

"My Kid Has Been Diagnosed With ADHD... Now What?"

A Sanity-Saving, Tear-Reducing, Reality-Accepting Guide for Real Parents in Real Homes

Welcome to the Club You Didn't Ask to Join (But We're Glad You're Here)

You've just heard that your child has ADHD. And whether you saw it coming or it hit you like a Lego to the foot, there's one big question on your mind:

What now — at home, in real life, when the diagnosis paper is crumpled in a drawer and your kid is refusing to put on pants?

This packet is not about treatment plans or doctor's appointments. This is about **what to do** when your child's behavior derails your morning, your nerves, and your coffee temperature. It's about **how to parent an ADHD brain** — not perfectly, but wisely, warmly, and with your sanity mostly intact.

ADHD 101: What You're Really Dealing With

ADHD is not a discipline problem. It's not caused by bad parenting, too much screen time, or gluten. It is:

- A **neurological difference** in how the brain organizes, regulates, and responds to the world.
 - A challenge with **impulse control, emotional regulation, attention, and executive functioning**.
 - Often paired with **brilliant ideas, wild creativity, empathy**, and a hilarious sense of humor.
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Common ADHD Behaviors at Home (And What You Can Actually Do About Them)

1. The 0–60 Emotional Meltdown

Expect: Tears over broken crackers, rage over bedtime, dramatic exits over homework.

Try:

- Validate: “That is SO frustrating. I’d be mad too.”
 - Use few words mid-meltdown. Stay present but quiet.
 - Regulate first, talk second. Logic doesn’t work on an unregulated brain.
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2. The Flashmob Energy Levels

Expect: Spinning, running, bouncing, climbing furniture, and mid-sentence cartwheels.

Try:

- Daily “crash time”: yoga balls, trampolines, bear crawls, pushing heavy stuff.
 - Don’t fight the wiggles. Channel them.
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3. Memory Like a Goldfish

Expect: Forgotten instructions, repeated questions, lost EVERYTHING.

Try:

- Visual cues: post-it notes, chore charts with icons.
 - Practice “Say it back” — have them repeat instructions.
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4. The “I Said No” Battle Loop

Expect: Demanding, negotiating, pushing boundaries, again and again.

Try:

- Avoid getting sucked into the verbal wrestling match.
 - Use “Asked and answered.” (Repeat it like a mantra.)
 - Offer two structured choices. ADHD brains resist control, not options.
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5. Time Is a Myth

Expect: Sudden panics, late shoes, and underestimating time by 4000%.

Try:

- Use visual timers (like Time Timer) and “when–then” phrasing: “When your teeth are brushed, then we can read.”
 - Break transitions into micro-steps with countdowns: “Five more minutes of play. Two more. One more.”
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6. Homework Wars

Expect: Tears, tantrums, procrastination, and a dramatic pencil toss.

Try:

- Break tasks into chunks: 10 minutes on, 5-minute break.
 - Sit nearby, but don’t hover.
 - Celebrate *starting*, not just finishing.
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7. Loud, Louder, Loudest

Expect: Yelling, blurting, interrupting, talking over you — loudly.

Try:

- Whisper. It feels weird, but it works. They’ll quiet down to hear you.
 - Practice call-and-response games to improve impulse control.
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💛 The Honest Truth About What You’ll Probably Do (And Why You’re Still a Great Parent)

Let’s normalize *you*, too. ADHD parenting is a full-contact sport. You will...

1. Yell

Because you're human. Because you've repeated the same sentence 12 times. Because no one put on socks.

🔧 *Fix it:* Model the repair.

“I’m sorry I yelled. I was frustrated, and I should have taken a break.”

2. Threaten Absurd Consequences

“If you don’t stop, we’re not going to Grandma’s. Ever again.”

 *Fix it:* Pull back. “That wasn’t fair. Let me try that again.”

3. Cry in the Pantry

Been there. Chips and tears go together.

 *Fix it:* Nothing to fix. Feelings are part of this.

4. Blame Yourself

You didn’t cause this. You’re not doing it wrong. You’re dealing with a harder job than most.

 *Fix it:* Remind yourself: this is hard *because it’s hard*, not because you’re weak.



How to Parent the ADHD Child You Have (Not the One You Imagined)

- **Lower the bar** — no, lower. Now lower it again. That’s where the wins live.
- **Laugh where you can.** Your kid will say the most bananas things. Enjoy it.
- **Separate the child from the behavior.** Your kid is not a “bad kid.” They’re a kid with a dysregulated brain.
- **Connection over correction.** Discipline doesn’t stick when a child feels misunderstood or ashamed.



You're Not Going to Ruin Them

You will mess up. So will they. The good news?

What kids remember most isn't perfection — it's **repair**.

- “I love you even when things are hard.”
- “We’re on the same team.”
- “Let’s try again together.”

You’re building resilience, not a highlight reel. Every time you own your mistake and try again, your child learns they can, too.



Extra ADHD Behavior Tips by Category

Transitions

- Use music to shift activities (a "get dressed" playlist).
- Give countdowns and preview what's next.

Mealtimes

- Keep meals short and simple. Let them wiggle.
- Use fidgets at the table (yes, even straws or napkin folding counts).

Sibling Issues

- Use scripts: "I know you're upset, but we don't hit."
- Celebrate *any* moment of self-regulation: "You stopped and used words — that's amazing!"

Sleep

- Predictable, boring bedtime routines work. Same order every night.
- White noise, weighted blankets, and minimal screens after dinner help.



Final Note to You, Brave Parent

You didn't sign up for a masterclass in neurological differences, but here you are — showing up, learning, trying again.

You are doing better than you think.

Your kid is lucky to have someone who cares enough to google, to yell and then apologize, to love them in their chaos, and to keep showing up.

This isn't about perfection. This is about **progress** — for them and for you.