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PSYCHOLOGISTS

# Attention Problems

## Strategies for Teachers

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

#### ***Physical Controls Predictability***

- Give energy breaks, opportunities for focused movement
- Minimize changes and pullouts
- Provide individual desks & space for extra materials
- Prepare for transitions
- Include short, fast-paced tasks; practice routines
- Be calm (soothing music, carpet, earplugs)
- Develop physical cues to refocus

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

#### ***Priorities***

- Use anticipatory set with frequent restatement of purpose
- Provide only needed materials
- Modify tasks: shorten, highlight, use markers and windows for tracking, break into manageable steps
- Teach summarizing skills
- One idea per paragraph or page

#### ***Directions***

- Start with one step, student restates in own words before performing independently
- Vary voice pitch and pacing of lesson
- Teach memory strategies (mnemonics, note taking, brain storming)
- Insist on instructional readiness (body still, eye contact)

#### ***Distractors***

- Use multi-sensory materials and “hands on” learning to engage
- Locate student away from visual and auditory distractors (heating/air conditioning, traffic and stimulating bulletin boards)
- Seat student by organized, understanding peers

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

#### ***Social Skills***

- Give opportunities for leadership, being a tutor for younger students, reinforce each step to success
- Use cooperative learning groups, giving a responsibility he or she can do
- Provide practice making choices, impulse control, empathy

#### ***Parent Support***

- Send frequent progress reports
- Give honest feedback, mostly positive

### ***Counseling***

- Reinforce time-on-task (process), fading to task completion (product)
- Encourage risk-taking and positive self-talk
- Build on strengths, teach compensating skills and remind of successful accomplishments
- Use contracts with frequent reinforcement for desired behaviors and response-cost for negative behaviors

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