**Parenting a Child with ADHD**

*From chadd.org*

While ADHD is believed to be hereditary, effectively managing your child’s symptoms can affect both the severity of the disorder and development of more serious problems over time. Early intervention holds the key to positive outcomes for your child. The earlier you address your child’s problems, the more likely you will be able to prevent school and social failure and associated problems such as underachievement and poor self-esteem that may lead to delinquency or drug and alcohol abuse. Although life with your child may at times seem challenging, as a parent you can help create home and school environments that improve your child’s chances for success.

Here are some ways to get started.

- **Don’t waste your limited emotional energy on self-blame.** ADHD is a disorder in certain areas of the brain and is inherited in the majority of cases. It is not caused by poor parenting or a chaotic home environment, although the home environment can make the symptoms of ADHD better or worse.

- **Learn all you can about ADHD.** While a great deal of information on the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD is available, not all of it is accurate or based on scientific evidence. It is up to you to be a good consumer and learn to distinguish the accurate information from the inaccurate. How can you sort out what will be useful and what will not? In general, it is good to be wary about ads claiming to cure ADHD. Currently, there is no cure for ADHD, but you can take positive steps to decrease its impact. In addition, pay attention to the source of the information. If you’re using the Internet, stick with reputable websites such as government (for example CDC), nonprofit (such as CHADD) or university resources (those that end in .edu).

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**ADHD Occurs More Often with Children in Foster Care Systems. Here’s Why...**

*From chadd.org*

About one out of four children in foster care systems have been diagnosed with ADHD, compared to about one out of 14 children not in foster care and enrolled in Medicaid, according to a recent study by Melissa Danielson, MSPH, a statistician with the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities.

According to Ms. Danielson, the study findings showed a substantial need for medical and behavioral services for foster children. Often children enter the foster care system following abuse or neglect, or if a parent has abandoned the child or been incarcerated. Research has shown higher rates of abuse in girls diagnosed with ADHD than in girls who do not have the disorder. A smaller number of children enter the foster system when their parents have died and there is not a family member available to raise the child. Children who have experienced abuse or loss have a greater need for emotional and psychological support.

The study also found that children in foster care were more likely than their peers to have a co-occurring condition, such as anxiety, oppositional defiant disorder, or depression.

Danielson is a contributor to the recent Vital Signs study on the pattern of care for children between 2 and 5 years old diagnosed with ADHD. Vital Signs emphasized the need for behavior therapy as a first treatment for young children before adding medication.

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HABIT STACKING: A PRIMER

By Ryan McRae

I’d heard of habit stacking for awhile. Do this one thing and then it leads you into another thing.

But I just didn’t get it. As someone who is in the “productivity writing niche” you’d think I’d get a brochure in the mail. Nope.

So it wasn’t until I read Atomic Habits to fully get a grip on how to habit stack—how to take the things you normally do—and add the things you normally don’t with ease and little if no willpower expended.

But before we get into it, let’s make sure we all know the lingo, shall we?

When I talk about willpower, I talk about the energy expended to do what you don’t want to do. Does it take willpower to eat a cupcake? Nor normally? But to resist that Pinterest famous Cookie Monster cupcake, especially when it’s Janice’s birthday and she made them. But you’re on the keto diet and you don’t want to ruin it. You can smell the willpower burning like the smokestack plume from a coal plant.

That’s willpower: the expenditure of energy to do what you don’t want to do. We only have a limited amount of willpower per day. If you’ve burned it out by the time you get home, the refrigerator looks like a buffet table and you’re yelling, “Honey, do we have any more ice cream in the house?”

So securing our willpower, guarding it, is essential for us with an ADHD/distracted mind. Why? Because we have leaks in our willpower bucket. We just do.

So we want to guard our willpower, our precious commodity—so we can spend it elsewhere instead of bouncing this willpower check we write.

**Habit stacking does just that.**

And before we get into habit stacking—we need to talk about what an actual habit is.

Every. Single. Time. I ask people, “What’s a habit?” They will respond with a “it’s like a goal that you have. It’s like “going to the gym regularly” or “always keeping a clean house.”

Nope. Full stop.

The best definition I’ve seen is from James Clear: A habit is [BEHAVIOR] at [TIME] and will be in [A LOCATION]. So for me, I go to a Crossfit gym on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:00AM in the Crossfit gym. That’s my habit. You know exactly what, when and where.

It’s not vague. It’s not obtuse. It’s specific.

And we have these habits good and bad all over the place.

When I get home from work (time) I will have some ice cream (behavior) in the kitchen above the sink (location).

Now that we’ve got the habit part down—on to the habit stacking!

**Habit stacking is taking a habit that is already established and connecting, chaining or stacking it to another.**