



# WHAT IS ADHD?

# Understanding ADHD in Children

- **ADHD**- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a recognised medical problem with a number of different symptoms.
- Common condition described over 100 years ago.
- There is clear evidence that ADHD is **not** caused by bad parenting skills.
- The condition can be inherited and run in families.

## Other risk factors

- Low birth weight
- Maternal smoking/alcohol/drug use
- Meningitis and brain injury.
- Chemical imbalance



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# Core ADHD Symptoms

## **Inattentiveness:**

Having a short attention span/does not pay attention.

Doesn't seem to listen when spoken to

Fails to finish tasks/Avoids sustained effort

Easily distracted.

Can't organise/loses things

“Forgetful”



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# The cycle of inattentiveness





# Core ADHD Symptoms

## Hyperactivity

Fidgets eg: touching others, chewing, twiddling, tapping. These can be small or large movements.

Always on the go, unable to sit still eg: leaves seat in class, or unable to remain seated when at the cinema, dinner table, assembly.

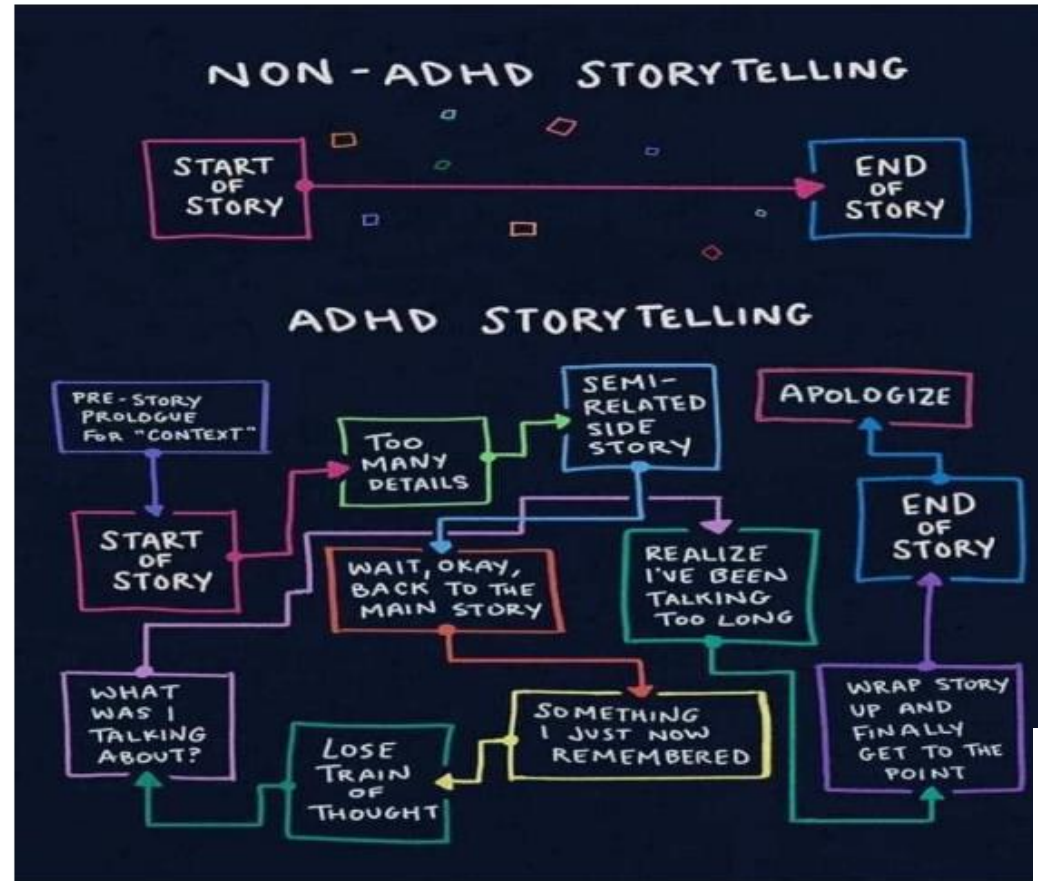
Run and climbs excessively

Talks excessively (verbally hyperactive)



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# Busy Minds



# Core ADHD Symptoms

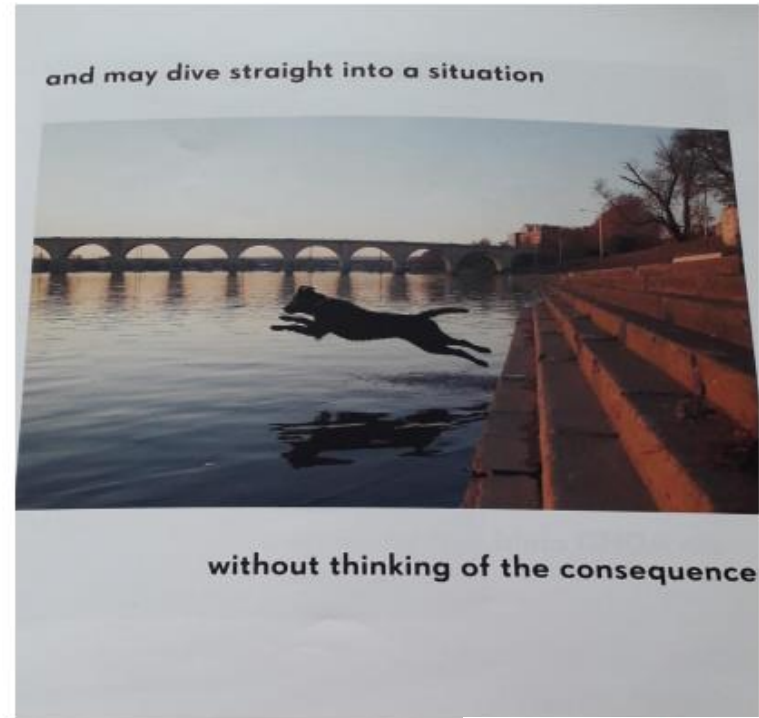
## Impulsivity

- Unable to wait their turn eg: table games, computer games.
- Impatient
- Needs to be first.
- Shouting out answers before the question is complete.
- Finishes others sentences.
- Interrupting other peoples conversation or games.
- Intrudes on other eg: games at school in the playground.
- Invading others space.



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# Impulsivity





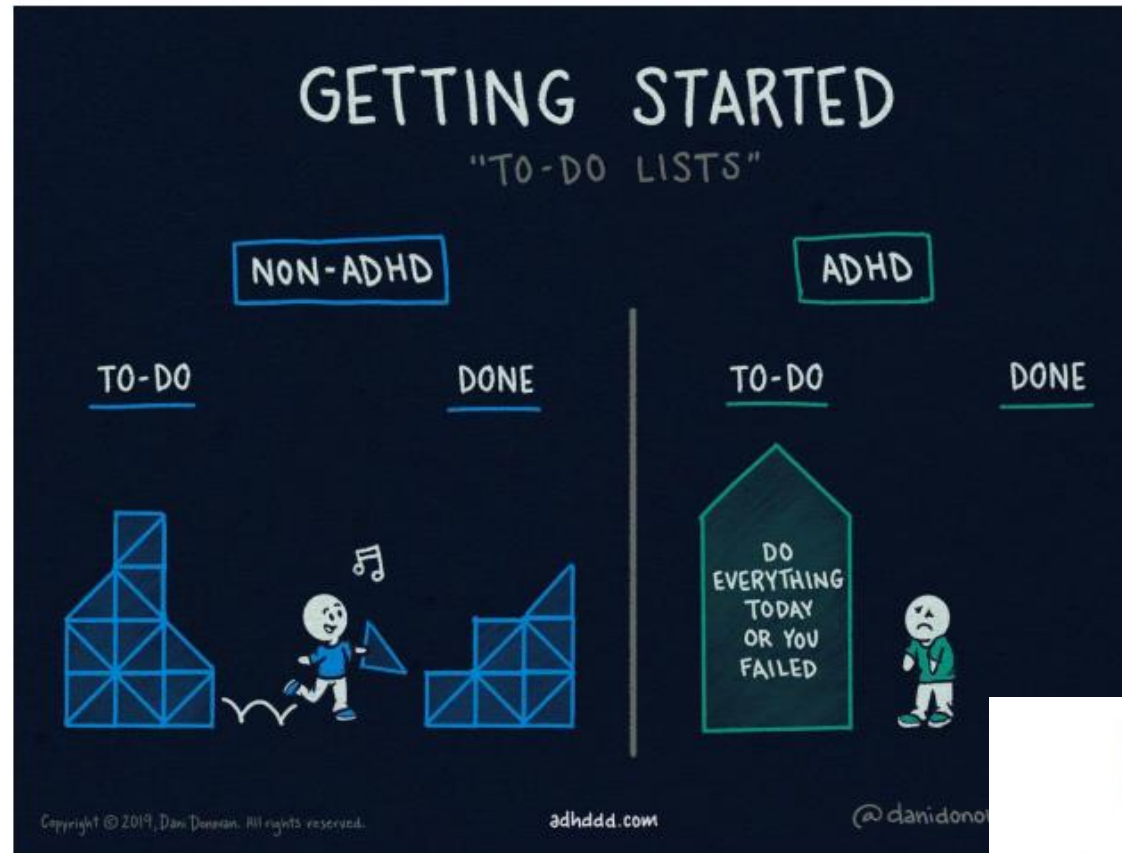
# ADHD

- ADHD is like a TV set that isn't receiving a perfect signal .For the child it's as if the channels keep changing.
- Their world is a constant stream of changing images and messages. It's difficult to focus on one thing at a time because something new is always coming along.
- It's all rather bewildering and it's hard to keep pace.



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# Feeling overwhelmed



# Brain Function

- Chemical messengers(Neurotransmitters) pass information across the brain.
- Dopamine/Noradrenaline is needed to help support this, people with ADHD do not have enough of this chemical to get the message across
- We need this to help to process our Executive Function effectively.
- The following video will help explain this
- You Tube Flynn ADHD Information video  
<https://vimeo.com/68604218>



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# Executive function

- Children and young people with ADHD can have difficulties in these areas which in turn can have a impact on their ability to perform tasks, pay attention, remember detail and organise themselves.
- Focusing
- Weighing the pros and cons of a situation
- Planning and carrying out best response
- Thinking ahead
- Waiting and not rushing
- Organising self
- Controlling emotional reactions
- To remain motivated
- Processing speed



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# ADHD & Co-morbidities

- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Conduct Disorder
- Anxiety Disorder
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Developmental Disorder
- Language/Reading delays
- Co-ordination motor delays
- Tics, Tourette Syndrome
- Sleep Problems



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# ADHD from young person's perspective

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI7Ro1PUJmE>

A short video to share.

# What's good about having ADHD?

- Children with ADHD may be very creative.
- They may be funny/kind/thoughtful
- They may be talented with sports/music/IT



Michael Phelps



Emma Watson



Will.i.am



# Super Power

Find you child's super power, encourage and engage them to achieve in the skills they are good at.

This will raise their self esteem, their confidence and build resilience.



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## The following information will give you a Tool-kit of ideas on how to :

- Stop unacceptable/difficult behaviour.
- Encourage appropriate behaviour.
- Manage testing & manipulation



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# Stop un-acceptable & difficult behaviour

How does this look for you: We will all have our own rules & boundaries. It is important that you know these so you can focus on improving them eg: swearing, climbing, leaving the dinner table, hitting & interrupting conversations.

## Ideas:

Start with clear **house rules** – Work on the first 3 to start – use positive language when writing these eg: If a rule is “no” swearing you could say “only use kind words”

**Positive role modelling** eg: lead by example your children learn from you and follow your lead.

**Praise** as soon as you notice a positive this can be as simple as a “well done for .....” or a gentle hug, and if possible in the presents of others.

**Rewards** can be small or large and can be as simple as extra time with a parent doing an activity they like eg: watching TV programme, an extra story or choose a pudding. Be mindful children and young people with ADHD may find it difficult to wait or their reward for long periods (several days). So if possible the reward needs to be in the moment.



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# Stop un-acceptable & difficult behaviour

- Sometime there needs to be consequences for the house rules being broken.
- It is important (if you can) to have identified what consequences you have chosen to use as a family when setting up the house rules.
- It is also important to use the positive tools discussed on the previous slide as your day to day tools to manage unacceptable behaviour and not rely on consequences.
- Before a consequence is given you need to give a reminder of the house rules and enough time to correct this or apologised. REMEMBER to praise when the behaviour has stopped.
- Some examples of consequences:
- **Time out/alone time/reflection:** – Often used when they are no longer able to clearly say how they are feeling or what is wrong and are overwhelmed, resulting in screaming, shouting, crying and running off. The aim here is to allow come down time, this can be as long or as short as needed the child needs to come out of this by themselves and **ONLY** discuss the behaviour if **THEY** feel the need to. We are adults and need to move on.



# Stop un-acceptable & difficult behaviour

- **Reduce TV/ Computer time:** It is advised that TV & computer times are scheduled into a daily routine. This is important as you can reduce the time rather than take the console or turn the TV off eg: If your child has 2 hours on the X-box after school and an unacceptable behaviour has taken place and you have to use a consequence then you would be able to take an allocated time (10 mins) away at the beginning.
- Again please **REMEMBER** to reinforce why the consequence has been chosen.
- It is important to remember and for the child to know it is the behaviour that is not liked and not the child themselves.



## Mild & annoying behaviour

- Ignore it!!!!
- Mild annoyances are irritating and at the end of a long day they might push parents over the edge of patience, but they are part of living with anybody and you are role modelling the following:
- Tolerance, Resilience and understanding in families.



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# Too much talking & too much Emotion

A child's ability to take in information is limited

The child can shut down or block out (or dissociate) information

In a situation of heightened emotion, too much talk inhibits their ability to think properly.



## How to encourage appropriate behaviours

- Setting up a family meeting
- Rewards
- Consequences
- Setting up a safe/calm space
- Useful books
- Nice guidelines



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# Family Meeting

- Discuss as an adult family group beforehand on how you want the family meeting to go.
- **Things to consider**
- Rules of the house- to be agreed by all
- Any new Routine/ Boundaries
- Rewards/incentives
- Consequences
- Be sure of what you want to achieve as a family so you present as united & consistent to your children



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# Family meeting

- Choose a time when you are all at home and not rushing to leave.
- Have some food and drink available.
- Relaxed atmosphere
- Let all family members have a chance to talk (one at a time)
- Develop 2 or 3 positive rules and write them down (great if the children can do this) and have them on display where they can be referred to easily. (make it bright and fun)
- Keep it positive, it's about moving forward not blaming.





# Reward Ideas



- Descriptive praise
- Activity of their choice e.g. read a book/play a game
- Watch a DVD
- Trip to the park
- Have a sleep over/friend round
- Objects in a jar
- Small toy (party bag)
- Go for a bike ride.
- Go Swimming
- Choose what's going to be for dinner/pudding
- Quality time with you
- Positive comments
- Car time–them having the car/you taking them
- Special meal- Pizza or them being allowed to cook
- Extended curfew
- Extended computer /social media time
- Friend over- sleep over
- A hug / touch



## Creating a safe/calm space

- This can be useful in helping your child to self regulate their emotions, with time and guidance they will know when they are becoming overwhelmed and need to step away.
- This is seen as a positive space for them to go to, this is not a punishment or an exclusion.
- Remember the “no talking, no emotion” rule, keep it simple and use a “buzz” word that only family know that gives them permission to use “their space” if you can see them becoming overwhelmed.
- Can be adapted to use out and about (cushion, blanket and a grab bag of sensory toys)



# Creating a safe/calm space

- Ideally choose a quiet space in the corner of the room away from the main living area.
- Use a pop up tent, blanket, cushion or beanbag.
- Create a calming space with some fairy lights and have a bag of sensory/fiddle toys, lego, colouring or puzzles, their favourite cuddly toys, headphones/ear defenders etc
- No computers, tablet, phone or gaming devices
- Encourage your child to use their space when you can see them becoming overwhelmed.
- Make the space personal to them (others not allowed in)
- Be clear this is not a punishment but an acknowledgement that they need to have some space to calm their brain.
- Your child chooses when to come out.
- Do not discuss the reasons why they went in unless they want to.





# Managing Testing and Manipulation

- All children will test their parents and push boundaries at sometime, it is part of their development.
- If you “give in” every time, they will learn that manipulation is a strong tool to use to get their own way.
- Be prepared to make some compromises, and teach by example on how to compromise in a respectful way, especially as your child gets older and seeks more independence.
- Remember the less talking less emotion rule.. Too much talking will lead to a power struggle.
- Teaching your child to compromise is an important life skill.



# Managing Testing and Manipulation

- The aim is to teach your child to use their power cooperatively while you keep your limits about acceptable behaviour.
- This means that if your child has been playing computer games all morning and they get angry when you ask them to turn it off, they need to learn to pause, identify they are upset, calm themselves down and then make a suggestion in a respectful way.
- If your child says “this game only has two more minutes. Would it be okay if I finish it and then I’ll turn it off?” he has offered a solution respectfully.
- If your child ignores you, or says, “I’ve only just started”, or starts crying just to get her way they are using manipulation.
- If your children are being disrespectful, using mean words, or other forms of power to bully you into giving them their way– they are manipulating.



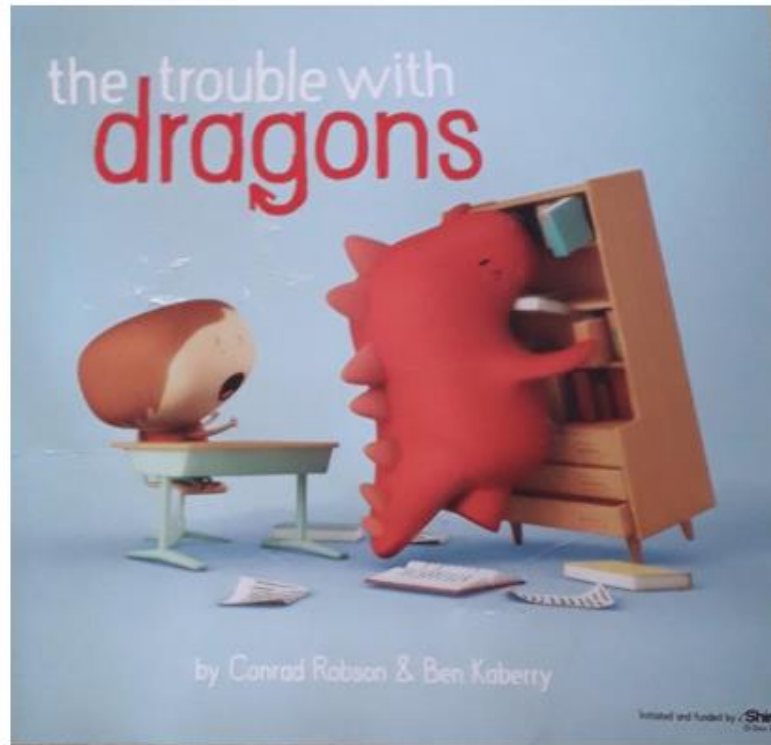
# Managing Testing and Manipulation

- If they issue a threat or start to manipulate, point it out and ask them if they would like to try asking in a more respectful way. If they refuse to engage respectfully, either walk away explaining that you deserve to be treated kindly, or calmly enforce your request despite their resistance. Eventually, your child will learn that they're more likely to get their way by respectfully engaging you than manipulating you. At times, they'll need to learn that "no" simply means "no" and that in these instances, there's no room for negotiation.
- Taken from [constuctiveparenting.com](http://constuctiveparenting.com)

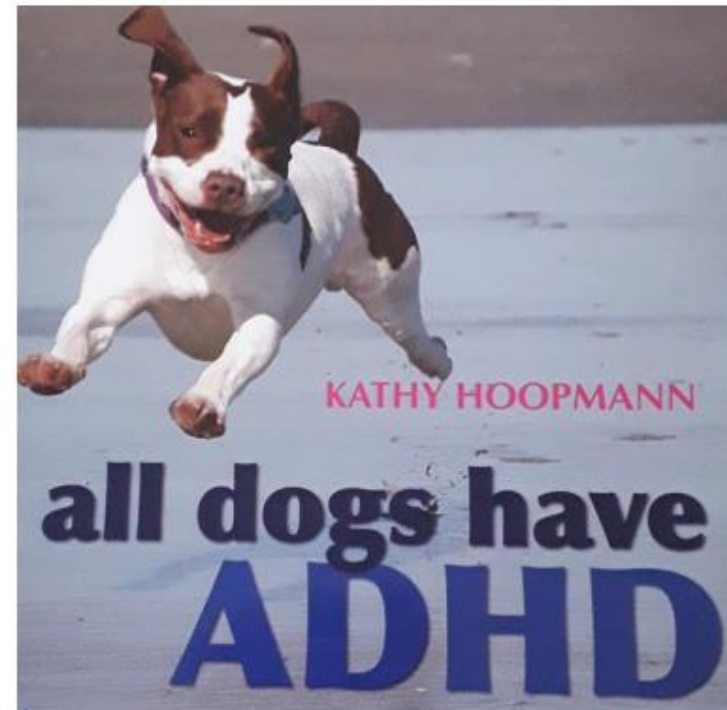


# Recommended Reading

**Ideal for the younger child**



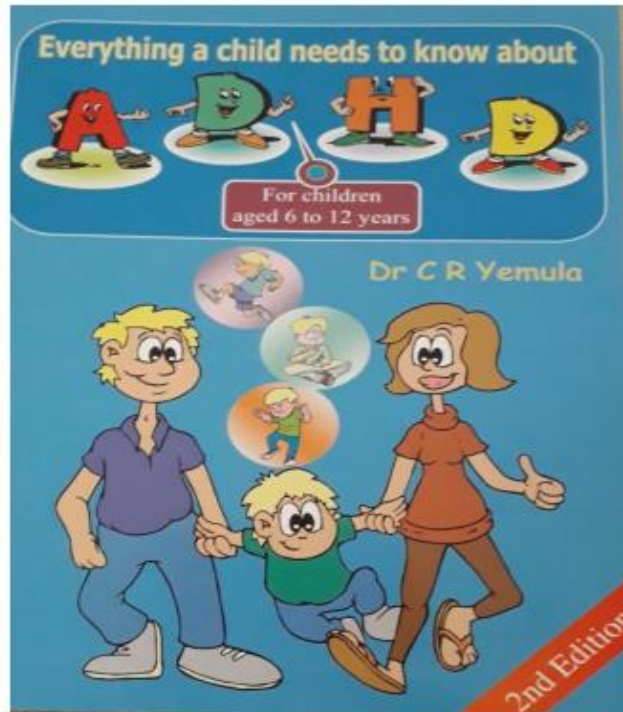
**Lovely to share understanding**



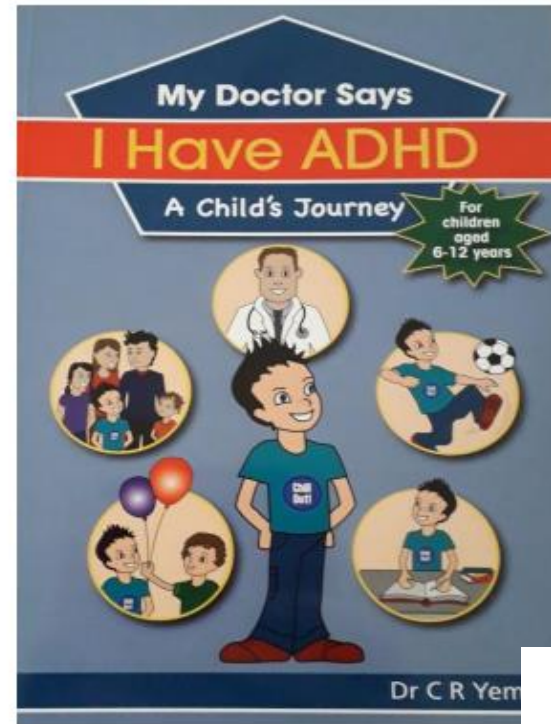


# Recommended Reading

Suitable for age 6- 12 yrs



Suitable for age 6- 12 yrs

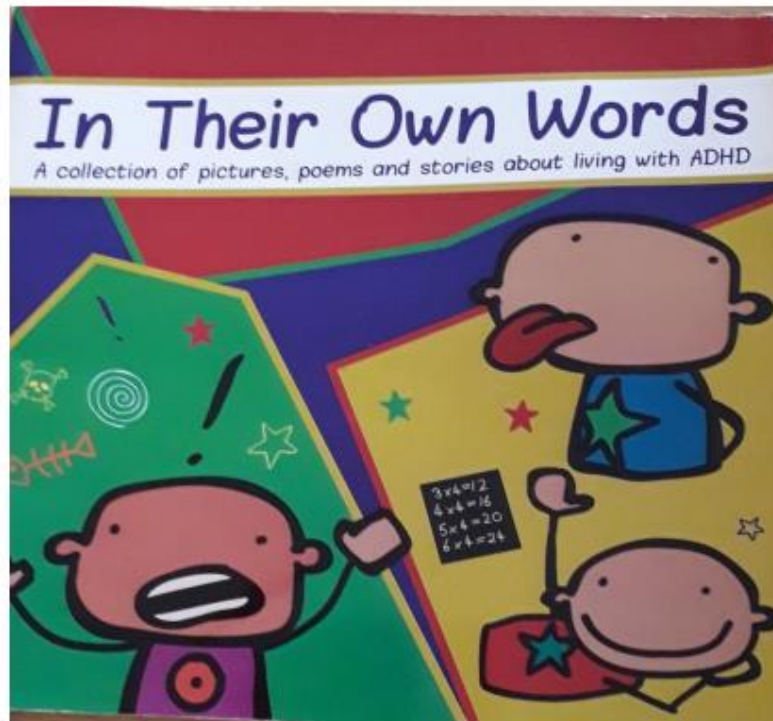


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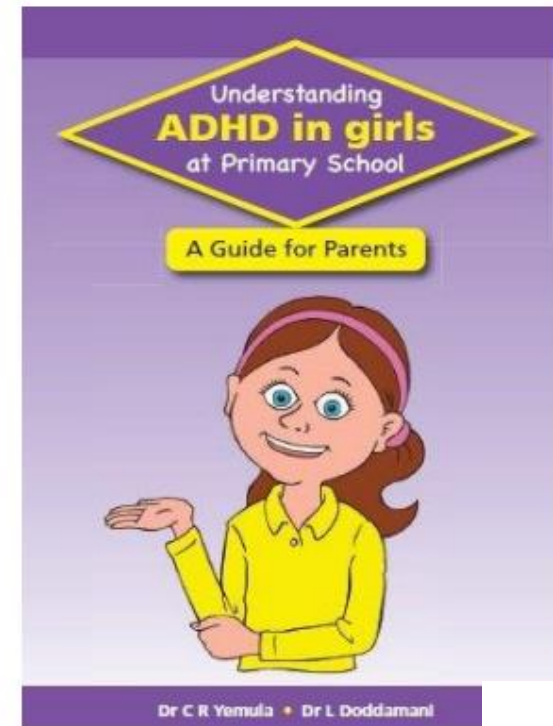


# Recommended Reading

**A collection of stories for  
children and adults to share**



**Greater understanding of ADHD  
presentation in girls**



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