

40 Great Accommodations for Your ADD/LD Child

Increase the odds of your child succeeding in school by pinpointing his problems in the classroom and including effective accommodations in his IEP or 504 Plan to remedy them. Below is a list of challenges your child may face during the school day along with specific accommodations to overcome them. Talk with your child's teacher about implementing these strategies.

Problem: ACTS UP IN CLASSROOM

"Erik is easily distracted by classroom activity, acts out in class to gain negative attention, and reaches across desks to talk to or touch other students."

Accommodations to request

- Seat him front and center, near the teacher, and away from doors or windows where noise or passing students may distract him
- Tweak the seating plan so he sits next to a good role model
- Increase the distance between desks, if possible
- For younger students, mark an area with tape around his desk in which he can move freely

Problem: INCOMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS

"Julie is unable to complete work within the given time, isn't able to keep up the quality of work, and has difficulty following instructions."

Accommodations to request

- Allow her extra time to complete assigned work
- Break long assignments into smaller segments
- Shorten assignments or work periods
- Pair written instructions with oral instructions
- Set a kitchen timer for 10-minute intervals and have the student get up and show you her work

Untimed testing and taking exams away from peers have helped.

A homework planner. His teacher and we have to reinforce the habit of using it, but it has been a godsend.

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from the editors of

ADDITUDE
LIVING WELL WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT

Problem: GETS DISTRACTED

“Jennifer falls behind during classroom discussions; when taking notes, complains that lessons are boring, and turns in work with careless mistakes.”

Accommodations to request

- Provide her peer assistance in note taking and ask her questions to encourage participation in discussions
- Enlist her to help present the lesson
- Cue her to stay on task with a private signal—a gentle tap on the shoulder, for example
- Schedule a five-minute period for her to check over work before turning in homework or tests.

Problem: INTERRUPTS

“Richard constantly engages in attention-getting behavior, blurts out answers, and interrupts others. He needs reinforcement and long-term help with improving behavior.”

Accommodations to request

- Ignore minor inappropriate behavior
- Increase immediacy of rewards and consequences for good and bad behavior
- Acknowledge correct answers only when his hand is raised and he is called upon
- Send daily/weekly progress reports home
- Set up a behavior contract with student and parents

Problem: LOSES FOCUS

“Alex daydreams a lot and isn’t able to stay focused on the subject matter that is being taught.”

Accommodations to request

- Use clear verbal signals: “Freeze,” “This is important,” or “One, two, three...eyes on me”
- Use a flashlight or a laser pointer to illuminate objects or words you want him to pay attention to
- Illustrate vocabulary words and science concepts with small drawings or stick figures
- Ring a bell or chimes; play a chord on a guitar or keyboard.

Having teachers who understand that there are differences in children’s learning styles is a huge bonus after years of my child’s having a “bad kid” reputation at other schools.

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Problem: RESTLESS IN CLASS

“Robby is constantly tapping his foot and fingers in class and has difficulty focusing for long periods of time.”

Accommodations to request

- Allow him to run errands, to hand out papers, or to stand at times while working
- Give him a fidget toy in class to calm him down and to increase concentration
- Provide short breaks between assignments
- Give him an air-filled rubber disk to sit on that allows him to wiggle.

Problem: DISORGANIZED, POOR PLANNER

“Anita can’t keep track of papers and has trouble remembering homework assignments. She loses books all the time.”

Accommodations to request

- Color code binders to specific academic subjects—green for math, red for English
- Provide handouts that are three-hole punched in advance
- Use brightly colored paper for project assignments, providing details and due dates
- Provide student with assignment book and supervise writing down of assignments
- Appoint monitors to make sure that students write down homework assignments at the end of the day
- Allow student to keep a set of books at home

Problem: SOCIAL PROBLEMS

“Marnie is unclear about social cues. She does not work well with others and isn’t respected by her peers. As a result, she has low self-confidence.”

Accommodations to request

- Set up social-behavior goals with her and implement a reward program
- Encourage cooperative learning tasks
- Assign special responsibilities to her in presence of peer group
- Compliment positive behavior and work
- Give her an opportunity to act in a leadership role
- Encourage social interactions with classmates
- Plan teacher-directed group activities
- Acknowledge appropriate behavior and good work frequently

Smaller groups, incentives for completing work, and going to school with kids who have similar struggles.

Keeping a journal and learning how to use a graphic organizer.

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