

# ADHD Tips From Teachers



## How to Help Your Child Succeed

By [Parenting.com](#)

If your child has been diagnosed with [ADHD](#), teacher attention -- and, even better, an [individualized education plan](#) -- will help him do his best in the classroom. But you can also do your part to keep your child on track at home. We talked to Michael Belle-Isle, director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services for Amherst School District in Amherst, N.Y., to find out what his

[teachers recommend for supporting ADHD students](#) when they're not in school.

### **Be Consistent**

Establish a daily routine that kicks in as soon as your kid walks in the door. Snack, homework, dinnertime and bedtime should be as close to the same time each day as possible. This establishes a pattern and helps your kid stay focused on the task at hand.

### **Talk It Out With the Teacher**

This is a biggie. Communication should be clear and frequent between you, your child and the teacher. Talk to your child's teacher often -- weekly, if not daily -- about what's going on in school and at home. When you have a task or directive for your kid, provide short, clear directions. Then have your child repeat what he heard back to you to ensure everything was understood.

### **Stay on Schedule**

Post schedules around the house that outline what happens every day in the hours before and after school. They're as helpful to your child as your own schedule is to you and can keep you all on track.

### **Eliminate Distractions**

Switching off the TV set at homework time is a no-brainer, but here's an important point: TV and video games should be off-limits for everyone when your child is hitting the books. Even if the sound is low or the video game is being played in another room, just knowing that someone is getting screen time can be very distracting to kids with ADHD.

### **Limit Screen Time**

Of course, we all need time to unwind in front of the boob tube sometimes, but it's important to understand that for ADHD kids, TV and video games can really increase levels of distraction. Parents should be very active in limiting television time. Make it part of a positive reward system for when work is finished -- not before. (This might mean less TV time for everyone in the family, but that might not be a bad thing, either!)

### **Use the Folder System**

Assignments have less of a chance of creeping up on your kid if you create special folders or baskets for their work and fill them right after school every day. Label one "do this" and another "done" to keep daily and weekly assignments organized.

### **Organize the Backpack**

With that in mind, be there to help your kid empty and sort out his backpack when he get home. Between hats and gloves, gym clothes, library books and homework folders, bags can get crowded and disorganized quickly. Weed out unnecessary objects daily.

### **Enforce Bedtime**

It's a vicious cycle: Your kid goes to bed later one night, then has a hard time concentrating the next day, then

stays up later to get his work done because his focus is off. Don't let the cycle start by making sure she gets enough z's each and every night.

### **Stay Close**

No one likes a helicopter parent -- or being called one -- but ditch the labels and recognize that your subtle supervision during homework time can really help your child. Frequent positive verbal cues like, "That assignment's really coming along!" or "I can't believe you've done that much work already!" both encourage and help your kid stay focused.

### **Use Charts and Checklists**

But you don't have to be your child's only source of feedback. Simple visual reminders like charts and checklists can keep your kid focused on his schoolwork, even when he's at home. They allow your child to do some self-monitoring, letting him see how much he's accomplished and what still needs to be done.

### **Break It Down**

If your child is feeling overwhelmed by something on the to-do list, help her break it down into smaller, more manageable steps. For example, don't just list "do science project" but rather "brainstorm flow chart for science project; choose and shop for supplies for science model." Smaller goals feel much more reachable, and checking things off the list is gratifying.

### **Limit Choices**

For kids with ADHD, too many options can be overwhelming. If you tell them they can watch TV or play their PSP or call a friend or get dessert, then focus wavers from any one task -- even if it's a fun one. Instead, help your child stay on target by limiting the this-or-that decisions.

*This story, written by Joanna Batt, originally appeared on [Parenting.com](#). Used with permission.*

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