

## Understanding Aspects of SEND: Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

**1. What is ADD?** Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) is a neurodevelopmental condition that primarily affects a person's ability to focus, pay attention and organise tasks. Unlike ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), ADD does not include significant hyperactivity or impulsivity. It often presents as a predominantly inattentive profile. Individuals with ADD may seem distracted, forgetful or disengaged. This is due to differences in brain activity. In the UK, between 2% and 5% of school-age children are considered to have ADD/ADHD. (Optomist Minds)

**2. How can ADD present?** ADD can manifest in a variety of ways, particularly in situations that require sustained attention. Common characteristics include:

- **Inattention:** Difficulty maintaining focus on tasks, following instructions or staying organised.
- **Easily distracted:** Struggles to filter out background noise or external stimuli.
- **Forgetfulness:** Frequently losing items, missing deadlines or forgetting instructions.
- **Slow task completion:** Taking longer than peers to finish assignments or activities.
- **Daydreaming:** Appearing lost in thought, disengaged or 'zoning out' during tasks or conversations.
- **Difficulty starting tasks:** Procrastination or trouble with task initiation, particularly with complex or multi-step activities.
- **Lack of follow-through:** Struggling to complete projects or leaving tasks unfinished.

**3. Ways to help manage ADD** Supporting individuals with ADD involves creating structure, minimising distractions and building strategies to improve focus. Key approaches include:

- **Break tasks into smaller steps:** Use clear, manageable instructions and focus on one step at a time.
- **Use visual and written reminders:** Timetables, checklists and calendars can help with organisation and memory.
- **Minimise distractions:** Create a quiet workspace free of unnecessary noise, clutter or interruptions.

- **Provide movement breaks:** Allow short breaks to improve focus and reduce frustration.
- **Use timers and schedules:** Encourage the use of timers, alarms and planners to manage time effectively.
- **Incorporate engaging learning methods:** Use hands-on activities, visuals and interactive tools to maintain attention.
- **Positive reinforcement:** Celebrate small achievements to boost confidence and motivation.

#### 4. Where to Find Out More

- **ADDitude Magazine** ([www.additudemag.com](http://www.additudemag.com)): Provides practical strategies, articles and community support.
- **ADHD Foundation** ([www.adhdfoundation.org.uk](http://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk)): Offers resources for both ADHD and ADD, including training and support.
- **Children and Adults with ADD (CHADD)** ([www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)): A leading organisation for individuals with ADD, offering resources and guidance.
- Book recommendations:  
[Driven to Distraction by Edward M. Hallowell](#)  
[Smart but Scattered by Peg Dawson](#)