/or mental health professional about your concerns. Make sure that you obtain a thorough evaluation to help ensure an accurate diagnosis.**
- 3. Once you have a diagnosis, request a meeting at your child's school. If your child has ADHD, advocate for a 504 plan or an IEP depending on your child's needs. Both are written contracts that specifically outline what the school will do to ensure your child receives appropriate accommodations for his/her needs.**
- 4. Seek a medication consultation with your pediatrician or a child psychiatrist to determine if medication would be helpful for your child. Ask them about their experiences in treating ADHD, what medication they believe would be most helpful for your child and why, what side effects may occur, and how frequently they will meet with you and your child to assess if medication is still necessary.**
- 5. Contact a mental health professional who works with children and adolescents with ADHD and their parents. Ask them about Behavioral Parent Training or other similar approaches that have been researched and found effective in helping parents of children with ADHD. Ask them how they approach working with children with ADHD and their parents.**
- 6. Think about your own interactions with your child. As a parent, your own behavior directly affects the behavior of your child. Think about ways to more effectively communicate with your child and to develop more positive interactions with them. Examples of ways to do this include more active listening, catching your child doing good things, and providing very specific positive feedback. When telling your child to do something, always make sure that you have his or her attention before giving them the command and keep the commands clear and realistic.**
- 7. Recognize that having a child with ADHD affects the entire family. It is difficult for the child with ADHD, the parents, and the siblings. Be aware of how this affects siblings in particular and talk to them about what they are experiencing. Seek support for yourself and your other children as necessary.**
- 8. Remember that symptoms of ADHD often evolve over the years. It is important to keep reassessing what your child's symptoms are, how severe they are, and whether medication and/or psychological interventions may be beneficial.**