



Introduction to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Overview

- What is ADHD?
- What causes ADHD?
- Strategies in the classroom
- Dyslexia and ADHD overlap
- Support for parents
- Where you can get more information

What is ADHD?

- A developmental condition
- Life long
- The differences have a significant impact on day-to-day functioning
- The impact can change



Differences between boys and girls

- A higher proportion of boys have a diagnosis of ADHD. But girls also experience ADHD.
- Typically symptoms in boys are easy to recognise due to them being more externalised – impulsive and hyperactive.
-
- Girls typically display internalised symptoms – inattentive and forgetful
-

But this can vary as everyone is different

ADHD and the brain

There are differences in how messages are communicated in the brain and body when you have an ADHD brain.

There are two main parts of the brain that are thought to be involved:

- The frontal lobe (the boss of the brain)
- The transportation of neurotransmitter chemicals (dopamine and noradrenaline)



Features of ADHD

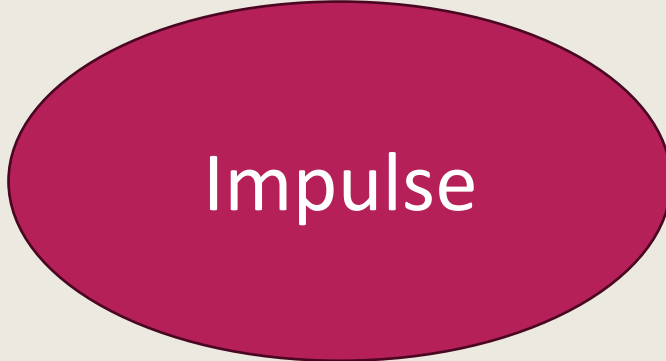
Students with ADHD experience strengths and challenges in these three areas. **Can you think of some examples?**

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Attention

A large, horizontal, magenta oval with a thin black outline, containing the word 'Activity' in white text.

Activity

A large, horizontal, magenta oval with a thin black outline, containing the word 'Impulse' in white text.

Impulse

What do we mean by attention?

- The ability to pay attention to something e.g. what someone is saying
- Listening and looking
- Processing the information effectively

You might notice:

- Difficulties remembering information
- Difficulties starting or finishing tasks
- Distractable



What do we mean by hyperactivity?

- Activity and movement levels

You might notice:

- Fidgeting
- Moving in seat
- Someone who seems to have endless energy
- Talking excessively
- Difficulties falling asleep and sleeping



What do we mean by impulsivity?

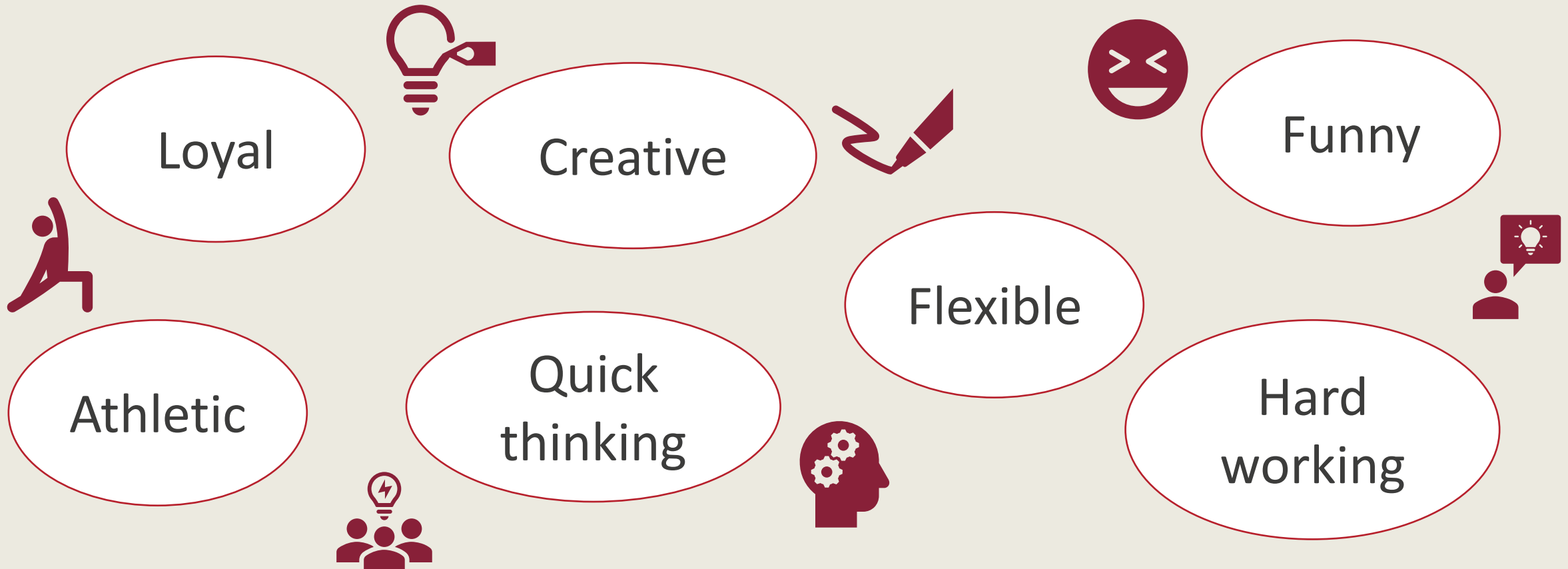
- Acting without thinking

You might notice:

- Difficulties being quiet e.g. calling out in class
- Difficulties waiting or taking turns
- Interrupting
- Lower awareness of danger or patterns of taking risks

ADHD strengths

It's important to consider the strengths that come with having ADHD



Let's have a browse of some famous faces with ADHD

[Famous People with ADHD - ADHD UK](#)

Famous faces

Simone Biles – “I was built this way, so I am going to use it”

Justin Timberlake – He has ADHD and OCD as a combination

Will I Am – Says “I have all this stuff in my head at the same time and I don’t know how to slow it down”

Michael Phelps – “I had a teacher tell me I wouldn’t amount to anything, look at me now”

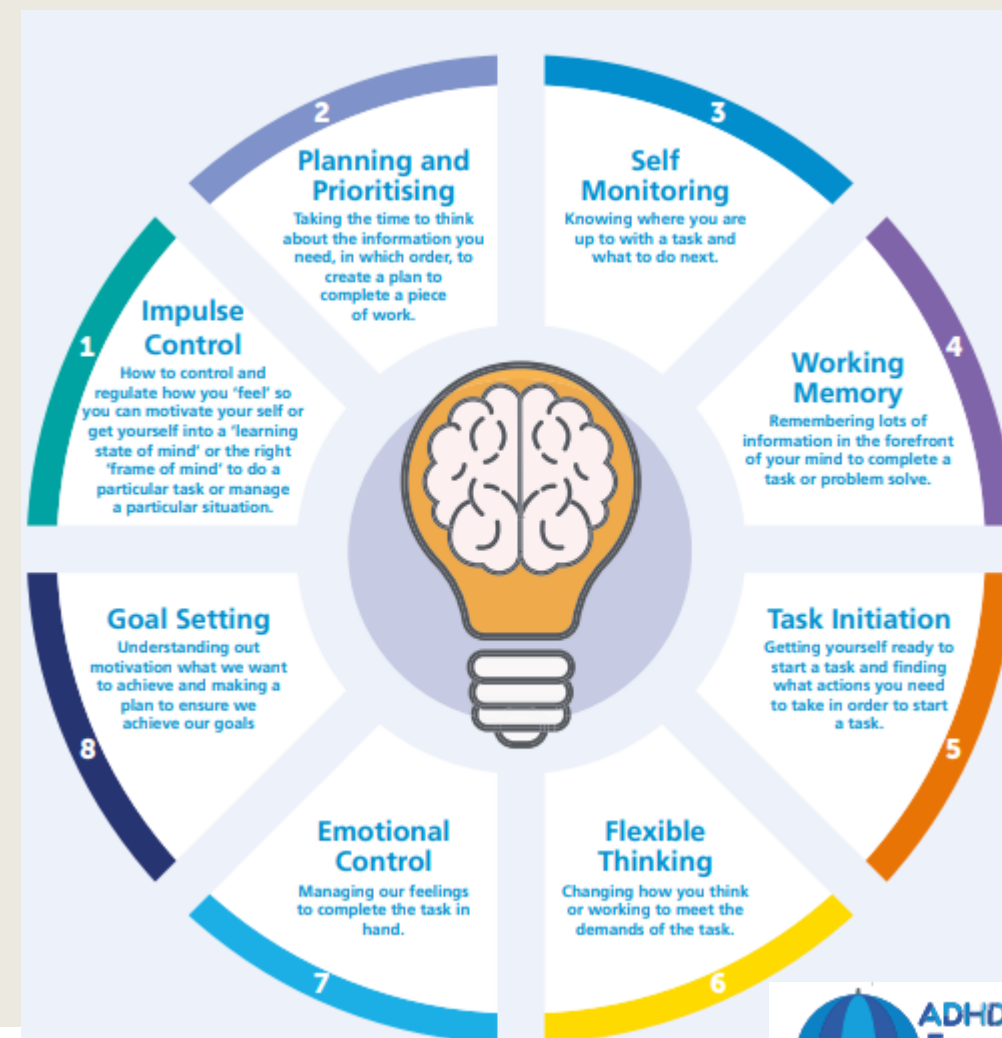
Richard Branson – “You don’t learn by following the rules, you learn by doing and falling over”

Executive function

When you have ADHD executive function can be difficult

Difficulties include:

- Planning
- Organising
- Starting tasks
- Time management
- Flexibility
- Perseverance
- Motivation
- Emotional control



Everyone with ADHD is different

- Some young people may learn strategies to hide or mask these difficulties, they may compensate with other skills (e.g. if they have a good memory)
- Whereas other young people may need a higher level of support
- This can vary – there can be good days, and challenging days



What is ADHD?



Finding out about ADHD

www.thebraincharity.org.

www.adhduk.co.uk

www.transformationpartners.nhs.uk





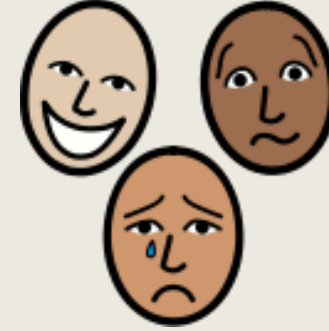
Finding strategies

Classroom strategies

- Fiddling – fiddle objects / toys will improve concentration in most cases
- Seating – use wobble cushions, fidgets, away from windows, accessible to TA
- Movement breaks – have movement breaks before or after periods of sitting down or quiet work e.g. handout out books in class, pushing up on the arms of a seat, incorporate use of outdoor equipment into an intervention
- Clear expectations and instructions chunked down
- Instructions in writing so children can refer back to them
- Use visuals to motivate bring learning alive
- Use their interests where possible to engage them in the tasks
- Praise effort and skills demonstrated e.g. perseverance



Classroom strategies



- Teach children about neurodiversity
- Ask children for their opinion on how they learn best and what support they'd like
- Use dyslexia friendly techniques
- Ensure children are well hydrated throughout the day and have sufficient toilet breaks
- Useful displays around the classroom which support their learning
- Ask children to retell instructions
- Provide sentences starters, word banks to support learning
- Support children to understand their feelings, triggers and emotions. Could you introduce some mindfulness sessions?

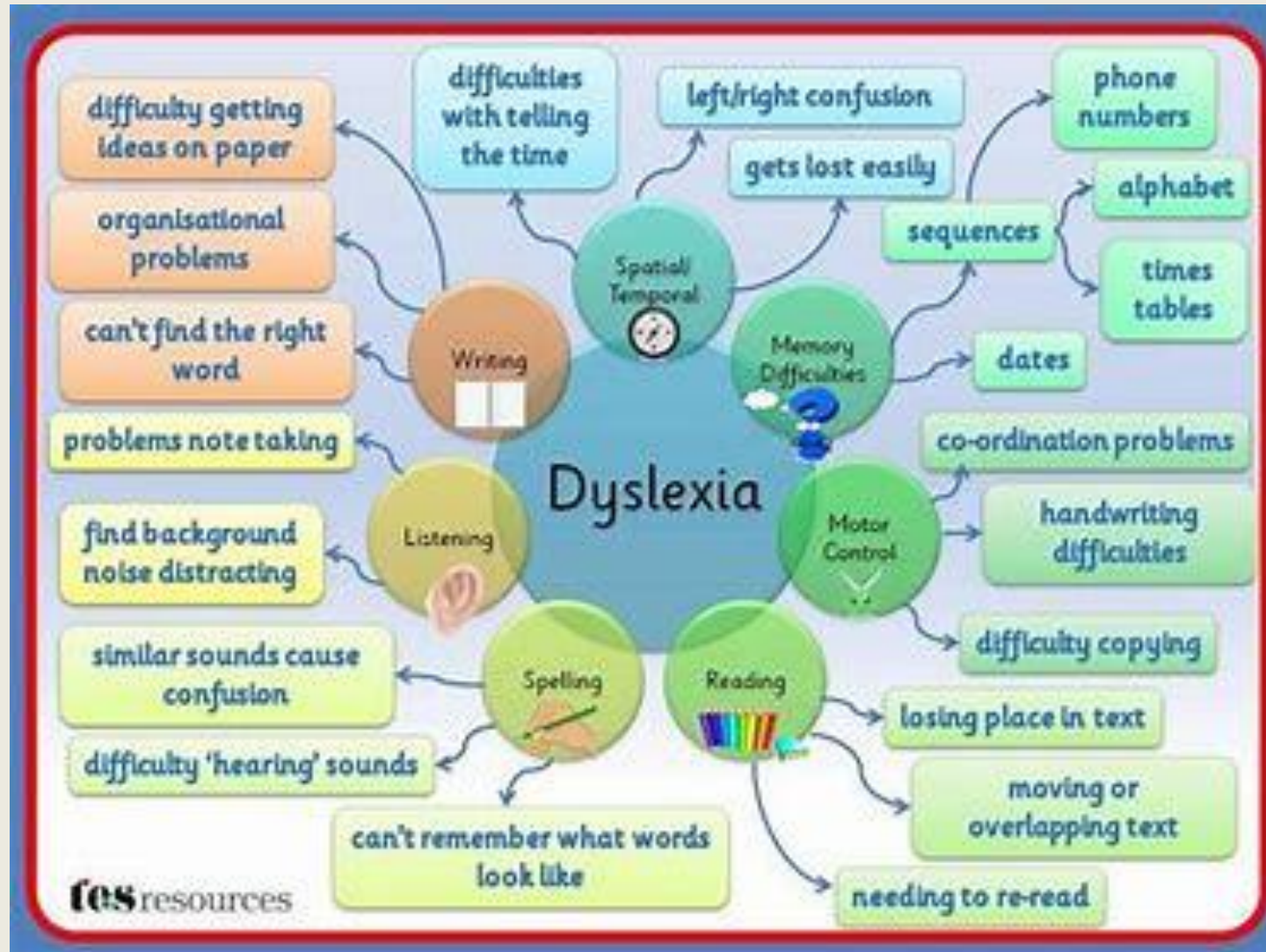


There is an increasing bank of research which suggests that people have co-occurring difficulties

Dyslexia and ADHD appears to have a huge overlap: 25-40%

Be mindful that most people with dyslexia will never be diagnosed. Respond to the need and put adjustments in place

What does dyslexia look like?



- Do any of your ADHD children have these difficulties too?

Support for our ADHD / dyslexic learners



- ❖ May need a seat towards front of class and where the teacher or TA can support them more easily
- ❖ Tasks need to be broken down or 'scaffolded'. It is unlikely all tasks will be completed
- ❖ Overlearning is essential to developing 'automaticity' and building self esteem
- ❖ Incorporate assistive technology where possible eg dictate and read aloud / immersive reader integral to Microsoft
- Use creative teaching including music, drama etc
- Allow learners to ask questions
- Explain the tasks clearly and in order, model what you'd like to see
- Allow thinking time
- Avoid black / white contrast on resources and displays

Useful websites and contacts

Information about ADHD



ADHD UK www.adhduk.co.uk



Mental Health resources

<https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/carers/adhd-autism/>

Information supporting ADHD

[All Things ADHD - Managing Emotions \(youtube.com\)](#)

[All Things ADHD - Impulse Control – YouTube](#)

[All things ADHD - Managing Behaviour Which Challenges Us \(youtube.com\)](#)

Thank you
Any questions