Thrive 365

Dragonfly: Impact Education

Did you know?

Having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) means that you're more likely to experience a mental health problem, such as anxiety, depression or a conduct disorder. This isn't because ADHD is a mental illness, but because things are much more challenging and there are many more unseen pressures for those who are neuroatypical. The two categories of symptoms are:

- Hyperactivity and impulsiveness
- Inattentiveness (trouble concentrating)

Although many people fall into both categories, around 3 in 10 people are inattentive but not hyperactive. This is known as ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder).

1 Raise Awareness

Those who have ADHD or ADD are more likely to feel isolated and have low self esteem. Their symptoms naturally makes school more challenging for them and so they might find themselves constantly singled out for the wrong reasons.

Raising awareness of the symptoms of ADHD with the whole school community can reduce the stigma and self-stigma associated with the condition. It's obviously important for staff to know how ADHD manifests so they can praise effort appropriately, but it's equally important for pupils to know and understand that we all have different strengths and face different challenges - even if these are sometimes invisible.

2 Avoid Comparisons

It can be all too easy to focus on what you lack - especially when those around you seen to find things so easy. When you hear comparisons from pupils with ADHD, challenge them. Spend time reinforcing the idea of different strengths for pupils with ADHD and have these visible.

For example, you could have displays of famous people with ADHD and list the strengths each one has, or you can create a 'personal profile' for a pupil who is struggling by creating a file and filling it with examples of strengths that they've shown - certificates, achievements, and observations from around school (even including photographs or specific pieces of work).

3 Teach Strategies

Lack of organisation or impulsivity means those with ADHD can often feel out of control or overwhelmed. This can be worse during puberty when ALL children have their ability to forward plan and think things through compromised because of the changes to the brain that occur during adolescence.

Teaching strategies such as repeating back instructions, the process for packing for school, making a list, having reminders set or given, doing 10 minutes on and 2 minutes off, and recognising physical cues, for example, can all help to empower those with ADHD and give them back that sense of control.

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Islands in the Stream:
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