5 Signs of ADHD in Girls and Recommended Solutions

by YVONNE BANKS

ADHD in Girls

The three traits that define ADHD — hyperactivity, inattention and impulsiveness — are more likely to be seen in boys than girls. Boys tend to be more hyperactive anyway, which makes this trait of ADHD more noticeable.

Most girls have the inattentive form of the disorder and may daydream, be forgetful or be messy. It may not be until middle school or high school that ADHD is noticed as schoolwork becomes more demanding and she has trouble keeping up. ADHD can also lead to depression around this time.

The following are signs of ADHD in girls.

Nonstop Chatter

Impulsiveness can make it very difficult for a girl with ADHD to stop talking, even when asked to be quiet. She'll likely interrupt the class with her chatter.

Intervention

Have her teacher seat her near the front of class, and keep her busy by having her help with passing out papers, for instance, to help her focus her energy. At home, have her practice keeping quiet while someone is speaking.

Trouble with Peers

A girl with ADHD may have trouble fitting in. She may be bossy and interrupt her friends, and have trouble with social cues. Her self-esteem may be affected.

Intervention

Be patient when helping her to socialize better; she just needs to have someone teach her social norms and then help her practice them. Teaching her what the norms are is not enough; she will need to practice responding to appropriate social cues in order for them to come naturally.

Difficulty Staying Focused

Retaining multi-step directions may be hard for her, and listening to a teacher may be very difficult.

Intervention

Have her teacher make an effort to involve her in lessons, and see if it's possible for lecture times to be cut shorter for the students as a whole. Practice with your daughter how to look attentive, quietly listening

with shoulders squared and eyes on speaker. Then she can try transferring this new skill to the classroom setting. If she starts to drift off, draw her back in with a signal or secret word to cue her to refocus.

Messiness

A clear sign of ADHD is having problems keeping things organized. Her room will likely be very messy and routine may be a struggle.

Intervention

Reduce the papers that keep getting shuffled back and forth from home to school by keeping as much as possible online. Put reminders on her e-calendar or text her reminders of project deadlines. Make it as easy as possible for her to be tidy by cutting down on clutter and providing simple organization systems.

Unfinished Homework

A struggle to finish homework and assignments may also be a sign of ADHD. Girls with ADHD may be quiet and blend into the classroom, but fail to finish tests in the allotted time — even though they seem to know the material.

Intervention

She may need to have her work broken down into smaller tasks. Give her a little bit of work at a time, so it isn't as overwhelming. Ask her teacher about her being allowed to take re-take tests if possible.