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15th Anniversary  
Greetings from the  
Attention Deficit &  
Hyperactivity Support  
Group of Southern  
Africa.  
ADHASA

# Keeping up with ADD

November 2004

Company not for gain  
93/03639/08

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**Counselling hours:**  
Wednesdays and Fridays  
08h00 to 13h00  
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Blairgowrie Tel: (011) 888-7655

## A GOOD START FOR HOLIDAYS WITH ADD/HYPERACTIVE CHILDREN

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### 16 years of service to the community!!

Although this article was written for parents with ADD/ADHD children, the info can be used for all children

Travelling abroad and wanting to take your children with you? Wondering how you are going to cope on that long flight with your child who has Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Hyperactivity (H)? These children are difficult at the best of times but can become totally impossible when cooped up in a small space for many hours. No wonder many parents have taken their children on one long trip and then never again!!!

ADD/H is a medically recognized condition which is characterized by a broad range of symptoms which undermine the child's ability to cope and as a result he is usually judged as being immature, disobedient, aggressive and interested only in himself. These symptoms are usually aggravated in new situations because his coping mechanisms don't work so well. Here are a few ideas to help you on the flight:

**Pre-flight preparation.** ADD/H children usually over-react to any stimulat-

ing or stressful situation, and preparation for a holiday involves both. Excitement levels are dramatically raised as children hear about the impending holiday - tell them about the places they are going to see but do so in a quiet and calming manner. Avoid telling them about the biggest, the greatest and the best or worst!! For example, if you are going to Rome, show them pictures of the city but avoid getting them all excited about the Colosseum and the gladiators. Unless they ask, don't even tell them they are going to the Colosseum until you are already there.

One very sensitive child realized that he was losing what little control he had because he was so excited and asked that, for future holidays, his parents only told him about it as they were on the point of leaving!! Useful for some, but other children could become very angry if they didn't know about it in advance – you'll have to judge what is going to be the best for your child.

Stress levels of the parents are inevitably raised as the date of departure approaches because there is always so much to be done and - as the parents' stress levels rise, so do those of the children. If necessary, enlist the assistance of friends and family to help with the children in those last few days before going away. Try and be as calm as possible when with the children as it could make a big difference to the start of your holiday.



### Food for the Journey.

If your ADD/H child is on a diet avoiding colourants, flavourants and anti-oxidant preservatives you won't want to break it on the aircraft simply because you have already seen how it can affect his all round functioning for anything up to the next 72

hours! It can make the difference between it being a quiet and reasonably pleasant journey ... or one in which the child aggravates and annoys everyone in his immediate area. Ask your airline if they offer meals free of synthetic colourants or flavourants and find out if they use MSG in their food. If there is any doubt, take your own food for the flight, but make sure that it is something that your child really likes.

Many children with ADD/H have frequent ear infections and so experience discomfort when landing – you might have to discuss this with your doctor before you leave. Have suitable chewy sweets available, but only offer them if necessary and as the plane starts to descend. In general these children should have as few sweets as possible and never on an empty tummy.

### **What about medication?**

Parents often feel guilty about their ADD/H children having medication (most frequently Ritalin) and, although there is a world-wide trend towards giving it to the child every day of the year, there are many children who take it only on school days. However, if the child's levels of excitement are just too high, parents sometimes give the child medication on the day that they leave the country to help him cope – as long as the medication does not make him feel totally unhappy and depressed.

At all times avoid giving the child sleeping tablets – they could have exactly the opposite effect.

### **Spraying of the aircraft as it leaves South Africa**

Spraying of aircraft leaving South Africa is a legal requirement and cannot be avoided. Most people hardly even notice it however, for a child with a sensitive chest, it could cause extreme discomfort and precipitate several hours of impossible behaviour. Ask your chemist for a simple mask which your child can wear during the spraying as well as the next half to one hour. Turn it into a fun thing by linking it to his favourite cartoon character. Anything for an easier flight!

### **A restless, fidgety child**

ADD/H children actually need a certain amount of movement. The more frustrated parents become with the fidgetiness, the more the child stresses and needs more movement! If possible, try to ignore some of that squirming in his seat. Give the child opportunities to discharge some of that energy even if it just a walk to toilet – choose the further one. He reflects your stress levels - the calmer you remain, the less he will stress and the quieter he will be. Ensure that he drinks enough water (not fizzy drinks).

**Please forward  
this article to  
anyone who you think  
could benefit from  
reading it.**

### **Activities on Board.**

The introduction of individual TV screens in front of each seat has probably made aircraft travel easier for families. For the younger child bring along a favourite toy or teddy and have him explain all details of the flight to the teddy, including what is happening and why teddy should try to sit still. As he explains to teddy, he could gain greater awareness of his own behaviour.

Gaining insight into the challenges faced by a child with ADD or hyperactivity can make all the difference in the world. Learn as much as you can about the condition and how it affects the child. Contact Support Groups – they have valuable information at their finger tips and they usually are mothers who have their own ADD/hyperactive children and so really understand you.

**Heather Picton**

### **Notes:**

- ADHASA has further information about suitable foods/sweets for ADD/Hyperactive children. Contact them at 888-7655 if you would like to know more about it.
- Masks might seem a bit far fetched but we are aware of people who do have reactions and, in particular, one child who was very ill for months after his reaction to the spraying in an aircraft!

Heather wrote this article for **Virgin Atlantic Airways** earlier this year after they had sponsored her flight to the ADDISS International Conference on ADD in the UK earlier this year.

### **Membership Fees**

There is to be an increase in Membership Fees in the New Year. Take the opportunity to join at the old price of R85 by filling in the Membership Form on page 4 and sending your details to ADHASA now!

Exciting things are happening in your Support Group ... we'll be telling you about them in future editions of "Keeping Up with ADD"

## December Holiday Programme

### KIDDIES DECEMBER HOLIDAY PROGRAMME WITH PROFESSIONAL ARTIST AREND ELOFF

**Monday 6 December to Friday 10 December - Drawing, painting and sculpture classes for kidz**

**Classes are limited to eight and include art materials, sandwiches, muffins and cooldrinks. Contact Arend for further information about this exciting art opportunity and choose the dates for your child to attend.**

**VENUE: 94 Eccleston Crescent, Bryanston. Between Bryanston Drive & Grosvenor Road.**

**To make your booking call Arend on 083 392-4589 or e-mail [arend@powerstar.co.za](mailto:arend@powerstar.co.za)  
To view Arend's art work visit [www.powerstar.co.za](http://www.powerstar.co.za)**

## Tape recordings

Audio Tapes of the following talks are available at R20 each. Order them from Sandy at 011-793-2024:

### Topics are:

1. **The Nature of ADD, Nutrition and Supplementation** by Heather Picton
2. **Diagnosis, Assessment, Treatment and Medication** by Dr Johan Erasmus
3. **Occupational Therapy and Sensory Solutions** by Francoise Harrison and Meg Allan
4. **Managing the Environment of the ADHD Child** by Terry Wilke
5. **Promoting Successful Learning Experiences** by Elaine Harcombe
6. **The Latest Facts about Fats** by Stuart Wilson
7. **Speech Therapy and Auditory Processing** by Jean Bowker
8. **The Social and Emotional Development of the ADHD Child** Anita deCaires Wagner
9. **Stabilising Blood Glucose Levels** by Jeske Wellmann
10. **Adult ADD** by Terry Wilke

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

### Can you help us?

No experience needed – we offer full training.

One morning a week of your time enables us to provide a better service to the ADD/H community. As you help others, you inevitably gain greater skills for helping your own family.

**Can you afford not to come? So put you name down for the next training group starting in February.**

Please contact Sandy at  
011-793-2079



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**MEMBERSHIP**

**APPLICATION FORM - Annual Subscription R85-00**

**PLEASE PRINT**

NAME: .....

POSTAL ADDRESS: .....

.....CODE:.....

TEL: (h) (.....) .....(w) (.....).....CELL.....

FAX NO: (.....).....E-MAIL.....

NAME OF CHILD/MEMBER:.....

DATE OF BIRTH: ...../...../.....

SCHOOL: .....

SIBLINGS: (Names & Ages)

1 ..... 2 .....

3 ..... 4 .....

OCCUPATION: Mother .....

Father .....

SIGNATURE: ..... DATE: ...../...../.....

For confirmation of application kindly deposit payment into Standard Bank, Braamfontein Branch Code No 4805.  
Account No. 002901323 in the name of Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Support Group of Southern Africa .

- Please make all cheques payable to: Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Support Group of Southern Africa .
- Cash payments can also be made into this account
- Please complete the deposit reference blocks below your signature with your printed full name
- Please fax your application form together with the bank deposit slip to (011) 322-4010 or 793 2079.
- Alternatively, post this form, together with your remittance to PO Box 3704 Randburg 2125.