

Acceptus don't reject us

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

ADHASA

Helping the community for 16 years!

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

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

Phone Sandy on (011) 793-2079 when you can help.

Keeping up with ADD

Feb/March 2006

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If you do not wish to receive this please send an e-mail with "unsubscribe" in the subject.

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Weekday mornings
09h00 to 13h00

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Importance of Playing

The holidays had finally come and Tom was pleased that his cousin Mary had come to stay for a few days. One sunny morning after breakfast, Tom and Mary ran down to the stream which trickled past the bottom of the garden to look for the smooth blue, red and pink stones in the water. Soon they each had a handful of pretty stones which they put into their pockets as they climbed the old tree and sat on their favourite branch ...



knowing exactly where they are or what they are doing.

The question is: are children losing out in any way if they don't spend a reasonable amount of time running around and playing?

A learning activity

It is now recognised that playing is in fact a most valuable learning activity and can affect every aspect of a child's functioning and development. Physical, emotional, academic and social development can all benefit. For example, activities such as climbing trees or climbing frames, running, crawling and jumping; games such as hop scotch, leap frog, wheelbarrows or catches can improve co-ordination, muscle tone, balance and proprioceptive skills (sense of where the body is in space).

More unusual forms of play can also be fun.... Have you ever taught your child to fly a kite? A child who struggles to play in a group might prefer

eliminating people or creatures on their play stations or TV games!

Security issues

Life in the big city doesn't give children opportunities to be a part of nature; security issues have also become most important. As parents we are more comfortable knowing that our offspring are safely in the bedroom occupied with a play station or TV game, rather than running around the neighbourhood and we not

to do things on his own and climbing up the door frame can build shoulder and arm muscles; jumping on the bed is such fun and gives the vestibular system (the balance system) a workout! Doing handstands against the dining room wall can improve shoulder stability and provide some unusual vestibular input! Play should always be fun!!



Different types of movements are experienced when the child plays on see-saws, slides or swings, and could help with gravitational

security and further develop a sense of where his body is in space. Please make sure that he is never criticized in a situation which he finds scary and refuses to try. Demanding that he goes on the high slide, and stops being such a ninny, won't do anything to overcome his fears. Rather, hold him firmly in your arms and make him feel secure; let him try the same task with you nearby or holding him.

Sensory defensiveness

Many children have issues with sensory defensiveness and over-react to noise, touch, taste, bright light or smell. Part of the therapy to overcome sensory defensiveness includes helping children to come to terms with different touch sensations by letting them experience different textures in fun situations. Playing does the same thing: rolling down a slight incline on the lawn (no grass allergies please!); play dough, playing with sea sand, and even making their own mud pies (check no animal mess) can keep them busy for hours. A lump of biscuit dough which they can shape ready for the oven would also be very satisfying.

Not playing with others

Sensory defensiveness could cause a child to avoid too much contact with others. In general children who don't want to play or run around might have difficulty with low muscle tone, gravitational insecurity (fear or discomfort with movement at a height, or with not having feet firmly on the ground), poor co-ordination, over reaction to touch, sound etc. The child might also have some difficulty with planning and may not actually know what to do when he engages in more structured play. He might only be able to handle unstructured imaginary play. A Sensory Integration approach in therapy (Occupational or other therapy) may boost their performance and allow them to play more freely.

Playing can also help develop social skills, however a child with poor social skills might avoid playing in groups. Play therapy might help him cope better in this situation.

Playing can also affect the ability to concentrate:

Playtime gives children the opportunity to blast off and get rid of all that excess energy and, after a few minutes into the next lesson, they'll be able to settle down and focus once more. Exceptions are when they have filled up with all sorts of junk food from the tuck shop or their own lunch boxes!!!

Avoid keeping in or isolating that very difficult child at playtime because he'll only become increasingly difficult as the day progresses. The excess energy builds up inside him and he has no way of relieving it.

Board games are also important and help to develop organizing skills but don't just leave it up to the children. Have the occasional game with them.

A speck of dust

How often have we said "Go out and play BUT DON'T GET DIRTY"!!! It's very difficult for the child to get totally immersed in the game (and benefit from the activities) if he is constantly concerned about having a speck of dust on himself or his clothes. The benefits can't be nearly as great.

Playing families

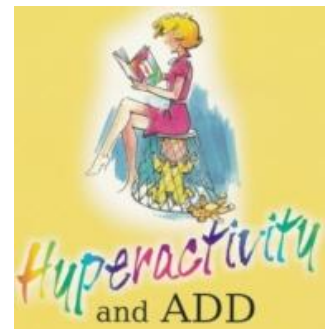
Each stage of a child's development is important and helps him to master different skills. His brain is developing at the same time. Play assists optimal



development of the brain and a child who doesn't have the chance to play is poorer for it. Even adults need to play – it is a tremendous way to relieve stress especially if you allow yourself to become totally involved.



We tend to take it for granted that all children know how to play, but the sad thing is that many don't. They go out into the garden or playground and don't know what to do with themselves. It's time to dig out all those games you played as a child; ask others if you don't know any games, and let's get our children playing! Of course it may come as a shock to them, and they could resist, but give it some time. Over weekends try to make some time to play as a family. You could be saving yourself time and money, and ultimately have a closer knit family.



Heather Picton

No link between ADHASA and Skills for Life College

In view of the fact that many people have contacted ADHASA in connection with Skills for Life College, we would like to clarify that Ms Taljaard was previously the President of ADHASA but resigned in June 2003. Since that time she has had no connection with ADHASA but unfortunately she has continued to misrepresent herself to the public as being linked with ADHASA.

Regretfully ADHASA has had to take legal action against Ms Taljaard, for this misrepresentation and other matters, which is still progressing in the Pretoria High Court and therefore we cannot comment at this time.

In spite of what Ms Taljaard may have said, ADHASA has not and never has had any involvement in any way with the Skills for Life College. We have always been led to believe that the Skills for Life College was privately owned by Ms Taljaard.

In view of the above you will understand that ADHASA cannot in any way become involved with the Skills for Life College over which it has never had any involvement or control.

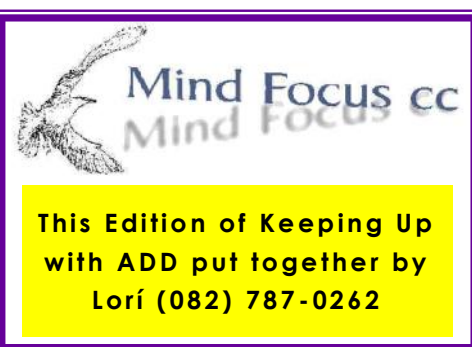
Whizz Kidz

Have you yet seen the latest edition of Whizz Kidz?? The exciting second edition of our quarterly magazine was recently posted to all members. Allyson has done a great job and comments are that it is magnificent even better than the first ... and a must for anyone with children! It is jam-packed with informative articles as well as letters, food list updates, breakfast and lunch box ideas as well as book reviews, a restaurant review, adult ADD, and competitions such as a crossword puzzle and Sudoku!

Major magazine distributors are loathe to take on new publications and so Whizz Kidz is not yet in the major outlet stores, but not for long as they are showing much interest. Therapists and certain stores around the country are contacting us asking if they can sell it in their area.

Whizz Kidz is currently available in stores such as the Spar Shops in Blairgowrie and Glenanda, Fruits and Roots in Emmarentia and Bryanston, the Dilly Lilly shop in Glenanda, Sohara Osman at the Garden City Clinic and Dentists Harry de Wet (Bedford Centre) and Dr Norman Cahi (Athol Square). Ramsgate Stationers in KZN are our first distant distributors; Stuart Wilson will also be distributing Whizz Kidz in KZN and surrounding areas.

If you'd like to see your therapist, local Spar or stationery shops stocking Whizz Kidz, give Allyson's number (082-561-0876) to them and we'll make sure it comes onto the shelves.



Please note that Whizz Kidz is sent free to all paid-up members of ADHASA. If you haven't yet joined, you can still get your free copy by filling in the membership form on our website www.adhasa.co.za; or by contacting National Office (011-888-7655) and asking for a membership form to be sent to you.

HELP!

We are still looking for more people to answer the phone in our office during the week. Thanks to our new office workers, it is wonderful to be open each weekday, but we would like to have a second volunteer to help out on certain days. Our hours are 8 am to 1 pm and if you have some spare time and would like to spend a morning a week on voluntary community work, please email Sandy on support@adhasa.co.za or phone her on 011 793 2079.

ADHASA SEMINAR

We have moved the date of our Annual ADHD Seminar from July to 7 and 14 October 2006. It is to be held at The Wits Club on Wits University Campus and we will tell you more about it in the next "Keeping Up with ADD". In the meantime, please diarise these important dates!

THANK YOU

We were recently invited to give a Poster Presentation at the recently held 3rd Public Health Conference held at Midrand earlier this month. Artist Elizabeth Bosman once more came to our rescue and produced the amazing attractive and informative posters which attracted many people and elicited many questions. Our information was of particular interest to the Kenyan delegates because they have very little information on the subject in Kenya. We'll be keeping contact with each other.