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Keep The Farmer

ADD Isn't Just a Kid Problem —It's Ours as Well

By Dr. Kenneth Silvestri ©2015



The label “Attention Deficit” is being thrown around way too much. Given the very general process that determines whether a child has it or not, the vast majority of our citizens (young and old) would easily fall within its “official” definition. Any label, especially if it hints at a deficiency, is scary. If you are a parent or grandparent you can, feel pretty helpless when it has been placed on your child.


Well-intentioned school personnel may be advising you to pursue the quick fix of medication, however, it is best to stop and pause. Remember the “name” is not the thing nor is the “map” the territory; so don’t get overwhelmed by labels. We are all different; we have our own temperaments and learning styles. Regardless of what the pharmaceutical companies advocate as a solution, there are alternative ways to address the situation. Here are suggestions that will enable you to develop a plan and make a positive difference in your child or grandchild’s life.

Our attention and concentration depends on our readiness to access the present moment; so get involved with them by participating in such exercises as being “mindful,” which encourages learning to breathe and focus, as well as relaxation and visualization techniques. In most cases these will result in an increase in a child’s awareness

and concentration. Some helpful books include: “Mind In The Making,” by Ellen Galinsky, “Child’s Mind,” by Christopher Willard and “The Mindful Child,” by Susan Kaiser Greenland.

Don’t blindly depend on the “experts.” You know your child or grandchild much better. Be positive and think outside the box. On one occasion I told an eleven year old patient, who had issues focusing and consequently low self esteem, the story of a little girl frantically throwing starfish back into the ocean after thousands were marooned from a violent storm. A passerby looks and says to her “Why bother, it doesn’t matter, there are so many,” and she replies “But it matters to this one.” This brief story resonated with the child and her new found positive attitude was all she needed to trust herself, and get the help she needed.

Perhaps the best way to assist is to participate in a support team for the child (schools can easily coordinate this,) who communicate with each other and have clear roles and responsibilities such as one-on-one time with grandparents. Other resources, including vitamins and homeopathy also have a proven record of success. Yes, in some cases prescription medication may be warranted, but we have everything to gain and nothing to lose by trying a more holistic approach, based on a child’s individual needs.

All in our society will benefit in the long run by addressing the needs of our youth, and who amongst us is not concerned about them and their future. In this seeming “epidemic” of ADD, you will be helping your loved one, yourself and other parents/grandparents as they learn of your efforts. You are about to embark on a possible life- changing journey for your child, with the added bonus that you can have a lot of fun while helping them. 



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