

THE PARENT'S ROLE AFTER THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS OF ADHD

By Elaine Lerner, MSW, CSW

After the diagnosis of ADHD, parents often call me feeling overwhelmed when trying to understand how to put together a plan to manage their child's needs. ADHD can best be managed through a combination of modalities including but not limited to medical and behavioral management treatments. Parents interact with their children on a daily basis and are at the "Point of Performance" where they can have the greatest impact on making change and supporting their child's needs.

Get Involved

Parents are at the "Point of Performance" when children act impulsively, have difficulty sustaining focus or fail to follow through with jobs to completion. Before parents can help effectively, they need to take the time to understand the biological as well as social ramifications of ADHD. This way, they can become a more effective source of support and advocacy.

Get Educated

ADHD affects children at home, in social setting and at school. You will need to learn techniques to help your child: Sustain Attention and Focus, Improve Behaviors, Accommodate Work at School, Develop Homework Skills, Communicate with Peers and Improve Family Relationships.

Use a Strength Based Approach

Children with ADHD can be exceptionally creative. They have strengths as well as areas that need accommodation. By focusing on areas of strength, you more easily build on

accomplishments and improve your child's self esteem. Accompanying this with a system of positive reinforcement will set the stage for change and improvement.

What A Parenting Class Should Include

A parenting class should include:

- 1) **An education on ADHD:** - the biological and social components
- 2) **An assessment of your parenting style and skills** – Do you and your partner have the same style and do you act on a united front?
- 3) **An evaluation of your Child's strengths** and areas that need accommodation
- 4) **Training on parent communication skills** to help you get the results you want to achieve
- 5) **A strength based - positive reinforcement - behavior management system** to change behaviors, teach them how to perform routines or to learn new tasks
- 6) **Education on school accommodations**, IEP & 504 plans and school communications
- 7) **An online behavior management system** to provide consistency and follow through after the class is over.

Follow Through After The Class

One of the biggest problems I have seen with ADHD is the fact that it is biological. This means there is a high probability that one of the parents may also have ADHD. Expecting a parent with ADHD to be able to change these characteristics in their child without the proper training and ongoing

support may not be realistic. Consistency and follow through is essential. Behaviors cannot be changed overnight. For this reason, I incorporate an online behavior management program into my 8 session ADHD parent training. Learning techniques accomplishes nothing unless the techniques are used consistently. The online program is flexible and uses visual cards that can be changed to handle just about any need. The cards can be prepared and printed from the convenience of your home. Changing behaviors is a process. It takes time, commitment and consistency. Remember, you are teaching your child skills they will use throughout their entire lifetime. Teach them while they are young and give them a better chance at managing their ADHD and living a successful life.

Elaine Lerner, MSW, CSW is an ADHD Parent Trainer. She uses the Russell Barkley, PhD. method of behavior management. She conducts ADHD Parent Trainings in Melville, Garden City, Long Island and Boca Raton. Trainings help educate parents to better understand the nature of the disorder. Conducting meetings in a group approach allows parents to share their experiences with others in a caring and supportive environment. Parents learn how to manage their children on a day-to-day basis. Trainings help relieve stress in families, bringing them closer together. For more information:

Visit www.ADHDParentTrainer.com,

Call (516) 487-0636

Email Elaine@ADHDParentTrainer.com