



Accept—don't reject

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

ADHASA

Helping the community for nearly 19 years!

This article targets people with ADHD and the information could help other people too.

Please make this newsletter available to anyone who could use it.

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Volunteers Needed to help in the office, even just one morning a week, please!

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

Keeping up with ADD

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Making Life Easier for ADD Moms with ADD Kids

by Allyson Koekhoven

It is difficult enough being a mother, but how much more difficult is it for the mother of children with ADD if she has ADD herself? The number one rule is to 'lighten up'.



Often the biggest struggle for an ADD mother with ADD children is an internal one. Societal expectations have been deeply ingrained in many women, and mothers place severe demands upon themselves.

Breaking out of a mould that doesn't fit can take time and effort.



Working with a therapist who really understands issues related to ADD may help shed the impossible expectations that an ADD mother has of herself.

There has been much information about ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder with or without Hyperactivity) and the focus has been on children affected by it. Little attention has been given to adults with ADD. Many children with the disorder have one or more parents or grandparents who had the disorder in childhood, and still suffer many of the symptoms in their adulthood.

Many adults – some even unaware that they have ADD - have developed coping strategies to get them through the day. Some write detailed checklists (or use 'Reminder' functions on cell phones and PCs and laptops) which serve to prompt the errant memory. Others follow strict and daunting routines to ensure compliance with societal demands for order.



ADHASA has provided a support system for all parents (with or without ADD). It has been a lifeline when demands of daily life become too hard for desperate moms to bear alone. ADHASA has drawn on its nearly twenty years of experience and contact with other international ADD support groups to



This edition of "Keeping up with ADD" kindly put together for us by Lorí Lea; Executive, Life, Family & ADD Coach 082-787-0262 ~ www.MindFocus.co.za

provide the best information for all. In this issue we have some tips to help mums with ADD to cope more effectively with their own ADD and that of their children:

- Partners may feel anger and resentment about an ill-kept house or badly behaved children so it's important for mothers to enlist their partner's support.



If the husband or partner does not have ADD himself, then it's a good idea for the children's mother to be open and honest about how ADD affects her.

- Create an ADD-friendly environment in the home by approaching the family's ADD with acceptance and good humour.
- Reassess killer schedules for both moms and children. This helps everyone make it through the childhood and teenage years



with their sanity intact. If the pressure gets to be too much, look for ways of reducing commitments.

- Moms need someone who will give them unconditional and non-judgmental help, even if it's just to offload some aggravations. A good support system outside the home is vital for when the pressure cooker syndrome takes hold of family members.

- Time-outs are essential when you have ADD and are raising children. But it's not easy to find time for these breaks because they require planning. Making time-outs part of your routine eliminates most of the planning and juggling that might otherwise take place. An example would be to enlist the help of your partner to take the kids out and away from the house for a couple of hours on the weekend. Another solution could be arranging for a regular babysitter a few times a month.

- Invest in a good book on behaviour management techniques for children with ADD. (Check out the books in the ADHASA shop at Delta Park School.) Parents of non-ADD children often judge parents of ADD kids as being too permissive. They usually blame the *laissez-faire* attitude of parents with these challenging children. Parents of children with ADD know that their children don't respond to the usual management and limits in the same way that others do.

- Manage the destabilizing effect of hormonal fluctuations. It is not commonly known that moms with ADD often have more severe PMS or menopausal symptoms that women without ADD. Look for positive experiences to share with your children. Mothers need to stop blaming themselves for not meeting the demands of two of life's most 'ADD-unfriendly jobs' that of housewife and mother. Be aware of what is necessary and what has to be accomplished, however find ways of expressing yourself and interacting with your children.



Relax and make it a magical journey for you and your family.

ADHD SEMINAR Feedback

The 15th annual ADHASA seminar was once again held at Wits University's Sturrock Park Hall on 13 and 14 September.

Interestingly, this year's conference harked back to the conferences of the mid 90's of ADHASA conferences when the number of professionals (teachers and therapists) far outweighed the number of parents attending. Last year's conference boasted approximately 60% parents while this year's delegates (120 over the two days) comprised 22% parents. It would seem that perhaps the inflation rate has affected the attendance rate as well.

A mixture of topics aimed at both the professionals and the parents were presented by both well-known, long-standing presenters such as Prof van der Merwe (ADHASA Chairman) Jane Jarvis, Terry Wilke, Anita Decaires-Wagner, Mary Hyam and Elaine Harcombe; coupled with some new faces like Dr Gill Lloyd, Françoise Harrison, Renae Basson, Gail van Zyl, Dr Johan Erasmus and Paula Barnard.

Subjects covered included the role of essential fatty acids, medical assessments and diagnosis, auditory processing, nutrition, environmental influences, time management with children and classroom management.

A DVD has been produced which will soon be available for purchase.



Even if you were unable to attend, you can still gain from the experience. We also have CDs for sale which features the speaker notes. Please contact our office to place orders for either of these on 011-888-7655, or e-Mail order: adhasa@telkomsa.net.

