

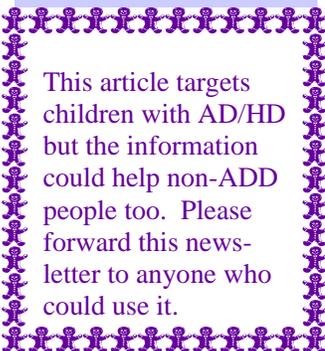
Accept us don't reject us

Read about our new logo on page 3

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

ADHASA

Helping the community for nearly 16 years!



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

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Keeping up with ADD

May 2005

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Weekday mornings

09h00 to 13h00

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Phone: (011) 888-7655

OUT OF CONTROL CHILDREN

"I'm at my wits end! I do everything possible for my child and yet he remains a screaming yelling monster! He tells me he hates me ... I just don't know what to do anymore!"



We cannot say that every difficult child is affected by ADD or doesn't have enough attention and sometimes they are just very indulged and over-spoilt. But often they are dealing with difficulties that we don't see or don't recognise.

It's devastating when you try your best but get nowhere and, if anything, matters become even worse.

Desperate parents

Parents can become so desperate (because they feel they can't cope any longer) that they will do almost anything to get away from the child. We've heard of mothers who go out to work only to get away from their 'monster child' and then taking every opportunity to travel (locally or around the world) just to get some peace and quiet, or a good night's sleep. We've spoken to mothers who were considering putting their toddler up for adoption, or worse, because they just couldn't cope any longer. Boarding school is often the solution for older children!

We've frequently encountered exhausted, harassed mothers who could write a book on the many and intricate plans they've made to escape. Fathers often feel so helpless that they withdraw, sometimes deserting the family and leaving mother to take on the double burden and cope all by herself.

These are very real situations which happen far too often for

us to ignore them and the impact they have on everyone concerned.

Find many answers at the ADHASA Seminar on July 23 and 30— Bookings now open! See page 3

Finding solutions

There are no solutions that cover every aspect of such a complex problem, but recognising what triggers an outburst can go a long way to avoiding a similar outburst in the future. It could put you the parent in control of the situation rather than have you driven by it.

Sometimes children are dealing with challenges that parents don't recognise or understand. Have you ever considered that an outburst could be your children's way of communicating that they are not coping.

Controlling children

Let's have a look at children who try to control everyone else in the home. They may demand

to hold the electric mixer, screaming and throwing a tantrum if they can't have it, and then splashing cake mix all over the counter and wall if they do. Are these children just being difficult for the sake of it? Or could it be that they over-register sound to such an extent that they cannot cope with the noise of the mixer unless they know that they can switch it off the moment it becomes too much for them? A strong-willed child is going to try and create an environment in which he can control the stress factors so that he can enjoy time with his mother. Maybe the child is just as frustrated as his mother. Maybe he has no idea how to deal with his own frustration.

**Children can help**

Sometimes children are able to give the solutions: When Stanley was asked why he wouldn't sit at the dinner table he explained that the



chair was too hard. Tying a cushion onto the seat soon had him sitting at the dinner table and eating rather than cruising around and grabbing a handful of

food as he went by. (Cushions are often effective for children who prefer to sit with one leg under their bottom.)

**School**

School presents its own challenges – a fourteen year old child's geography book was a terrible mess with large chunks of work missing and was told to rewrite it. He decided that a new geography book was definitely needed and so borrowed a friend's book and did his very best. With great pride he showed his efforts to his mother who, aware of his academic difficulties, was most impressed. The teacher looked at all his work ... and tore it up ... it was not good enough for her. Do you think that she would have done the same if she realised the effort the child had put into that book?

Children are usually far more co-operative when their difficulties are understood and catered for.

**Understanding helps**

Take for example the little girl who wouldn't sit on the toilet even though her friends were already doing so. Many children fear sitting on the toilet but this child had once passed a motion in the bath and was terrified by the 'big brown monster' that suddenly appeared. Could it be that she feared that the monster was still lurking in the toilet along with others that may have joined him? Children have vivid imaginations.

Consider how comfortable you would feel balancing on a long-drop toilet if the hole was so big that you thought you could fall through if not careful enough. You would know that there were no large monsters lurking below but would you feel comfortable about the prospect of spiders or a snake? Many adults would go out of their way to avoid situations like this, but children cannot explain their resistance to the toilet.

Wisely the little girl's parents allowed her to use the potty until she felt secure enough to use the toilet.

**A closer look at their needs**

Acknowledging the little girl's fear and allowing a solution that she chose eliminated a tremendous amount of upheaval and the problem was soon solved. But for some situations this may not be enough and further action is required. For example, both Stanley, who wouldn't sit at the table because the chair was too hard, and the child who couldn't cope with the noise of the electric mixer were displaying symptoms of inappropriate sensory modulation. Occupational therapists who have studied in that field would be able to assist them.

The fourteen year old child needed far more support than the teacher recognised. She could have assisted him with general organisation in the classroom and also with planning of projects and assignments, and been less critical of his handwriting and spelling. Presentation is important but ultimately it is more valuable to ensure that the child understands



the subject matter rather than concentrating on the appearance of the book, especially if the older child has difficulties with writing or spelling and has poor organising skills.



There is ever increasing recognition of the importance of ensuring an adequate intake of essential fatty acids and healthier eating habits which often produce unexpected improvements in children.

**Irrational or misunderstood?**

The less we understand our children, the more irrational they will seem! A large part of the solution for taking control is to be able to understand the underlying reasons for their behaviour. Read books, attend courses and seminars and talk to others. Find out what works for them and maybe it will work for you.

Understanding why children behave the way that they do can eliminate untold hurt and anger. In addition it can radically change the parenting experience, making it far more pleasant and rewarding. It can also make the difference between a child growing up with love and acceptance ... or feeling like an outcast.

*Heather Picton*

**ADHASA News ~ Support Group activities**

**SATURDAY 11 JUNE**

**Neurotherapy:** Find out what it is and how it can assist your child (or yourself) with concentration and focus. We're looking forward to hearing Justine Loewenthal explaining it. Who knows, parents will probably benefit from it too!

**Suggested donation at meetings:**

R20.00 – members; R25.00 – visitors

**Date:** Saturday 11 June, 13h30 for 14h00  
**Venue:** Delta Park School, Standard Drive, Blairgowrie, Johannesburg.

**RSVP Phone: (011) 888-7655**

**SATURDAY 18 JUNE**  
**Adult ADD Meeting**  
**(ADHASA Adult ADD Group)**

Art Therapy can help us access and work through deep feelings and difficulties; and help us cope more effectively. The Speaker, Gillian Velleit, is a qualified Art Therapist (Canada) who invited me to a workshop when she returned to South Africa, and I was amazed at the difference it made for me at a time that I was dealing with a difficult issue.

**Place:** Roedean School  
 35 Princess of Wales  
 Terrace, Parktown

**Date:** Saturday 18 June 2005

**Time:** 14h00 for 14h30

**Entrance:** R25 Visitors;  
 R20 Members

Come along and be a part of this vibrant group of people determined to make a difference to their lives and helping others to do so as well!!!

National Office 011-888-7655;  
 Dr Norman Cahill 011-322-4000; or  
 Gail Ramsey 083-308-3547.

For bookings at meetings please  
 phone National Office:  
 011-888-7655  
 Weekday mornings 09h00-13h00

Suggested donation at meetings:  
 R20.00 – members  
 R25.00 – visitors

If possible we would like to advertise meetings of our Branches.  
 Please send details well in advance!

Payments to ADHASA  
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**FRIDAY 12 AUGUST AND**  
**SATURDAY 13 AUGUST, 2005**

**Volunteer Training Courses**

We have thoroughly enjoyed the last volunteer course – so much so that everyone agreed to extend the course by a couple of sessions because they wanted to learn even more! They are a wonderful group of people who have learnt a lot and taught us in the process, and already they're making an impact on the group. We have two new branches and hopefully we'll be able to have the office open a few extra days of the week. Welcome aboard!!!

Our next volunteer courses start on Friday 12 August and Saturday 13 August. We have two courses running at the same time to accommodate people who can only come during the week and those who can only make the weekends. There is still so much more to be done and we need more volunteers!

Please let us know which day you would like to attend.

**SATURDAYS**  
**23 JULY AND 30 JULY 2005**

**Seminar! Seminar! Seminar!**

Our Annual Seminar is once again to be held in collaboration with the Division of Special Education of the University of the Witwatersrand. This year we are having a Seminar for ADD Adults running concurrently with a Seminar dealing with issues of children with ADD. In addition to tackling the basics of ADD/ADHD, we have included many new subjects and new speakers which will give delegates far greater choice. See attached Seminar information. 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!



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

*This edition of "Keeping up with ADD" kindly put  
 together for us by Lorí Lea;  
 Executive, Life and ADD Coach of Mind Focus*