**Playbook to Inject the Healthy Undercurrent of Education and Support**

*Mental or Physical Impairment Seed*

**Our Education/Resource Plan**

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**Who:**

* **Michael, Mom & Dad, Grandma and Grandpa**

**What:**

* **We will review the Parents’ Guide to Handling Michael’s ADHD so that we all better understand Michael’s needs**
* **After reviewing the Guide, we will develop a Playbook or Hybrid Contract that will solve the area that is causing the greatest difficulty**

**When:**

* **Next Session with the PLL Therapist**

**How:**

* **As we review the ADHD Guide, we will identify what descriptive behaviors in the guide match Michael’s behavior at home and with his homework**
* **A Playbook or Hybrid Contract will then be developed to address the one area that is causing the greatest difficulty**

**Parent’s Guide to Handling ADHD**

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**What is ADHD?**

**Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a chronic condition that affects millions of children and often persists into adulthood. ADHD includes a combination of problems, such as difficulty sustaining attention, hyperactivity and impulsive behavior. Kids with ADHD act without thinking, are hyperactive, and have trouble focusing. They may understand what's expected of them but have trouble following through because they can't sit still, pay attention, or focus on details.**

**Of course, all kids (especially younger ones) act this way at times, particularly when they're anxious or excited. But the difference with ADHD is that symptoms are present over a longer period of time and happen in different settings. They hurt a child's ability to function socially, academically, and at home.**

**ADHD is a common behavioral disorder that affects about 10% of school-age children. Boys are about three times more likely than girls to be diagnosed with it, thought it is not yet understood why. ADHD cannot be cured, but it can be successfully managed.**

**What does ADHD look like in my child’s life at home and at school?**

* Not making eye contact with the person talking
* Showing up unprepared
* Sitting sprawled/head down
* Perpetually running late
* Socializing while a teacher is talking
* Asking irrelevant questions
* Demanding attention
* Rudeness
* Doodling/drawing instead of taking notes in school

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**How do I handle my child at home?**

**How can I increase my child’s organization skills & time management?**

* Establish daily patterns/routines for mornings, preparing for bedtime, managing after school activities, etc.
* Use clear organizational systems (i.e. charts/checklists, calendars, etc.) and hang in conspicuous places
* Leave prompts lying around the house to serve as silent reminders (i.e. post-it notes, etc.)
* Place plenty of conspicuous clocks around the house for your child to use as cues for time management

**How can I increase my child’s ability to follow rules?**

* Define a few clear, precise rules IN WRITING. (You get exactly what you ask for, no more and no less.)
* Only focus on one or two challenging behaviors at a time
  + Trying to change all your child’s negative behaviors at once is never possible and attempting to do so can create unbearable stress for both you and your child
* Consider changing up rewards for following your rule frequently to avoid boredom and increase interest
* Try to give two positives for every consequence for not following your rule (in other words, give unconditional love no matter what
* Never argue with your child about a rule….use “reflecting” words like “Nevertheless” or “Be that as it may” (these words “unhook” your child)
* Set small, attainable goals

**How can I communicate effectively with my child?**

* Always speak in a calm, clear voice and with a low tone
* Don’t nag or lecture, it is simply ineffective.
* When giving instructions, use the following tips…
  + Always gain your child’s attention first
  + Establish eye contact when giving instructions
  + Keep instructions brief and clear (only one or two steps at a time)
  + Have your child repeat instructions back to you
  + Consider ways to give instructions in multiple forms
  + Avoid giving a command in the form of a question
* Remember to find opportunities to praise your child. No one enjoys being subjected to constant criticism or complaints about their behavior. This will fracture your relationship.

**How do I avoid arguments with my child?**

* Try to give choices.
* Involve the teen in the problem-solving process.
* NEGOTIATE and use the common sense technique:

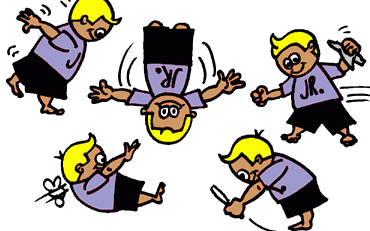
First you must… then you may…

…do the assignment …stand up and stretch

…take out the trash …have a snack

…clean your room …go somewhere

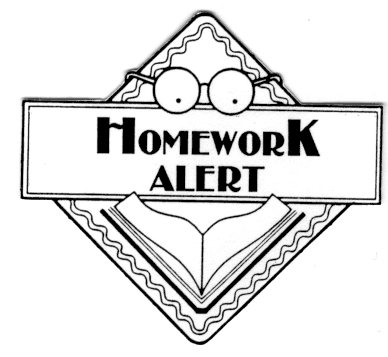
* When criticism is required, criticize the behavior, not the child
* Pick your fights. Avoid arguments based on whose fault it was.
* Behaviors that are best ignored include: whining, nagging or arguing
* If the behavior escalates, the best strategy for the ADHD teenager is to simply exit and wait until they calm down and are able to communicate more appropriately
* When their negative behaviors (whining, etc.), stop, be sure to praise
* NEVER set up the teenager to lie. If you already know what they did, just state the facts that you know, and proceed with the consequences. Do not use the situation as an honesty test.

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**How do I help my child delay impulsivity?**

* Teach your child to use the following five steps to slow down impulsivity…
  + Step 1: Stop what I am doing
  + Step 2: Ask myself, “What is the problem”?
  + Step 3: Ask myself, “What are my possible choices?”
  + Step 4: Determine choice and act on it
  + Step 5: Reflect afterward – “How did I do?”

**Signs my child is struggling with homework!**

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* Failing to write down homework assignments
* Writing the wrong assignments
* Forgetting the assignment book
* Forgetting materials needed
* Taking hours to do minutes of homework
* Arguing about when and where to do homework
* Lying about having done it
* Failing to bring notes home concerning homework
* Needing constant supervision
* Needing constant help
* Forgetting to get homework papers signed
* Forgetting homework at home

**How to help my child with homework…**

* Look over the amount of homework that is assigned and consult with the teacher if it appears to be excessive compared to the work of peers.
* Break down the homework into smaller chunks – for example, break down 20 math problems into groups of 5 problems each. This makes the assignment seem more manageable and attainable to an ADHD child. Consider using the short breaks between “chunks” of homework to reward the child for his or her progress (for instance, with a snack at each break). Gradually increase the work segments so that eventually the child is able to tolerate longer strings of work activity.
* Try timing the child, as in “You know, it sure would be interesting to see how long it takes you to complete these 20 problems. Let’s time it.” If the child’s speed improves because of the monitoring, giving oral praise, such as, “I really am impressed; you normally take so long, but you finished in just 30 minutes.”
* The less chaotic the home environment, the better your teenager can manage the ADHD and focus on completing homework
* Be sure your teen has plenty of quiet time and space to complete homework and other tasks
* Keep homework space free of external distractions like television, video games, etc.
* Use a self-monitoring system. The child wears headphones and listens for a periodic beep that occurs approximately every 30 to 60 seconds. At the beep, the child marks a sheet to indicate whether he/she was on task or off task. Although this sounds distracting, it works well for many ADHD children.

Final Tips for Parenting the ADHD Child

**Tip #1:**

* Focus on helping your child find an interest he/she can get involved in and be successful (i.e. a sport, musical instrument, helping others, etc.).

RESULT: This will increase their sense of self-worth.

**Tip #2:**

* Find things you both enjoy doing together and begin to participate in a shared activity.

RESULT: This will strengthen your relationship.

**Tip #3:**

* Above all, keep a sense of humor.

RESULT: This will keep you both sane!

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