



Stopping ADD/ADHD and Learning Disabilities

A UNIQUE AND PROVEN TREATMENT WITHOUT
DRUGS FOR ELIMINATING ADD/ADHD and
LEARNING DISABILITIES IN CHILDREN AND ADULTS

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Previously published as: *Stopping ADHD*

Published by: Stopping Hyperactivity, LLC

1. The Real Problem



Many children seem unable to sit still, pay attention, or function normally in school, home, and community situations where controlled behavior is expected. Parents of these children may find that their lives are dominated by the child's constant disruptive behavior. Frequently, these children are labeled with ADD/ADHD or LD. There is a simple, logical, and accurate explanation of the real cause of this behavior: these children are extremely uncomfortable, and their extreme discomfort has a real, physical basis.

The Behaviors of ADD/ADHD and LD Children

The most common disruptive behavior that occurs in children diagnosed with ADD/ADHD or LD is difficulty sitting still in an "appropriate" position. They squirm, sit "inappropriately," get up frequently, lose attention, and daydream. In addition, these children often exhibit poor handwriting, reverse letters and numbers as they write, and find the act of writing a great struggle. They often move awkwardly or clumsily; consequently, they may avoid athletics or develop athletic skills slowly.

Not Just a Problem for Children

If this problem is not solved in childhood, it persists into adulthood. Many adults suffer from the effects of an immature STNR. Because adults are allowed to stand up or slouch or move around more freely than children, the problem has frequently not been identified in adults. However, in recent years, the diagnosis of adult ADD/ADHD or LD has significantly increased (*Audio-Digest*, 2003). While the major thrust of this book discusses children, be advised that these same descriptions and sufferings apply to adults as well. The solution in this book for these problems is *equally effective* for adults as for children.

School Behaviors

Most teachers assume that sitting still, in a socially acceptable position, is comfortable, easy to do, and relaxing. However, if sitting “appropriately” is so easily managed, then why do some children consistently resist this “relaxing” position? If sitting appropriately is so easy, why is “Keeping Johnny in His Seat” the usual goal of behavior-modification programs? Teachers struggle continually to keep some children seated at all, much less “appropriately.” Frequently, teachers spend more time telling children to stay in their seats, sit still, sit up straight, and pay attention than they do teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic. Do some of these comments sound familiar?

- “Why can’t these kids sit still?”
- “I spend half my time just trying to keep Johnny in his seat.”
- “The work Janie does is good, but I have to keep after her all the time to get her to finish it.”
- “The poor kid has missed three recesses this week trying to get all the work done.”
- “He squirms around so much he misses half the directions.”

- “If he would just try a little harder . . .”

These children can’t sit still, can’t stay put, can’t stop squirming, and can’t pay attention no matter how hard they try, because *they are uncomfortable*.

Home Behaviors

Equally frustrating are some home situations. Most parents, like most teachers, assume that sitting is comfortable, easy to do, and relaxing. Unfortunately, the children who cannot meet the demand to sit appropriately in school have the same difficulties at home. Consequently, these children hear the negative comments of their teachers at school repeated by their parents at home.

- “Why can’t you sit up at the dinner table?”
- “How many times do I have to tell you not to sit on your legs?”
- “Don’t do your homework lying on the floor. Why do you think we bought you a desk?”
- “We just can’t take you to church anymore. You’re all over the pew.”
- “People must think we don’t discipline you at all. You’re so antsy.”
- “Why can’t you pay attention when I’m talking to you?”
- “You just don’t try hard enough!”

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The Discomfort of ADD/ADHD and LD Children

What do we mean when we say that a child is uncomfortable? To begin with, there are varying degrees of discomfort—from mild to extreme discomfort. Try to imagine the discomfort of sitting a little too long on a straight-backed, cushionless wooden chair. The longer

you sit, the more uncomfortable you become, fidgeting and shifting your weight from side to side in an attempt to release your muscular tension.

Now imagine that you are told you must sit in that chair for an indeterminate length of time. As the hours go by, your body begins to ache. Your muscles beg to be stretched. You find no relief in any sitting position you try. As more time passes, these feelings intensify. Minutes seem like hours. Time becomes distorted. Someone barks an order to you, but it is hard to focus on what he is asking you to do. In order to cope with the discomfort, you try to think of other things—friends, family, vacations, anything to take your mind off what you are feeling. What you are experiencing now is extreme discomfort, a degree of discomfort often used by interrogation experts as torture.

Some children do not have to sit in a chair for hours to feel so uncomfortable. Discomfort begins to work on them within minutes of sitting down. For these children, discomfort is not an unusual circumstance, but a part of their everyday experience, a condition that permeates their world. Because this discomfort has always been with them, they do not know that what they are experiencing is unusual—that there is a problem. They assume that everyone else is also uncomfortable, and they wonder how other people are able to sit still and get their work done quickly. As parents and teachers, we have misinterpreted the behavior that uncomfortable children exhibit. Without knowing what to look for, we have been blind to the obvious. Once we know what to look for, the real problem becomes apparent.

If you question the kind and degree of discomfort that these children feel, we would like you to perform the exercise we call “The Spelling Bee” (see the inset on page 13). It should give you an inkling of what a child with this problem may be going through. It takes two people to do the exercise, but it will be well worth the effort. See for yourself.

After enduring the “Spelling Bee” exercise, you will have some idea of the discomfort and distress that many children experience every day. We exaggerated the spelling test conditions for you. How-

The Spelling Bee

To better understand the discomfort that many children feel when they are required to sit straight and still, imagine yourself in a typical classroom on a Friday morning, almost religiously preparing for the universal weekly spelling test. You will need someone who can play “teacher” for you for a few minutes, and you will need a pencil and a small piece of paper (about 2 inches by 3 inches). Sit in a straight chair at a table and extend your legs straight out in front of you, keeping them raised off the floor. Don’t brace or prop your legs on anything. Hold the pencil in the hand you do not normally use for writing. Now, keeping your legs raised in front of you, use your nondominant hand to write on the small piece of paper. Have the “teacher” dictate the following words to you at a rate of one word every second. Be certain that the “teacher” allows you no more than one second on each word:

elbow	doctor
sunshine	zebra
animal	transportation
Wednesday	mother
dinner	

How Did You Do?

Did you finish all the words? Did you keep up? Are the words legible? Are you proud of the way your paper looks? Would you want this paper displayed on the bulletin board? Do you think that this paper adequately reflects your intelligence? Would you like a penmanship grade on this paper? Are your legs still raised as they are supposed to be? Would you like to go through school all day sitting and writing like this? Are you comfortable?

ever, very common, everyday situations present exaggerated problems for the children we are describing.

These children need a great deal of space for efficient writing; therefore, standard sizes of paper seem too small for their needs. Their motor coordination is generally so poor that their writing is as labored as yours was with your nondominant hand. They are at least as uncomfortable in the “normal” sitting position as you were with your legs extended in front of you. (If you weren’t too uncomfortable after several seconds, try sitting that way for several hours, as children are expected to do in school. Now you know why some children call school “torture.”)

They need considerably more time for average writing tasks, so the normal amount of writing time seems very short to them. While most teachers would not dictate spelling words at a rate of one every second, the length of time typically allowed for a task is really too short for the child who is uncomfortable.

The Source of Discomfort

What causes this discomfort and the inefficiency that arises from it? Is it lack of effort by the child? Is it poor discipline by the parents, the teachers, or both? Is it that the child is “all boy” or “naturally active?” Is it ADD/ADHD or LD? A major reason why these children can’t sit still is *none of the above*.

These children can’t sit still because they are extremely uncomfortable in “normal” sitting positions. They are uncomfortable because a reflex is pulling their bodies in two different directions. This reflex makes it as difficult for children to do their schoolwork as it was for you to complete the spelling test in the “Spelling Bee” exercise.

In this book we will tell you what this reflex is, what it does to your children, and what you can do about it.