

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

ADHD is one of the most common *neurodevelopmental* disorders of childhood. It is usually first diagnosed in childhood and often lasts into adulthood. Children with ADHD may have trouble paying attention, controlling impulsive behaviors (may act without thinking about what the result will be), or be overly active. ¹(<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/facts.html#1>)

Signs and Symptoms

It is normal for children to have trouble focusing and behaving at one time or another. However, children with ADHD do not just grow out of these behaviors. The symptoms continue and can cause difficulty at school, at home, or with friends.

A child with ADHD might:

- daydream a lot
- forget or lose things a lot
- squirm or fidget
- talk too much
- make careless mistakes or take unnecessary risks
- have a hard time resisting temptation
- have trouble taking turns
- have difficulty getting along with other

How many children have ADHD?

The percent of children estimated to have ADHD has changed over time and can vary by how it is measured. The American Psychiatric Association states in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5, 2013) that 5% of children have ADHD¹. However, other studies in the US have estimated higher rates in community samples.

Children ages 4-17:

- Approximately 11% of children 4-17 years of age (6.4 million) have ever been diagnosed with ADHD, according to parent report from 2011-12. [[Read key findings\(https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/key-findings-adhd72013.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/key-findings-adhd72013.html)]
- The percent of children with an ADHD diagnosis continued to increase, from 7.8% in 2003 to 9.5% in 2007 and to 11.0% in 2011-12. [[Read key findings\(https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/key-findings-adhd72013.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/key-findings-adhd72013.html)]
- The percent of children with an ADHD diagnosis varied by state, from a low of 5.6% in Nevada to a high of 18.7% in Kentucky. [[Read key findings\(https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/key-findings-adhd72013.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/key-findings-adhd72013.html)]

Children ages 2-5:

- Approximately 237,000 children aged 2 to 5 years in the United States had an ADHD diagnosis, according to parent report from 2011-12. [[Read key findings\(https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/kf-national-adhd-profile-young-children.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/kf-national-adhd-profile-young-children.html)]
- The number of young children with ADHD increased by more than 50% from the 2007-2008 survey. [[Read key findings\(https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/kf-national-adhd-profile-young-children.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/features/kf-national-adhd-profile-young-children.html)]

ADHD affects children differently. I had an opportunity to talk with Gabby F, age 12, who was diagnosed when she was 4 years old. Gabby was on medicine until she was 8, at which time her mom decided to try to see how she did without her medicine. Gabby, who is currently in 6th grade, recently made Principals List at her Middle School and is currently not taking medication for ADHD.

Question 1: Can you describe what your brain feels like when you're learning.

My brain feels confident that I will get good grades. However, I get distracted sometimes, so when I realize I'm supposed to be doing work, I rush to get it done because I might not finish in time.

Question 2: What do you wish teachers knew about how you learn?

I wish that my teachers knew that when I read and take notes, I don't remember some of the things I read. Also, it gets me really distracted. I would rather learn with a teacher reading the article or watching a video.