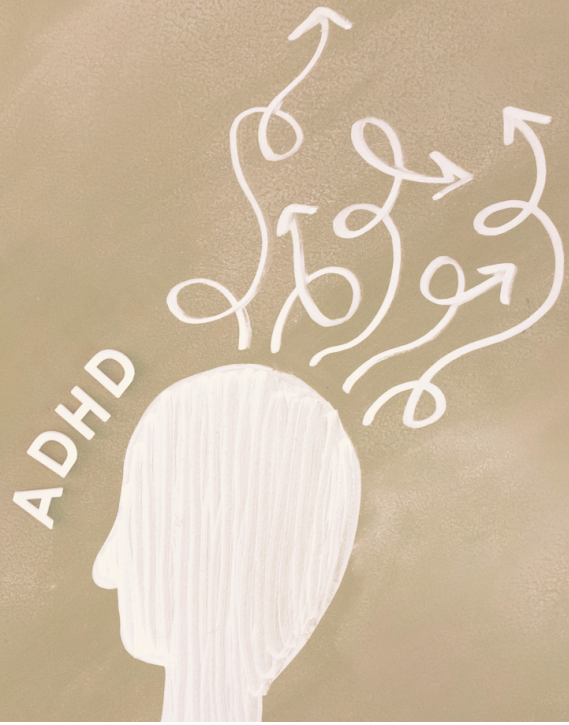


UNDERSTANDING ADHD: SIGNS, IMPACT, AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES FROM A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE



WHAT IS ADHD?

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by persistent patterns of inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. From a psychological perspective, understanding the signs, impact, and support strategies is crucial for individuals, families, and educators alike.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

1. Inattention: Difficulty sustaining attention on tasks, making careless mistakes, difficulty organising tasks and activities.

2. Hyperactivity: Excessive fidgeting, restlessness, difficulty engaging in quiet activities.

3. Impulsivity: Acting without considering consequences, interrupting conversations, difficulty waiting for turns.



IMPACT ON DAILY FUNCTIONING

1. School: Children may struggle to follow instructions, complete assignments, and maintain focus in class, leading to academic underachievement.
2. Work: Adults may find it challenging to meet deadlines, stay organised, and maintain consistent performance in the workplace.
3. Home: Household tasks, maintaining routines, and regulating emotions can be particularly challenging, affecting family dynamics and relationships.



CURRENT STATISTICS

According to recent statistics in Australia, approximately 5% of children and 2.5% of adults are diagnosed with ADHD. However, it's important to note that ADHD often remains underdiagnosed and undertreated, leading to significant disparities in access to support and resources.

STRENGTHS OF ADHD

While ADHD presents challenges, it also comes with unique strengths:

1. **Creativity:** Many individuals with ADHD demonstrate exceptional creativity, thinking outside the box, and generating innovative ideas.
2. **Hyperfocus:** While difficulty with attention is common, individuals with ADHD may also experience periods of intense focus on tasks of interest.
3. **Energetic:** The high energy levels associated with ADHD can be channelled into productive activities, such as sports or creative pursuits.

SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Effective support strategies can help individuals with ADHD thrive:

1. **Medication:** Stimulant medications like methylphenidate and non-stimulants such as atomoxetine are commonly prescribed to manage symptoms of ADHD.
2. **Behavioural Therapy:** Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) and behavioural interventions can help individuals develop coping strategies, improve organisational skills, and regulate emotions.
3. **Educational Accommodations:** Accommodations such as extended time on tests, preferential seating, and breaking tasks into smaller steps can support academic success.
4. **Structured Routines:** Establishing consistent routines and providing clear expectations can help individuals with ADHD manage daily tasks more effectively.
5. **Parental and Teacher Support:** Educating parents and teachers about ADHD, fostering open communication, and collaborating on intervention plans are essential for supporting individuals with ADHD across different settings.

