

ADHD After School

Most forward-thinking teachers and instructors understand how to meet the special needs of children with ADHD. Unfortunately, many parents don't.

ADHD

is an acronym for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Children with ADHD struggle with attention problems, as well as hyperactivity. Teachers are trained to help ADHD kids deal with their personal obstacles and meet their learning potential. However, parents can often find it difficult to keep children safely occupied after school hours.

If your child has

ADHD, the first step to choosing the right after school activity is to understand how he or she is affected by the condition. If your child is interested in sports, you need to know if he or she is put off by fierce competitiveness, or is overly competitive. Is it easy for your child to get along with teammates? Does your child vocalize emotions, or is communication a problem?

Physical exercise is beneficial to all

children, and perhaps more so for children with ADHD. Exercise can use up the extra energy and help stimulate the brain. Team activities offer kids to learn valuable social skills and discipline. If your child shies away from team sports, you may want to look at activities like swimming, dancing, cycling or gymnastics. Martial arts are a great alternative, as they teach self-defense techniques along with discipline, patience and self-control.

Some kids tend to gravitate towards fine arts rather

than athletics. There are wonderful after school opportunities for artistic kids with ADHD. Acting or improv classes provide a great form of creative expression and exercise. Drama classes can also provide the child with ample opportunity to develop social skills. Music, art or dance can help a child with ADHD keep busy and entertained, while providing a valuable sense of self-worth and accomplishment.

Scouting is

another good after-school option. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and other community-oriented clubs teach children social skills and personal values. Like all children, kids with ADHD love to take part in special interest projects, and help with community efforts like park clean-up projects.

Whatever

after school program you choose, be sure to monitor your child's progress periodically. Ask your child's coach, instructor or counselor for help in assessing your child's development. If you feel that he or she is not benefiting from the program, you may need to consider changing the activity.

Any after school program that increases your child's

self-esteem is good, but certain activities may be detrimental to the development of a child suffering from ADHD. Excessive television use should be avoided, as well as certain computer and video games. These activities involve no interaction and can leave your child feeling more all the more isolated. Kids with ADHD can sometimes find it difficult to distinguish between good and the bad messages, so they may be inclined to exhibit inappropriate actions or act out contrary messages. On the other hand, group activities that require a child to sit and wait patiently for his or her turn might not be a success.

Children with ADHD are normal kids facing above average challenges. It is important to allow them to take part with their peers in regular after school programs. Take the time to review options with your child, and choose after school activities that are fulfilling, challenging and above all, rewarding.