

Foreword

Attention-deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is characterized by a constellation of problems with inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. Taken together these problems have lead to faulty self-control and executive functioning. These problems are developmentally inappropriate and cause difficulty in daily life. ADHD is a biopsychosocial disorder. That is, there appears to be strong genetic, biological, experiential and social factors that contribute to the extent of problems experienced. ADHD has been demonstrated to affect 3% to 5% of individuals throughout their lifespan. Early identification and proper treatment has been found to dramatically reduce the family, educational, behavioral and psychological problems experienced by individuals with ADHD. It is believed that through accurate diagnosis and treatment, the myriad of life problems experienced by some individuals with ADHD, including school failure and drop out, depression, behavioral disorders, vocational and relationship problems, as well as substance abuse, can be properly managed or even averted.

For many years it was reassuring for professionals and parents to believe that the problems caused by ADHD simply represented a poor fit between some children and their environments. It was comforting to reassure parents that the problem would be outgrown and with patience and treatment, ADHD was not likely to cause children significant lifetime adversity. Over the past twenty years, the belief that ADHD is just a childhood condition quickly outgrown by late adolescence has been increasingly tested. A significant number of individuals, male and female alike, suffering with ADHD in their childhood, continue to suffer and lead lives less than their capabilities often into their geriatric years.

With much new science comes the important realization that the day in and day out behaviors and attitudes of parents towards their children with ADHD are powerful forces in fostering resilience and stress hardiness as well as improved symptoms. Biology we now know is not destiny. Now more than ever parents must play a significant role in preparing children with ADHD for normal adulthood. The Excalibur Manual for parents of children with ADHD authored by Maya Warnock is a practical and important resource in fostering this process.

Sam Goldstein Ph.D.
Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
University of Utah School of Medicine
Affiliate Research Professor of Psychology
George Mason University