

# Helping Hand

Volume 20, Issue 7

## ADHD, IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

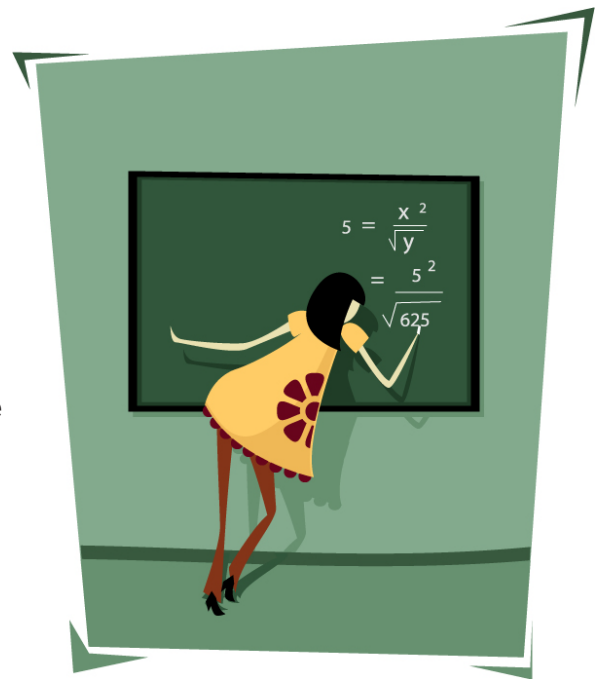
Children with ADHD face many challenges at school. They are at an increased risk for lower academic performance, peer problems and teacher conflicts. These children have a greater chance of dropping out of school. Many repeat grades or receive lower academic scores due to difficulties with paying attention, being “hyper,” or acting impulsively. A very typical problem is displayed by children who do not turn in schoolwork to the teacher even though it has been completed. Many have disorganized book bags and desks. Entry into middle school is especially demanding for children with ADHD because they are now expected to be able to switch from class to class.

To help ensure success in school, children with ADHD may qualify for special school services or accommodations under either of two federal laws: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Children covered by IDEA are entitled to education services that meet the standards of a free appropriate education. IDEA also requires that if a child’s behavior impedes learning, a Functional Behavior Analysis must be conducted and a Positive Behavior Plan developed. Generally, these are conducted by specialists who work with the school district. The Functional Behavior Analysis seeks to identify what the child does that blocks his or her academic progress so those behaviors can be modified. The Positive Behavior Plan focuses on a few specific behaviors at a time that can be learned to replace the ones that are not working. The plan never uses discipline or punishment, but instead uses meaningful rewards that are chosen by the child. In addition, schools are prohibited from suspending for more than 10 days and expelling students whose behavior results from their disability, unless drugs or weapons are involved or the child is a danger to him- or herself or others.

Section 504 is a civil rights statute that makes it illegal for schools to discriminate against children with disabilities and requires them to provide reasonable accommodations, which may include the provision of services. To be eligible for Section 504, a child must have an existing identified physical or mental condition that substantially limits a major life activity. Because learning is considered a major life activity, children with ADHD are entitled to protection under the law if the condition substantially limits their ability to learn.

Children with ADHD may benefit from modified instructions, special classroom assistance, behavior management and “assistive technology” such as tape recorders or visual aids.



# Teens and Online Gambling

Gambling is a part of our culture and teenagers are exposed to it in various forms. Whether exposed to lottery tickets in the store, ads for trips to Las Vegas on television, or billboards for tribal casinos, they receive many messages about gambling. Teenagers spend a large amount of time online and are very comfortable with using the internet. Online gambling sites are readily available and for many teens it may appear to be just another kind of entertainment.

Some teenagers may be more vulnerable to gambling than others. Although adolescence is a time of greater impulsivity, teenagers who have a family that gambles, who are often bored or feel lonely, or who start gambling at an early age are more susceptible to being lured to gambling websites. As a parent, it's your task to prevent your child from from being addicted to gambling.

Begin by establishing clear boundaries around which kind of sites are all right to visit, and the consequences for breaking the rules. Monitor which sites are visited, and keep the computer in a common area like the living room. It's also important to talk with your teenager about gambling and discuss the risks.

If gambling has become a problem, help is available. Talk to your teenager's school counselor or contact your Employee Assistance Program for a referral to a professional counselor.



---

## Compassion Through Service Projects

Compassion encourages us to be honest and to support justice because we can imagine how others who are hurt or suffering feel. Children can be taught empathy toward people they know and love, but often we shelter them from the hard things in life like poverty, homelessness, racism, or crime. As we do that, we may also be preventing them from feeling connected from people who are struggling. A service project can be a way to safely allow children and teens some exposure while giving them the satisfaction of doing something very real to help.

There are many types of service projects. Ask yourself:

- 1) How much time does our family want to invest in this? Don't overcommit.
- 2) How sensitive is my child? Will he or she be overwhelmed by a certain type of suffering?
- 3) What are the needs and wants of the people we'd like to help? Is our plan to help respectful of the people we want to help?
- 4) Can we afford this? Voluntourism in another country can be very rewarding, but it may not be affordable. It's a useful lesson to teach your child to balance compassion with healthy finances.
- 5) Is my child physically able and emotionally mature enough to do the project? Even young children can be very helpful when effectively supported and safe.

**Helping Hand** v20i7

Copyright © 2010  
Troy, Michigan

---

PRP Media, Inc.  
1270 Rankin Dr., Suite F  
Troy, Michigan 48083-2843  
248-588-7733; 1-800-453-7733  
www.PRPOnline.net

Editor: Julie Flaming  
Contributors: Julie Flaming, Matthew Barnes  
Graphic Designer: Lisa LaGrou  
Publisher: Jane Adams

Please send suggestions or contributions to the editor at the above address or through your student assistance program.

HELPING HAND is published monthly (September-May) to provide timely information to readers; its contents are not intended as advice for individual problems. Editorial material is to be used at the discretion of the reader and does not imply endorsement by the owner, publisher, editor, or distributors.

## Homework Help



Homework is a great chance to work on all kinds of skills. Homework teaches students how to manage time, how to stay with a hard task, how to work as a team on a project, how to learn something new, and sometimes even how to ask for help. No two children are alike, so finding the right way to support your child is a very individual thing.

There are many ways you can help your child. Observe how he or she does work best. Most students will need quiet, structure, and a routine, such as always taking a quick break after school and then doing homework from 4 p.m. until dinnertime. One of the most important questions to ask yourself is, am I trying to do something for me child that he or she can (or should) do for himself? If I help now, will he or she learn what he or she needs to know from this assignment?

If you are worried about how your own lack of knowledge will hurt your child, schedule a

meeting with your child's teacher. Explain your worries and ask for suggestions on either what you can do to learn the material, or what things you can do (like helping with flash cards) without knowing the subject yourself.

---

## Girls and Dating Violence

Student dating violence has received little attention in the media. According to the Family Violence Prevention Fund, one in three adolescent girls is the victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in a dating relationship. While approximately 75% of parents report they have had a conversation with their teens about a healthy relationship, three-quarters of boys and two-thirds of girls say they have not discussed dating violence with their parents in the past year.

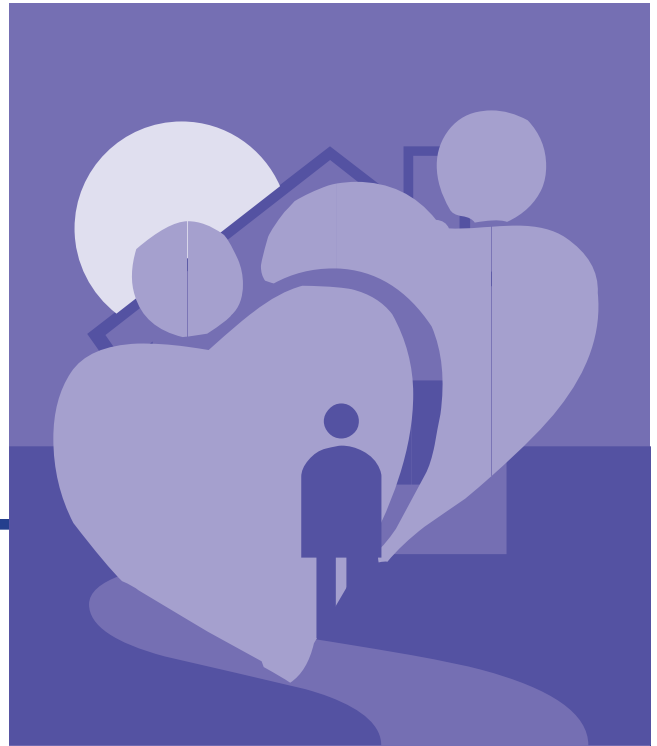
The most typical type of abuse in a junior high or high school romance is emotional abuse in which a boyfriend or girlfriend calls his or her significant other names, criticizes them, threatens them, or becomes very jealous and controlling of whom she or he talks to or spends time with. Sexual abuse may involve sexting, in which a boyfriend or girlfriend is coerced into sending sexually explicit photos or texts or pressure to have sex before he or she is ready. Physical abuse can involve slaps, shoves, hair pulling, or shoving.

There is never a good reason for someone to be controlled or abused in a relationship - No matter how "bad" someone thinks they are, every person deserves to be treated with love and respect. If you have concerns about the safety of a student, consult with your school's student assistance counselor. If danger is imminent, call 911.

# Tips for Setting Helpful Limits with Teens

As a parent, it is your job to offer support and be available for your teenager as much as possible. One of your roles is to help develop your teenager's judgment and sense of responsibility. It might help to recall what you went through as a teen. You may remember that part of the process was scary. While you were feeling independent, you may have felt vulnerable.

For most teenagers, having limits helps them to feel more secure in the long run. The trick is to establish and enforce your limits with mutual understanding and respect. Your plan for guiding your teenager to adulthood may include:



- Agree on reasonable rules for living together.
- Experience can be the best teacher. Let go of small things when the situation isn't harmful.
- Teenagers are trying to prove themselves, and they need all the support you can give. Use positive reinforcement whenever possible.
- Teenagers need a stable point of reference. Consistent, fair treatment and logical consequences provide the best framework for getting along.
- Recognize your own limits. Drug and alcohol abuse or self-destructive behavior can limit your ability to help. Seek professional assistance as soon as you need it.
- Teach responsibility and remember that love and trust are the basis of your relationship. A positive attitude, realistic expectations, and open communication can help you succeed.

**For more information, contact:**