

Accept us don't reject us

Keeping up with ADD

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

ADHASA

Helping the community for 16 years!

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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 WHEN YOU CAN HELP.

THE PRESENT DILEMMA

CURRENT FAVOURITES

It's the Festive Season again and, once more, we're thinking about children's Christmas presents. To a large extent, traditional toys have been replaced with electronic toys such as computers, video games, Playstations and cell phones. Battery operated toys are also extremely popular. These are understandable choices for families who can afford them because they keep the children safely occupied at home and besides, children ask for them.



recognised the impact they had on AD/HD children's learning ability. When recently in the country, she explained to ADHASA that the activity stimulates the growth of the ends of the neuron (brain cell) fibres, which in turn improves the levels of communication between these brain cells. In addition to assisting learning ability, these activities help children improve muscle tone, co-ordination, social skills and a whole range of other things as well.



Electronic games have their uses, but cannot replace what the growing child loses by spending too much time in front of them. It was recently reported in a British International newspaper that spending more than an hour a day behind a glowing box (TV, videos, Playstation), can hinder a child's development.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Play activities such as running, sliding, rolling, climbing, jumping, crawling are all of great importance to our children's learning ability. Dr Madeleine Portwood conducted the now famous Durham Trials on the importance of Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs) for children with movement disorders, and in the process

We are not suggesting that children can't have electronic toys, but please let's have a more balanced approach.



WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

Children are very demanding and tell us exactly what they want – it's very difficult not to get the message! However, their behaviour (good and other) can tell us a lot about the kind of gifts they might enjoy.

Stimulating Movement

Movement and hands-on experience is extremely important so young children could have pull toys or



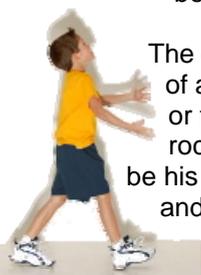
push cars and graduate to a tricycle, rocking horse, a pedal car, garden swing or a climbing frame. Never ever put a child into a situation where he is fearful, or for which he is not ready (Occupational Therapists do not like walking rings in which the child scoots around before they are even able to walk). What about building blocks or Lego or soap bubbles, which burst as children clap hands on them. A sandpit complete with different sized buckets and spades can keep a child happily occupied (and learning) for hours.

Reducing Frustration

Children, and especially those with AD/HD, often have tremendous frustration and hammering large nails into wood can provide much relief. Consider an old log, a real hammer and large nails and these could be extra satisfying for the child who tends to crash and bash into things. Other children have used smaller nails on squares of wood to spell out words or even create pictures.



Obviously there would have to be rules about the use of the hammer as there would be with all activity toys.



The child with the irritating habit of always drumming with hands or fingers might be a future rock star! Alternatively it might be his way of dealing with 'things' and so a hand drum might be a soothing activity (for him)!

Swinging can also be a calming activity as can riding a bicycle or bouncing a ball. A hammock could be useful if you have somewhere to hang it that is completely secure.



To encourage children to work together, consider a push or pull cart. At all times, parents should use their own common sense when choosing presents for their children.

Other gifts include a gardening set, complete with seeds and a small patch of land for the child interested in gardening; a kite; swingball; a basic recipe book; a baking set; a skipping rope or a ball. Let's have children going out, being constructively active and having fun! Even if it's just a game of hide and seek!

Textured gifts

Textures have become increasingly important in our lives and young children can have as much fun with fabric books with different textures. The touchy-feely child with hands on everything could be seeking further stimulation from touch – what about a blanket made up of squares of different textured fabric or a few different textured toys? A soft cuddly toy; a bristly rubber hedgehog or a squeezey ball. A squeezey ball can go a long way to calm children with sensory defensiveness, especially when they are about to lose their self-control.

Dressing up is great fun and gives another opportunity to explore textures – maybe a ballerina or a fairy, a spaceman outfit or Spiderman. How about allowing the children to dress up in many different textures and notice their seeking of certain textures and avoidance of others. The wrong texture can have a child's system in a state of high alert and ready to react at the slightest (or even imagined) provocation and it's unfair to put any child into this situation and expect him to behave 'in a proper manner'. Bear this in mind when shopping for clothes.



Rainy Days

Rainy day toys include a compendium of games with Snakes and Ladders, Drafts, Ludo and or Chess. There are also Pick-up Sticks, playing cards, knitting needles and wool, French knitting. Each one of these teaches our children learning and other skills in a fun way.

There are also story books for him to read. Even older children and sometimes teens still enjoy being read to by their parents and it's never too late to stimulate an interest in and an enjoyment of books.



PLAYING WITH CHILDREN

An even more valuable gift you can give your children is to play with them!! It teaches them how to play, how best to use their gifts and, most important of all, builds the bond between them and yourselves. It might be difficult at first, but that's all the more reason to persevere! So go ahead, push the swing, pull the cart, have a game of swing ball, play Snakes and Ladders... and find the child in yourself, even if it's just for 15 minutes a day. You might find this to be one of the best Christmases ever for you and a present that your child takes into the future!

Make it a wonderful play-filled Festive Season.

Heather Picton

Several ideas in this article have been taken from the book, *Out of Sync Child Has Fun* by Carol Stock Kranowitz. Every family with young children should have a copy where they can refer to it on a daily basis. Why not treat yourself to a copy this Christmas?

ADHASA NEWS

Keeping up with ADD

Many people have thanked us for our e-zine 'Keeping Up with ADD' and have frequently commented that it deals with and helps them through issues that they are facing. They are concerned when it doesn't arrive and we've had a number of calls asking about it.

It has been a bit erratic during this past year and we hope to have that all under control for the future. This October/November issue brings us almost up to date and in future *Keeping Up with ADD* will be sent out on a bi-monthly basis.

National Office is closed until 10 January 2007 when the schools re-open.

Whizz Kidz

Have YOU got your copy of Whizz Kidz? If not, secure your copy by phoning Allyson 082-561-0876 or e-mail support@ADHASA.co.za.

Whizz Kidz

ADHASA Online Shop

ADHASA has opened an online store offering a range of products that are suitable for people with and without ADD/ADHD. We have launched with several products and when you keep coming back, you will find we are adding to the list as your support of our shop grows.

Order now at www.ADHASA.co.za and your products will be promptly dispatched by courier. This is available immediately and will continue until 22 December 2006, when it will be closed for the festive season and reopen on 8 January 2007. Maybe you would like to give the book *Hyperactivity and ADD – caring and coping (WUP)* by Heather Picton as a gift, and have been unable to get out to get it!



Volunteers

We send a warm and heartfelt welcome to those wonderful people who responded to our last request for volunteers. We now have two new ladies starting in National Office when it reopens, and another two have volunteered to help in Durban! Thank you very much for coming forward – ADHASA is run totally by volunteers and we need them for us to continue the work that we do. We always need help – please offer anything you can, even if just a few hours a month.

Library Books

Our library is a valuable Support Group asset and we are always looking for opportunities to expand it. If you have any books on AD/HD (or related topics) that you are no longer using, please send them to us. We could use them to help many others!

There are still a few ADHASA library books that have not yet been returned – please contact Sandy (011-793-2079) or Heather (011-886-7668) in order to arrange their return as soon as possible.



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.**

We wish you all a very happy and playful Festive Season, a well-earned break and safe travelling.



To our Christian friends,
a Merry Christmas

To our Jewish Friends,
a Happy Channukah

And a wonderful New Year
to all our Muslim Friends.

**May it be a special
Spiritual, Peaceful and
Joyous Festive Season for
all our Readers, your families
and their loved ones.**

