

Adult AD/HD

By George "Bud" Wassell, MS, LPC, CEAP

A while back I read somewhere that Adult Attention Deficit Disorder has a very significant impact on the workplace, which makes sense if you think about it. We all have that feeling of being scattered, especially when work is crazy and we're trying to keep up with multiple priorities. But true AD/HD is different, the same as feeling down or blue is different from real depression. So I thought I'd provide some information and hope you find it helpful.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) is one of the most researched health conditions in the United States. You may have heard of AD/HD associated with children who can't sit still, have short attention spans, or suffer from impulsive behavior problems. However, many adults also suffer from AD/HD. Most of them don't know it.

There are many symptoms of AD/HD, but most are rooted in three broad behavioral categories: impulsive behavior, short attention span, and often hyperactivity.

Think about your life at home and at work. Have you experienced repeated frustration sticking to repetitive and tedious tasks, or the inability to plan and organize your work? Have you suffered from excessive procrastination?



You may want to learn more about the symptoms of AD/HD, ... and what you can do about it.

Have impulsive or hyperactive behaviors contributed to disciplinary actions, interruption and intrusion on coworkers, conflicts with others, and multiple job changes? Have you had trouble with romantic relationships because of your impulsive behavior? Do you think of yourself as a fun-loving person, a "big kid," or a well-meaning but "hyper" person who "other people just don't understand?" Has your self-esteem suffered as a result of these experiences? If so, you may want to learn more about the symptoms of AD/HD, whether or not you suffer from this disorder, and what you can do about it.

The diagnosis of AD/HD is made by an experienced professional or several different professionals who interview the patient or client to determine the

pervasiveness of symptoms in a wide range of life functions. AD/HD symptoms adversely affect home and work life, so reports by family members are often key to helping professionals make the AD/HD diagnosis. All people experience periods of impulsiveness, hyperactivity, or inattentiveness at some point in their lives, but when these behaviors become pervasive, long-term, and affect life functioning, the existence of AD/HD is a possibility. Further evidence that symptoms have persisted since childhood strongly confirms the diagnosis.

Treatment for AD/HD is designed to prevent disruptive behavioral and cognitive symptoms and consequent life problems. A variety of medications are commonly used and are very effective. Cognitive-behavioral therapy is also very useful, along with education about the symptoms of the disorder and how to manage them.

The EAP can meet with you to discuss concerns or problems that may be associated with AD/HD, and can give you more information about symptoms. The EAP can also refer you to mental health professionals in your community who have experience in the diagnosis and treatment of AD/HD.

Call the EAP for *free & confidential* counseling and referral. Family members are welcome.

1-800-526-3485

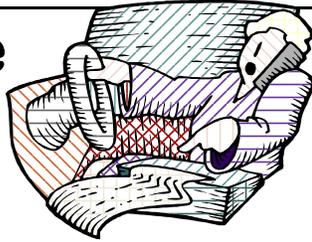
www.solutions-eap.com

Solutions EAP is a program of Middlesex Hospital and Behavioral Health Connecticut, LLC.

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Mobile Phone Rage?



New AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (AAAFTS) research shows that cell phone use in a car increases the risk of a crash. Other evidence exists that an emotionally intense cell phone conversation is riskier than a simple conversation. The AAAFTS research showed dialing a radio/CD/tape player or eating in your car puts you at even higher risk for a crash than using a cell phone!

Source: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Kids & Summer Drug Use



Kids in trouble with drugs don't take a vacation from drug abuse with the coming of summer. With more contact, signs and symptoms may be easier to spot between parents and kids during summer months.

Although brief experimentation is typically hard to spot, addiction includes more disturbing behavioral symptoms. A family history of addiction increases the likelihood that experimentation with drugs or alcohol can lead to addiction.

Signs and Symptoms:

1) **Mood swings** from passive and withdrawn to angry and hostile; 2) personality changes from energetic and outgoing to non-communicative; 3) blaming others and feeling "persecuted" or "victimized"; 4) unwillingness or inability to discuss important issues or concerns (the "leave me alone" syndrome); 5) rejection of family (meals, gatherings, or celebrations); 6) spending time with suspicious friends who refuse to meet parents, look them in the eye, or talk to them, and changing to clothing or jewelry styles that support drug abuse culture; 7) isolation: spending unusually long periods of time alone in bedroom; 8) apathy: dropping once meaningful activities like clubs, hobbies, and sports. The EAP can provide you with more information and guidance on intervening with a child or teen you suspect is using drugs. *Common mistake:* Adults dismissing drug use as a "normal" or a symptom of a depressed teenager rather than a possible primary healthcare problem.

EAP???

What happens when I call EAP?

Most people call to set up an appointment to see an EAP Counselor in-person. Call between 8:00 and 4:30, Monday — Friday to do this. After these hours you will reach our hotline crisis service. During business hours, our EAP team member will ask you where you live and work so we can determine the best location for you to see an EAP Counselor. We don't ask for any information about your personal issue, so calling EAP is as easy as calling your doctor or dentist. In some cases, when you can go to one of our staff counseling offices, we will schedule your appointment at the first call.

If it is more convenient for you to see one of our EAP Counselors in our network (many convenient locations are available) we will give you the name and number of the counselor and you will schedule your appointment directly with him or her. You may reach their voicemail, so leave a good time to be reached. We will call them also to alert them of your call. They should call you back promptly, usually the same day or within 24 hours, and initial appointments should be made within a few days. If you do not hear back from them or get an appointment within this time frame, call us back and we will give you another name. Also, once you have made an appointment, if you have to cancel or change it for any reason, please give the counselor at least 24 hours notice.

You may also speak to one of our staff counselors on the phone if you wish.

Remember, your entire EAP experience is confidential.

Shift Focus to Your Goal



Temporarily shifting your focus from your source of stress to something non-stressful is a key stress management technique. Using a powerful and exciting life goal is ideal. *Try this:* Identify any portion of any exciting "will-do!" pursuit or life goal you haven't acted on yet. Will you hike the Appalachian Trail someday? Buy a book, or begin planning now. Will you own your own bed and breakfast at the beach someday? There's a lot to know. Contact your state's bed and breakfast association to begin research on how to make it happen. Stressed? Take a break and spend time on your magnificent and exciting life goal.