The Best Ways to Support Children With ADHD

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Supporting Children With ADHD

Children with ADHD have a hard time focusing in school or at home and this condition can be difficult to manage. To support a child with ADHD, a parent must have patience and remember that it is not his or her fault. Let's dive into supporting children with ADHD and how you can achieve it.

Russell A. Barkley, a clinical professor of psychiatry medical at the University of South Carolina, lists 20 principles of supporting a child with ADHD. With these principles, he lays out strategies that are important for every parent to remember when dealing with the struggles of parenting a child with this condition and providing ADHD help.

Control, Organization, and Scheduling

The first of the principles Barkley outlines shows parents that the disorder is mainly affected by forces beyond the control of the parent and helps them to accept that fact. The second and third principles deal with organizing and scheduling a child's time. In it, Barkley points out that children with ADHD have trouble recognizing time on their own. He recommends having timers placed around the child's workspace to help him or her mark the passage of time. He also introduces the idea of rewarding a child's positive behavior to teach him or her about managing time effectively.

Rewards and Consequences

The next few principles have to do with rewards and consequences. Barkley says that it is important for parents to provide immediate consequences (good or bad) for a behavior. The longer a parent waits between the behavior and the consequence, the less effective that consequence will be. Additionally, the consequences must be frequent and consistent to have any sort of effect. If a child believes that his or her actions have no consequences, then their behavior will reflect that idea. For instance, the child may stop trying to complete tasks on time, if he or she has not received feedback regarding the tasks completed. In these principles, Barkley is attacking the lack of self-motivation present in children who suffer from ADHD. By making the consequences apparent and frequent, a parent is more likely to garner the preferred behavior from the child.

Help with Problem Solving

In addition, ADHD interrupts a child's ability to solve problems easily and effectively. As a parent, it may be prudent to help a child problem-solve by constructing a method that details the necessary steps of problem-solving. For ADHD help, break the steps up so the child can easily digest each step to not overwhelm him or her. For word problems, for example, use index cards to break up the elements of the problem in a physical way. Then, allow the child to add to it to logically solve the problem.

Sense of Humor

Because children with ADHD have difficulty focusing, talking to the child leads to little results. To get your point across as a parent, you must physically make a point by putting your hand on his or her shoulder or hand, maintaining eye contact, and keeping your comments short and succinct. Barkley also mentions the importance of maintaining a sense of humor as a parent when dealing with a child with ADHD. It allows you to keep the disorder in perspective and treat it as unfortunate rather than debilitating. Accepting the fact that your child has ADHD is the first step in coping with it and supporting your child.

Understanding ADHD

Finally, perhaps the best principle for supporting a child with ADHD is to be understanding of the condition. Not only do you need to understand ADHD from a scientific standpoint, but you also need to understand it from a human one as well. Understanding that neither you nor your child is perfect, and in doing so, you know that mistakes are going to happen. Holding onto those mistakes is going to cause a lot of strife in your life, and you need to learn the art of letting go and be better able to offer ADHD help.