

## ADHD

### Affects focus, attention and behavior and can make learning challenging

A disorder that includes difficulty staying focused and paying attention, difficulty controlling behavior and hyperactivity. Although ADHD is not considered a learning disability, research indicates that from 30-50 percent of children with ADHD also have a specific learning disability, and that the two conditions can interact to make learning extremely challenging.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a condition that becomes apparent in some children in the preschool and early school years. It is hard for these children to control their behavior and/or pay attention. It is estimated that between 3 and 5 percent of children have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), or approximately 2 million children in the United States. This means that in a classroom of 24 to 30 children, it is likely that at least one will have ADHD.



ADHD is not considered to be a learning disability. It can be determined to be a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), making a student eligible to receive special education services. However, ADHD falls under the category "Other Health Impaired" and not under "Specific Learning Disabilities."

Many children with ADHD "also" approximately 20 to 30 percent "also" also have a specific learning disability.

The principle characteristics of ADHD are inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. There are three subtypes of ADHD recognized by professionals. These are the predominantly hyperactive/impulsive type (that does not show significant inattention); The predominantly inattentive type (that does not show significant hyperactive-impulsive behavior) sometimes called ADD; and the combined type (that displays both inattentive and hyperactive-impulsive symptoms).

Other disorders that sometimes accompany ADHD are Tourette Syndrome (affecting a very small proportion of people with ADHD); oppositional defiant disorder (affecting as many as one-third to one-half of all children with ADHD); conduct disorder (about 20 to 40% of ADHD children); anxiety and depression; and bipolar disorder.

*\*National Institute of Mental Health, 2003*