

Parenting a Child with ADHD

MARYBETH RIGALI-OILER, PH.D.

CLINICAL CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGIST

Health  District

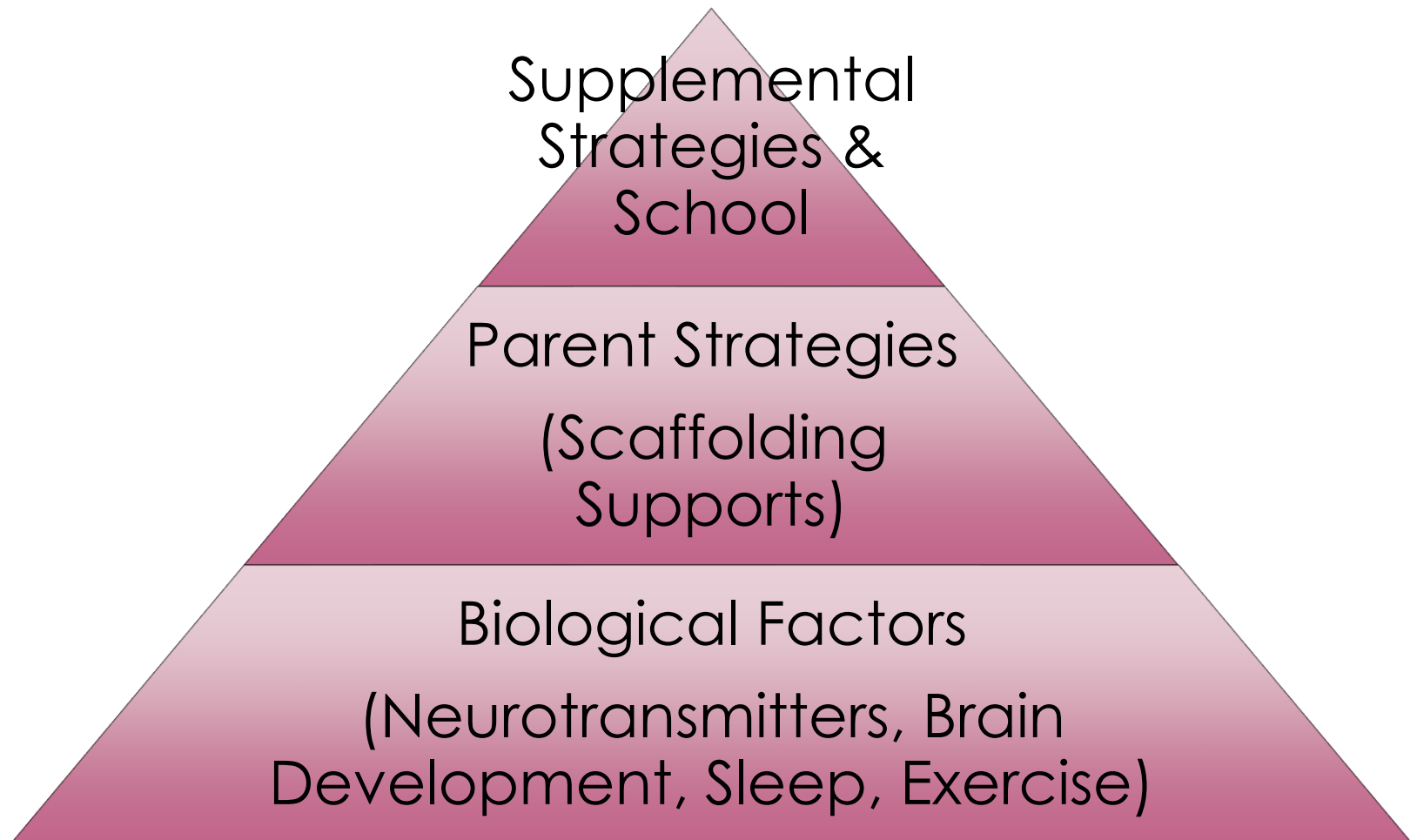
CHILD, ADOLESCENT, AND YOUNG
ADULT CONNECTIONS (CAYAC)

Learning Objectives – Part 2

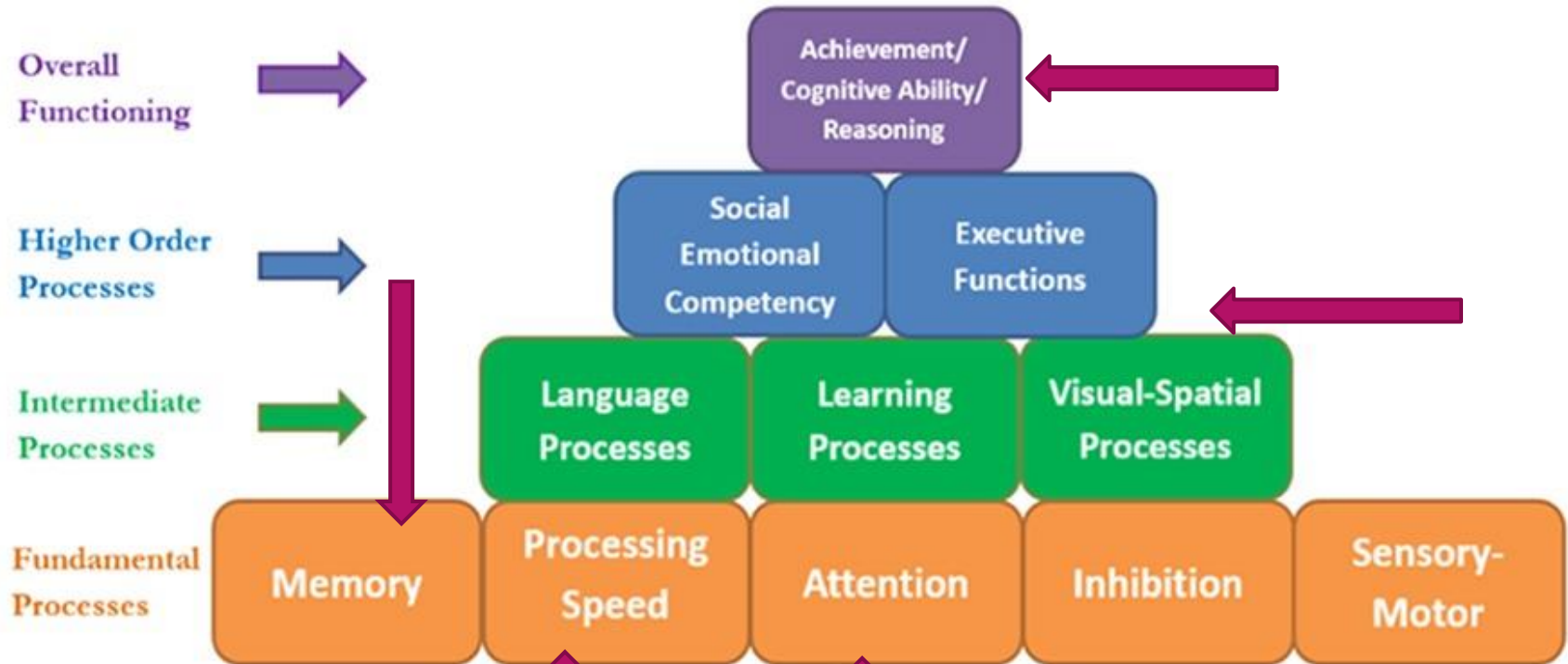
1. Learn the **order of impact** regarding interventions
2. Learn how to assess for and build on your child's **strengths**.
3. Learn how a **mindfulness approach** to parenting is beneficial for a child with ADHD.
4. Learn the **guiding principles** for parenting a child with ADHD.
5. Learn the **ABC model for building executive functioning skills**.
6. Learn the effectiveness of developing a **routine** for a child with ADHD.
7. Learn how to support building your child's **time management** skills.
8. Learn how **lifestyle changes** can support your child's success.

Order of Impact

Order of Impact



Places for Intervention



The Hierarchy of Neurocognitive Functioning © created by Peter Thompson, Ph.D. 2013, adapted from the works of Miller 2007; Reitan and Wolfson 2004; Hale and Fiorello 2004.
The Building Blocks of Brain Development © – further adapted by the CO Brain Injury Steering Committee, 2016.



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Teach Skills

DO NOT ASSUME KIDS LEARN THROUGH OSMOSIS



Strengths- Based Approach

Assessing For Strengths

- ▶ Children with ADHD tend to exhibit behaviors that are disruptive or have a difficult time following directions
- ▶ In turn... they often get attention for what they are **doing wrong**
- ▶ Higher risk of
 - ▶ Low self-esteem
 - ▶ Developing a negative association with school and learning

Strengths-Based Approach

▶ It WORKS!

- ▶ Focusing on the behavior you want to increase is more effective than focusing on the problem behaviors
- ▶ Children's well-being and resilience depends on **adults emphasizing their strengths**
- ▶ YOU are the intervention

Strengths-Based Approach

How can I do this?

- ▶ 1. Measure strengths (handout)
 - ▶ Help a child put words to and verbalize their strengths
- ▶ 2. Notice and tell your child their strengths DAILY!
 - ▶ Mention what he/she did well **and** acknowledge effort
- ▶ 3. Bait for success
 - ▶ Create situations in which your child can be successful

How can I do this?

- ▶ 4. Give options
 - ▶ Ex: different ways to complete homework that capitalizes on strengths
 - ▶ Increases autonomy and helps practice executive functioning skills!
- ▶ 5. Teach (and **reinforce**) collaboration
 - ▶ Encourage your child to ask questions when stuck
 - ▶ Help child recognize that no one is good at everything

Common Strengths of Individuals with ADHD

- ▶ Resourcefulness
- ▶ Approach problems with novel solutions
- ▶ Creativity
- ▶ High energy
- ▶ Adaptable
- ▶ Hyperfocused
- ▶ Willing to take risks
- ▶ Spontaneous

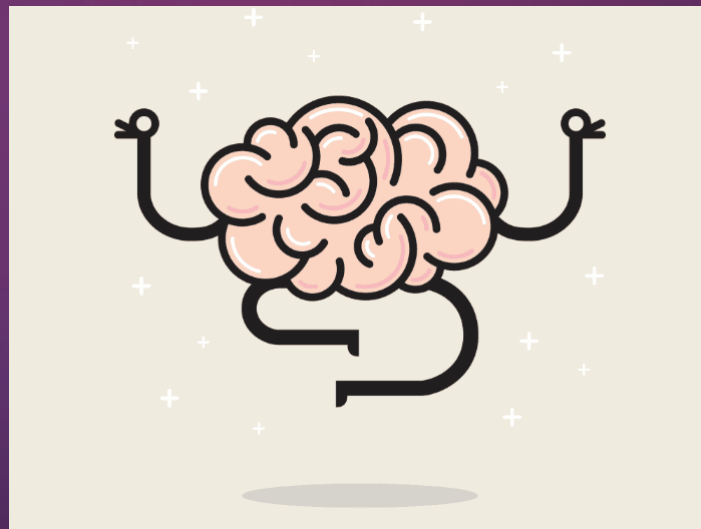




Capitalize Strengths
Identify and Support
Weaknesses

Mindfulness Approach

“PAYING ATTENTION HERE AND NOW, WITH
KINDNESS AND CURIOSITY, AND **THEN**
CHOOSING YOUR BEHAVIOR”



Mindfulness Approach: 2 fold

- ▶ Bring mindfulness into parenting
 - ▶ Allows you to have more of a pause in your parenting style (making up for your child's lack of pause button!)
 - ▶ Responsiveness rather than reactivity
 - ▶ You are your child's first and greatest teacher
 - ▶ **Having a child with ADHD is HARD!**



STOP



- ▶ **S** – Stop what you are doing
- ▶ **T** – Take a few breaths
- ▶ **O** – Observe what is happening in your mind **and** in your body
 - ▶ What are your *emotions*? What are your *thoughts*?
- ▶ **P** – Proceed with intention
 - ▶ What would be best to do next?

Parent-Child Fit

▶ Not a good EF fit

- ▶ Acknowledge that we all have strengths and challenges, and we can use our strengths to help
- ▶ Be creative in EF skills to help
- ▶ Make a point of identifying your own weakness and your child's strengths

▶ EF fit... the apple doesn't fall far...

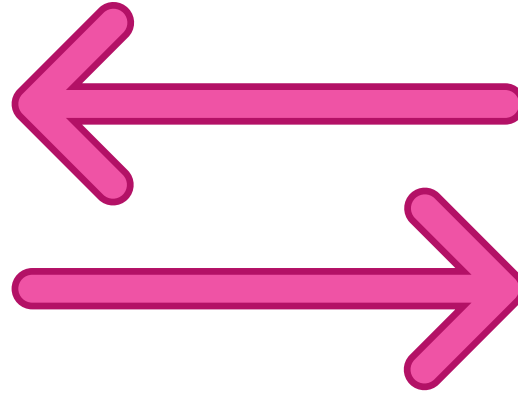
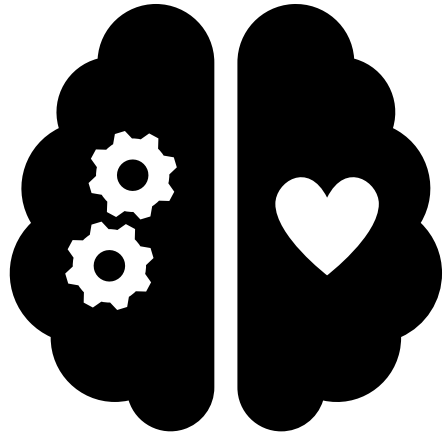
- ▶ Work at connecting with your child – laugh!
- ▶ Do some common problem brainstorming – you are both experts in the areas that are challenging!
- ▶ Remind yourself that you have had the same struggles as a child and maybe today too!



Parent Training: Philosophy Shift

Self-Monitoring

- ▶ Being **consistent** is the most important way to modify behavior
- ▶ Mixed messages between parents, grandparents, and/or teachers leads to confusion and behavior modification won't work
 - ▶ Child should have the same rules/expectations at school, home, with other caregivers, etc.



Externalizing Executive Skills

MOVING THE INTERNAL TO THE EXTERNAL AND BACK AGAIN



ABC Model of Executive Skills



A is for
Antecedent

WORK TO ADJUST
EXTERNAL FACTORS TO
REDUCE PROBLEMS

Environment

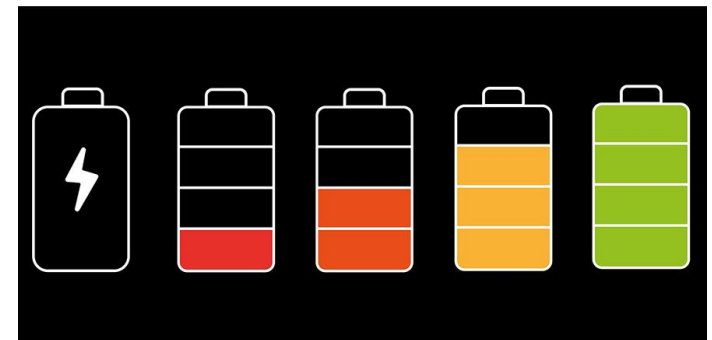
- ▶ Reduce the number of distractions present
 - ▶ Homework in a quiet place
 - ▶ Limit (eliminate!) technology when trying to focus
 - ▶ Limit number of toys – reduces the complexity of organization
- ▶ Reduce opportunities for impulsivity
 - ▶ TV in the room
 - ▶ Limit internet access
- ▶ Provide organizational structures
- ▶ Reduce social complexity of an activity or event
 - ▶ Emotional control in complex situations can be hard
 - ▶ Avoid overstimulating, over scheduling

Tasks

- ▶ Make tasks shorter and/or break up tasks into a few EXPLICIT tasks
 - ▶ Cleaning a room:
 1. Put dirty clothes in the laundry
 2. Put books on bookshelf
 3. Put clean clothes in drawers
 4. Put toys in toy bin
- ▶ Create a schedule (see *routine*)
- ▶ Make tasks more appealing

Routines are fuel for the brain

- ▶ All human beings do better with routines, but these are a critical support for individuals with ADHD because...
 - ▶ Routines free up the brain to spend energy (RE: Focus and creativity) on complex tasks
 - ▶ Routines can make a habit stick
- ▶ The **mental to-do list** is difficult for individuals with ADHD, so build a routine to support the challenges kids have



Routine

- ▶ Consistent morning, afternoon, and bedtime routines will help your child *learn* what to do
- ▶ Small steps = Prioritize!
 - ▶ Planners
 - ▶ Family calendar
 - ▶ Reminders of the routine around the house



Interactions with Adults

- ▶ Prepare your child for what will happen and how they can handle a situation
- ▶ Use verbal prompts and reminders
- ▶ Cue your child for the skills!
- ▶ Praise for good skills!
- ▶ Debrief when done

Problem Solving Routines – Supporting Executive Functioning

- ▶ For older children (10 years +, although planting the seeds earlier too)
- ▶ Goal-Plan-Do-Review method
 - ▶ Goal setting: *What do I need to accomplish?*
 - ▶ Self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses: *How easy or difficult is this task or goal?*
 - ▶ Organization and planning: *What materials do we need? Who will do what? In what order do we need to do these things? How long will it take?*
 - ▶ Flexibility and strategy use: *When or if a problem arises, what other ways should I think about reaching the goal? Should I ask for assistance?*
 - ▶ Monitoring: *How did I do?*
 - ▶ Summarizing: *What worked and what didn't work? What was easy and what was difficult, and what will I do next time?*



B is for
Behavior

EXPLICIT TEACHING OF
SKILLS - SCAFFOLDING

Identify the Problem: Prioritize Your Goals

► Pick your battles

► Ex: Is your child cleaning their room an important priority?

► When modifying behavior focus on what is essential

► Practice forgiveness

Urgent & Important

do it now

Important not urgent

decide when to do it

Urgent not important

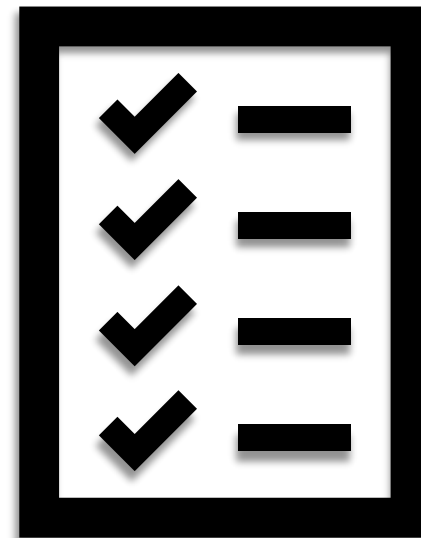
delegate it

Not important
not urgent

delete it

Goal setting

- ▶ Set realistic goals
- ▶ Break goals up into small, manageable chunks
 - ▶ How long it takes to do a task?
 - ▶ How many reminders does your child need?
 - ▶ How many times does the target behavior occur?
- ▶ Outline the steps to achieve the goals
 - ▶ Turn into a checklist



Supervision

- ▶ Provide supervision throughout the process
 - ▶ Positive support throughout the process
 - ▶ Celebrate successes!
- ▶ Fade supervision and scaffolding

Provide *JUST*
enough
support for
your child to
be successful



Time Management



Time Management is HARD!

- ▶ Routines are the starting point!
- ▶ When completing tasks, talk about how long it takes to do things!
 - ▶ This helps with estimation skills
- ▶ Have analog clocks available for your child – bedroom, in the house

Family Strategies

- ▶ Have multi-step activities planned for the weekend or vacation days (low stakes)
 - ▶ Gives opportunities for learning about time and the relationship between time and tasks
- ▶ Have a family calendar
 - ▶ Visual effect



C is for
Consequence

MOTIVATING YOUR
CHILD TO LEARN AND
USE EXECUTIVE SKILLS

Initiating and Persisting in Tasks

- ▶ Modify tasks to leverage your child's strengths
- ▶ Utilize rewards!
 - ▶ ADHD brains need more positive reinforcement and rewards
 - ▶ For younger children, rewards should be more timely

Effective Praise & Incentives

Praise

1. Deliver praise immediately (5:1!!)
2. Specify the exact behaviors you want to continue to see
3. Provide information about *why* this accomplishment is important related to goals
4. Emphasize the hard work that has gone into targeted behavior

Incentives

- ▶ Menu of incentives that is co-developed with your child
- ▶ Have a plan for larger rewards
 - ▶ Marble jar
 - ▶ Point system

Lifestyle Changes – Supplementary



Exercise

The Essential, The Beneficial, and the Optional

Free Play: Essential – for all

Unstructured time for play

- Developing coping strategies
- Social connections
- Imagination
- Self-directed learning

Exercise: Essential – for all

- Fitness is associated with

- Better working memory
- Behavioral inhibition
- Learning
- Impact is about half of what medication can do

Sports: Optional, Beneficial

- Compensatory strength
- Area to build self-esteem
- Organized to promote social connections
- Decide based on...
 - How vigorous (heart rate)
 - How much your child enjoys it

Exercise – Beginning of the Day

- ▶ Aiming for exercise at the start of the day is even better!
 - ▶ Walk/bike to school
 - ▶ Walk the dog
- ▶ 60 minutes a day!





Sleep

Sleep is Essential

- ▶ Sleep hygiene is essential to executive functioning!
- ▶ Children who are sleep deprived exhibit symptoms of ADHD – **treat the sleep!**
 - ▶ Inadequate sleep leads to:
 - ▶ Inattention, moodiness, disorganization, irritability, and health problems
 - ▶ Ages 3-5 years: 10-13 hours (including naps)
 - ▶ Age 6-12 years: 9-12 hours.
 - ▶ Age 13-18 years: 8-10 hours.
- ▶ Proper sleep is even more important for a brain with ADHD

Bedtime Routine

- ▶ A consistent bedtime and routine is important:
 - ▶ No screen time **at least an hour** before bedtime
 - ▶ Beds are only for sleeping – no TV/ Phone in bed
 - ▶ No large meals or exercise **at least an hour** before bedtime
 - ▶ **Co-develop** a routine with your child
 - ▶ Glass of water, brush teeth, read a book together, sing songs/say prayers, etc.





Nutrition

Nutrition – Smallest difference (but significant!) Beneficial / Optional

- ▶ Growing research indicating that there is a gut-brain connection
 - ▶ Support for Omega-3 supplements reducing symptoms of ADHD (speak with your family doctor)
 - ▶ Some small evidence re: food additives contribute to symptoms of ADHD
- ▶ Balanced blood sugar, healthy balance of protein, fats, fruits, vegetables
 - ▶ If the battery is on low, there is even less capacity to accommodate related to ADHD symptoms
 - ▶ If your child has sensory sensitivities and has a limited diet already – check blood levels (iron, vitamin D, etc.)



Technology

Technology – Reality and Grace

- ▶ Technology is a necessary part of life and important for so many reasons
- ▶ It also consumes a lot of time and mental energy
- ▶ Capacity issue
 - ▶ With only so many hours in a day
 - ▶ Prioritizing sleep, exercise, free plan time
- ▶ An ADHD brain is more likely to be enticed by dopamine inducing video games
 - ▶ Harder to shift away
- ▶ Clear, consistent limit setting
- ▶ Impulsivity and risk for children on the internet

Resources

- ▶ *Smart But Scattered* by Peg Dawson & Richard Guare
- ▶ *The Family ADHD Solution: A Scientific Approach to Maximizing Your Child's Attention and Minimizing Parental Stress* by Mark Bertin
- ▶ *Mindful Parenting for ADHD: A Guide to Cultivating Calm, Reducing Stress, and Helping Children Thrive* by Mark Bertin and Ari Tuckman
- ▶ *The Kazdin Method for Parenting the Defiant Child* by Alan Kazdin
- ▶ *Your Defiant Child: Eight Steps to Better Behavior, 2nd Edition* by Russell Barkley & Christine Benton
- ▶ *Your Defiant Teen: 10 Steps to Resolve Conflict and Rebuild Your Relationship* by Russell Barkley, Arthur Robin, & Christine Benton
- ▶ www.CHADD.org
- ▶ www.adhdlectures.com
- ▶ How to ADHD – Youtube Channel

Questions?





THANK YOU! WE WILL SEE YOU IN DECEMBER!

CHILD ADOLESCENT YOUNG ADULT
CONNECTIONS (CAYAC)

970. 221. 3308