

TEENAGERS AND ADHD... IT'S COMPLICATED



Actor portrayals.

From hormones to homework, teens already have a lot to deal with... ADHD doesn't make it easier.

Children don't grow out of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), it grows with them. In fact, ADHD can make the already awkward teenage years more difficult.

Teenagers with ADHD typically need more parental supervision and more school support than teens without ADHD.

If your teen was diagnosed with and treated for ADHD at a young age, his or her needs have probably changed. Work with your teen's doctor, therapist, and school team to keep identifying and meeting new needs and goals. The following hot topics may uniquely impact your teen in adolescence:

HOT TOPICS FOR TEENS WITH ADHD



Distracted Driving

Inattention and impulsivity can lead to driving mistakes. This can result in more tickets, more accidents, and more broken rules on the road.

Talk to your teen about safe driving habits: the importance of using a seat belt, observing the speed limit, obeying stop signs, and eliminating distractions, such as texting. Read this [crash course in safe driving](#) for teens with ADHD.



Tired of Taking Meds

Almost half of kids with ADHD don't take their medication as directed. What's more, teens with ADHD may forget to take it, may want to take a break from their medication, or may even decide they don't need it anymore.

Talk to your teen about the benefits of their individualized treatment plan. These tips may also [help your teen stick with their program](#).



HOT TOPICS FOR TEENS WITH ADHD



Updating Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)

Academics naturally get harder in high school and beyond—requiring more focus, more attention to detail, and more time-management skills.

If your teen has an IEP, make sure it gets updated to allow for any extra support that's needed (such as tutoring, more time to complete work, or quieter workspaces).



Sharing Medications

ADHD medications can be dangerous if taken by someone for whom it is not prescribed. Unfortunately, teens with ADHD may give away their medications due to peer pressure, or sell them for financial gain.

Remind your teen that this behavior is illegal and could have serious consequences. Talk to your teen about peer pressure and teach your teen how to handle any medication requests.

Keep your teen confident.

Adolescence is difficult for everyone (parents included). During this time, don't get discouraged. Instead, emphasize your love and support. Take the time to help your teen identify his or her strengths and try to find opportunities where your teen can use these strengths to experience success (whether it's art, sports, nature, computers, chess, etc). This can go a long way to help keep your teen and your family happy, busy, and on a positive path.