

Accept us don't reject us

Greetings from the Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Support Group of Southern Africa

ADHASA

Helping the community for nearly 16 years!

Keeping up with ADD

July 2005

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This article targets children with AD/HD but the information could help non-ADD people too. Please make this newsletter available to anyone who could use it.

DOCTORS ... DESPAIR NO MORE!

How to handle an ADD/H child in the surgery!

A NIGHTMARE!

Attention Deficit Disorder/ Hyperactivity (ADD/H) is currently the most researched childhood condition today. Every day there is new information available; however few people really understand the many ways in which these symptoms actually affect these children, and those around them.

We suggest that you show this article to your child's doctor or dentist. It could give him far greater understanding of your child and make the visit easier for everyone!

Find many answers at the ADHASA Seminar—if you couldn't make 23rd—make it on July 30th !! See Page 3.

Treating a child with ADD/H can be a nightmare for Doctors, Dentists, parents and the children themselves, especially if no-one fully understands why children with ADD behave the way that they do.

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CITIGATE— Partnering with us !!

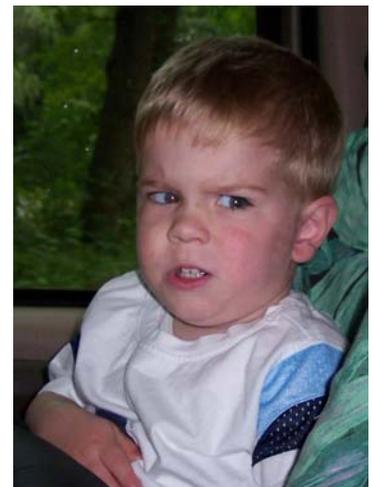
The Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Support Group of Southern Africa, ADHASA, was going into a new phase and we needed help! We realized that although the Support Group had been started in the late eighties, there were still far too many people who had never even heard of ADHASA; nor did they understand the condition of ADD/ADHD or know how to handle it. Too many peoples lives were still being destroyed by this 'hidden handicap', largely due to ignorance about the condition.

Then the very best possible thing happened ... **Citigate**, an International Marketing Company decided to take us on as their social responsibility programme and they have already made a tremendous difference. It's an interesting co-incidence that their in-house magazine is called '**hyperactive**'!

Read more / continued on Page 3 ...

Volunteers Needed to counsel and help children and adults who are battling with their ADD/ADHD.

Phone Sandy on above number if you feel you can truly help them..



HIGHLY STRESSED

Like most children, ADD/H children are scared of going to the doctor and react accordingly. However, their reaction is more

intense because children with ADD/H invariably have



exaggerated reactions to any situation and so, what would be a mild protest from other children becomes a major temper tantrum in the child with ADHD. By the time he walks into your rooms, he may have been pulled out of the tree where he was hiding, yelled at, physically shoved into the car and threatened with all sorts of punishment if he misbehaves during the consultation. It is relief if he keeps quiet ... but most unpleasant if he is so stressed that his reactions are exaggerated even more than usual and he cannot bear to have anyone just touch him – especially his face or hair! Such a reaction is quite possible if the child is sensory defensive and in a state of being highly alerted to danger.

ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP

The first step is to set the child at ease. If possible, use the first appointment as an opportunity to establish a relationship with him. Explain procedures and show him any instruments that may be used - ask questions and be prepared to answer the child's queries. Ask if he has any suggestions that could make the visit easier for him – you may or may not be able to use them, however these children really appreciate the opportunity to feel important. If a relationship has been established and the child feels comfortable with the

doctor, he is more relaxed and better able to try and co-operate with him. If children are scared and stressed they have far less control of their reactions.

A dentist may have a television available so that the child can watch a favourite program or video while in the chair having treatment. Have a selection of video tapes available, or ask mothers to bring children's favourite videos along for the appointment.

EASIER TO HANDLE

ADD/H is a neurological disorder with many different manifestations so awareness and understanding of the symptoms makes it much easier to handle children with ADHD. Here are a few ideas:

Low Tone: A very fidgety child might have **low tone** and so it is more comfortable for this child to be lying down. If he has a stuffy nose or sinusitis, lying down could be so uncomfortable for him that he becomes less compliant.

Reduce Tension: Stress balls and soft squeeze toys can also help reduce tension levels during treatment if the child can squeeze the toy without distracting the doctor or dentist at work. Have a supply of different textured toys available

Seeking Stimulation: A possible manifestation of the neurological disorder could be constant seeking of stimulation manifested in the touching of anything and everything that the child can lay his hands on. He is curious and the intentions are good, but things can go horribly wrong.... avoid leaving children with ADD/H alone and unattended in the consulting room for even the shortest period of time. Accidents can and do happen and it is unfair to put children into situations in which loss of control could have dire results!

Inappropriate Sensory Modulation: This affects many ADD/H children and can be linked to various difficulties faced by doctors or dentists.

Inappropriate Sensory Modulation refers to difficulty with monitoring incoming information from the perceptual organs with the result that affected people often over-react to incoming stimuli, in which case it is known as Sensory Defensiveness. The manifestation differs from one person to the next: A child may, for example, be a picky eater refusing to have different textures (such as peas and rice) in his mouth at the same time, or it could be that he cannot swallow a tablet or a capsule. He may object strongly to touch, and flinch or stiffen at light touching of his face, hair or skin.

Inappropriate Sensory Modulation manifesting orally could manifest in children refusing to have the doctor putting anything into their mouth ... including his fingers. Nobody, not even doctors and dentists, likes to be bitten!

Pressure on the Gums: Therapy could alleviate children's need to bite when stressed! Biting is often linked to Inappropriate Sensory Modulation with uncomfortable feelings experienced in the mouth which are alleviated by applying pressure on the gums. When small, children with Inappropriate Sensory Modulation often calm themselves by biting others – and this usually continues until they realize how painful it is when someone bites them back. As they grow older, they unconsciously find other means of providing relief such as biting their pens, pencils and whatever they can get into their mouth.

Jerseys, shirts and collars are regularly chewed, as are their own fingers. All of these can be used to increase pressure on the gums (and in various parts of the mouth), and provide relief for children. Try calming to the child (and hopefully reduce the chance of being bitten) by giving a child with Inappropriate Sensory Modulation something to bite into for a few seconds before treatment commences. A dental plate works well for dentists.

Being covered by a weighted blanket could also be very calming for some children – dentists could use the lead blanket normally used for shielding patients from X-rays.

Asking a few questions and observing tactile avoidance behaviour could provide a few clues about the child's needs before treatment even commences.

Therapists:

Make contact with an Occupational Therapist who can offer Sensory Integration Therapy so that children displaying symptoms of Inappropriate Sensory Modulation may be referred to them. Therapy can help lessen the tactile discomfort for children as well as their over-reaction to noise, smell or bright lights.

Trying their best:

It has often been stated that ADD/hyperactive children do their best to cope in a world that doesn't understand them. As we gain greater insights into the challenges faced by these children, it becomes easier to handle them –

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which could make the visit to the doctor or dentist far less frustrating for everyone concerned.

If you have any dental-related questions about your ADD/Hyperactive child or patient, please email us at support@adhasa.co.za. Make it to the attention of our Dentist, Dr Norman Cahi, who will be answering your queries.

Heather Picton

SATURDAYS 23 JULY AND 30 JULY 2005

Seminar! Seminar! Seminar!

Our Annual Seminar has once again been held in collaboration with the Division of Special Education of the University of the Witwatersrand.

For those of you who were unable to make July 23rd — it's not too late to attend the second session on Saturday 31st July.

The fee (including lunch and Seminar Pack of BOTH days) is a mere R250.

See Seminar information from June Keeping Up With ADD. This is an ideal opportunity for anyone seeking to learn about ADD/ADHD or wanting to find solutions to particular problems.

Hope to see you there!!!

Our NEW Logo!



Indicative of
interdependent support -
receiving with one hand
and giving with the other!



Mind Focus cc
Mind Focus cc

For a COMPLIMENTARY
session (1,5 hours)
to learn about how coaching
can and will enhance your life
phone Lori now on
082-787-0262 to book
an appointment!

**THIS EDITION OF KEEPING UP
WITH ADD PUT TOGETHER BY
LORI OF MIND FOCUS.**

CITIGATE—Partnering with us !!

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Legally speaking the previous logo was totally unsuitable for ADHASA purposes so the first undertaking of Citigate was to provide us with a new logo: four people, holding hands and going out in ever increasing circles to support and help each other and the community affected by the condition of ADD/ADHD. Green is for growth and support, blue for reaching to the future.

The new logo is being used in the fax template, letterheads, presentations and business cards which were also designed by Citigate and printed by Masterpack at no cost.

Our new logo was launched on 1 July 2005 at Wits Club where everyone was greeted with a glass of champagne and orange juice. Guests included people representing the Education Department, Health Department, Business sector and people affected by ADD/ADHD as well as Parents and Support Group workers. After listening to a few short talks where they learnt about the Support Group and the importance of the work we do, and introduced to Citigate, we adjourned to a delicious hot meal and much networking. It was a highly successful event.

We are very proud of our new logo and already companies are asking that we use it to endorse their products.

Working with Citigate has broadened our horizons and we intend making ADHASA a household name. Citigate is helping with our publicity, sending out press releases ; and interacting with the media.

Thank you to Citigate – together we're going to change and improve things for people in South Africa with ADD/ADHD ... and all those around them.