



# National Association of School Psychologists

Effective partners in the commitment to help school children and youth achieve their best. *In school. At home. In life.*

## **Attention Problems Strategies for Parents**

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### **Hyperactivity: Provide External Structure**

#### *Physical Controls*

- Include regular exercise, balanced diet, adequate sleep, medication if appropriate
- Check schedules: mornings usually best for learning, need calm routine at bedtime
- Check environment for safety and remove treasured items, prevent problems

#### *Predictability*

- Use consistent rules across time and place
- Prepare for changes to new activity
- Practice simple daily routines
- Have regular contact with school

### **Distractibility: Focus on Priorities**

#### *Priorities*

- Organize backpack and notebook
- Have a "Launch Pad" area for next morning's materials and messages
- Encourage on-task behavior
- Request special education assessment if appropriate

#### *Directions*

- Use simple, positive directions showing what to do instead of what not to do
- Give visual clues

#### *Distractors*

- Provide regular time and clean area for doing homework
- Limit and balance extra curricular activities

### **Impulsivity: Build Self-Confidence**

#### *Social Skills*

- Build on strengths
- Teach game-playing skills, taking turns and making choices

- Encourage noncompetitive sports (karate, gymnastics, swimming)
- Teach friendship skills (making requests, giving compliments, less rough play)

### ***Parent Support***

- Enroll in classes in behavior management
- Join support groups
- Use "special time" for bonding

### ***Counseling and Management***

- Use strategies to reduce impulsive behavior
- Model positive self-talk and goal-setting
- Reward frequently

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