



# District I Parenting News

## Extension Nutrition Program

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### Tips On Working With Children With ADHD

You probably know someone whose child or grandchild has a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). It is estimated that 3 to 5 percent of all school-age children are affected. What are the symptoms of this neurobiological disorder, and what coping strategies are recommended?

#### This disorder has three subtypes:

- Inattentive—in daily life, the child has a hard time listening to instructions, remembering details, and organizing tasks
- Hyperactive-impulsive—the child can't sit still, is always "on the go," runs all the time, and behaves impulsively
- Combination of the first two (may or may not include hyperactivity)

Because all children exhibit these signs sometimes, the guidelines for diagnosis are very specific, and the symptoms must be more frequent or severe than in other children.

Strategies for working with children with these symptoms include:

- Work with each problem together as a family. For example, is the problem during meals? Then brainstorm specific solutions for that specific dimension of the problem.
- Work with the child to discover what might help, such as using the alarm clock/kitchen timer for short blocks of time to organize homework or using earphones to block out distractions.
- Use concrete tools such as lists and

schedules. If homework is an issue, consider a tutor or coach as an adjunct to the parent.

- Use incentives to reward designed behavior. Use praise and positive feedback; while all children need praise, children with ADHD seem to do best with abundant praise.
- Give feedback often, so that children realize when they need to correct the direction they're going.
- Try to negotiate rather than struggle. Whenever possible, give responsibility to the child.

Children with ADHD are affected at home, in school, and in social settings. Support groups can be useful to parents, and a wide variety of books and online resources are available on the topic. National organizations that offer information and support include:

- Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder (CHADD), 800-233-4050, <http://www.chadd.org/>
- The National Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA), 484-945-2101, <http://www.add.org/>
- Learning Disabilities Association of America, 412-341-1515, <http://www.lidaamerica.org/>
- National Center for Learning Disabilities, 212-545-7510, <http://www.nclld.org/>

Source: Sally Bowman,  
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## PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITY IDEAS

### Egg Scramble



Will the bunny catch the egg in this colorful chase? This egg-citing tag game is the perfect addition to any Spring celebration. To set up, select one person to start off as the

Bunny. The remaining players are the Eggs, who each quietly (so the Bunny doesn't overhear) select an everyday color for themselves. Next, decide on a home base for the Eggs, a starting point for the Bunny (about 10 to 15 feet away from the Eggs' home base), and a round-trip course for the players to run, such as to a tree and back or once around the house. Have the Bunny and the Eggs gather at their starting points. To play, the Bunny begins calling out colors. As soon as he call calls a player's color, that Egg takes off through the course, with the Bunny in pursuit. If the Bunny manages to tag the Egg before she can make it back to her home base, the players swap places and the Eggs all select new colors. If not, the Bunny tries again with another color.

### Blackout Nights



Pretend the power has gone out. Have the kids turn off anything that uses electricity—lights, TV, computer, radio, stereo, etc. Eat dinner by candlelight, and then play

games, read stories and color by flashlight. The kids will have a great time and it will help them see that losing power can be an adventure, not something to fear. It also provides parents with an unusually quiet evening.

### A Twist On The Classic Egg Hunt



Instead of just hiding the eggs this year and having the fun over in a blink of the eye, try a treasure map of the locations. You can use pictures for younger children and clues for older children. For example a three year olds map might in-

clude familiar pictures such as the front porch with bunny tracks leading to the sandbox and so on while an older child's map might involve some puzzles to solve such as: Follow the front fence line to the end of the driveway, jump over the stump and look in the M\_\_\_\_\_. Design the maps so there is little overlapping and not only will the hunt last longer, the kids will have a terrific time.

### Edible Puzzle



Stuck inside? Chase away bad-weather blues with a fun-and-yummy-springtime puzzle. If rainy days keep your family in-

doors this month, try making this edible garden puzzle, a reminder of the spring flowers that are on their way. To make one, press ready-to-bake sugar cookie dough (found in the refrigerated section of the supermarket) into a 10 by 14" jelly roll pan, then roll it out to a 1/4 inch thickness. (If your rolling pin is too long to use in the pan, roll out the dough on a large piece of aluminum foil first, then place it in the pan. Use a knife to cut the dough into about 15 randomly shaped pieces, then bake it according to the package directions. When it's done, recut the lines if necessary. Allow the cookie to cool, then pipe on frosting flowers, leaves, and vines., Separate and mix up the pieces, then let your kids have fun reassembling the scene before munching on the cookies.