

INTRODUCTION TO THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) affects approximately 3% to 5% of the school-aged population. ADHD is a condition that is characterized by inattention, distractibility, impulse control difficulties, and hyperactivity. It is important to note that not all children with ADHD have hyperactivity difficulties, and thus, some professionals prefer to use the term Attention Deficit Disorder. For the purpose of this manual, both will be used interchangeably.

Students with ADHD—or these characteristics—have always challenged our best educational practices. In fact, studies on educational outcomes for students with ADHD suggest a dismal outlook. Consider these facts for individuals with ADHD (Barkley, Fisher, Edelbrock, & Smallish, 1990; Weiss & Hechtman, 1993):

- Between 30% and 50% have been retained in a grade at least once.
- Almost 50% have been suspended one or more times.
- Between 20% and 35% do not complete high school.

What can educators do to improve the situation? What knowledge exists that will enable us to move forward in designing educational programs and interventions that support the learning capacity of students with ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a recently recognized condition that is estimated to affect literally thousands of school-aged youngsters. During the past 10 years, the knowledge base about students with ADHD has grown extensively. Although not yet comprehensive, this knowledge has resulted in more accurate identification and assessment techniques. Suggestions for developing educational programs and practices continue to grow as educators find increasing numbers of school policies and instructional strategies that work to enhance learning outcomes in classrooms (Montague, Fiore, Hocutt, McKinney, & Harris, 1996). Moreover, research suggests that children with ADHD can succeed in general education programs when appropriate modifications are made (Aleman, 1991; Fowler, 1992; McBurnett, Lahey, & Pfiffner, 1993).

Success depends on a number of factors. Probably most critical are the knowledge and skills that educators bring to their work



Knowledge

& Skills

with students with ADHD. Current estimates suggest that approximately 50% of students with ADHD are being served within general education classrooms, with another 35% to 40% mainstreamed into general education programs for part of the day. Therefore, it is important that general education classroom teachers learn as much as they can about how to recognize these students' special needs and to make appropriate classroom accommodations for them. Specifically, educators will need to understand the unique characteristics of students with ADHD so they can develop the knowledge and skills to:

- Establish policies and procedures that guarantee due process.
- Assess students who may have the condition.
- Implement classroom interventions, including accommodations in curriculum, modifications in classroom organization, and design of behavioral management systems.
- Collaborate with families and other professionals, and work as a team to support the educational progress of these students.

Armed with knowledge and skills in these areas, educators can tailor classroom programs to build on the student's strengths while addressing the student's learning and behavioral needs. The first step in the process is to find out what we currently know about educating children with ADHD. The second step is to put that knowledge into practice. The purpose of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Knowledge and Skills: Training Program for Educators, is to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators so they can better meet the learning

needs of students with ADHD.

ABOUT THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Knowledge and Skills: Training Program for Educators offers training materials that teacher educators (both preservice and inservice), school district professionals serving in staff development roles, and educational consultants can use in developing a basic knowledge base that will allow them to begin meeting the needs of students with ADHD. For example:

- Professors of undergraduate and graduate students might infuse the information and activities about ADHD into their course curriculum.
- School district personnel who are responsible for staff development in the area of ADHD might tailor inservice professional development opportunities for different audiences, including general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, and related services personnel (e.g., school psychologists, speech and language clinicians, counselors, school nurses, and social workers).
- Consultants to school districts might use the materials in their consultations, trainings, and planning sessions.

The program is organized as a series of five modules and will accommodate the varying time constraints and different purposes that users will have. Each module presents basic information and skills about a specific topic area, along with training tools (e.g., blackline masters, activities, handouts) related to supporting students with ADHD

in school-based educational programs. The chapter topics include:

- Chapter 1: Characteristics and Needs of Students with ADHD. This chapter covers background information about ADHD, describes the primary characteristics and associated features of ADHD, and discusses several common beliefs that people have about ADHD. We recommend that this chapter be used as a prerequisite to all other chapters.
- Chapter 2: Policy and Procedures Governing Services for Students with ADHD. This chapter describes a brief history of the policies governing services for individuals with ADHD, discusses legislation regarding education of students with ADHD, and addresses the issues of compliance and due process.
- Chapter 3: Assessment and Identification of Students with ADHD. This chapter presents a general overview of the evaluation process for identifying individuals with ADHD, reviews typical assessment devices and procedures and describes how to interpret the results of an evaluation and make recommendations for placement and program.
- Chapter 4: Interventions for Students with ADHD. This chapter offers an approach to designing interventions for students with ADHD using functional assessment, describes appropriate classroom interventions, and discusses the role of medication in the treatment of ADHD.
- Chapter 5: The Role of Collaboration and Teamwork. This chapter describes the collaboration process, discusses the

need for multidisciplinary teams for effective educational programs, and provides recommendations for school-home coordination of programs.

Each chapter follows the same format: A rationale for including the information is followed by a summary of key background information. This brief summary is intended to familiarize the presenter with relevant literature and research, and in so doing provides the foundation for the training session and follow-up activities. Users should feel free to expand this foundation.

A proposed agenda lists the goals and objectives for the chapter. We have matched the agenda goals to the pre/post-tests for each chapter, so presenters should make a note of this when altering the material. Included in the agenda are suggestions for activities that may be used to actively engage the participants in the learning process.

There is also a section on how users can extend the chapter into application or “knowledge extension” activities. We suggest that these be used outside of sessions as homework or follow-up activities. Annotated lists of relevant readings and videotapes are provided for participants who may be interested in furthering their knowledge of ADHD.

Each chapter contains several blackline masters for your convenience. A fact sheet listing the most salient information from the chapter is presented as a note-taking guide for participants. Also included are blackline masters for overheads, activities (where appropriate), pre-post tests, and handouts. A training session evaluation form also is included.

USING THE TRAINING PROGRAM

The chapters in this training program were developed and field tested as part of a Department of Education, Office of Special Education grant (#H029K20420). Research conducted as part of this grant formed the basis for this training program (for more information, see Montague, Warger, & Harris, 1997).

Active participation is the mainstay of the training program. Activities are used to engage the interest and involvement of the group. When organizing their sessions, trainers may draw from a selection of activities in each chapter. While the chapters are presented in step-by-step fashion, trainers should feel free to modify and tailor them to fit their own style and the needs of their participants.

Although teacher educators might use the program as a stand-alone course, they will most likely use it as a supplement to courses that focus on delivering educational and related services to students with special needs. When used as a supplement, the following suggestions are offered. It is important to consider the content of the course (e.g., introduction to special education, educational assessment, methods and materials, language development) before deciding on the program topics that would be most appropriate to include. For example, the instructor of a course on assessment in special education might select several activities from the chapter on characteristics and needs of students with ADHD before moving to the activities from the chapter on assessment and identification of students with ADHD.

For the most effective use of time during inservice training, we recommend that facilitators (we will use this term throughout the manual to refer to trainers, presenters,

teacher leaders, staff developers, and other individuals who will deliver the training material) first assess the particular knowledge needs of the intended audience. We have included a needs assessment instrument in Appendix I-1. Using the information from the needs assessment, the facilitator can better tailor the program to the audience by selecting activities from the various chapters that address their needs. For example, participants may indicate that they need information about criteria for deciding if a student with ADHD is eligible for special education. With this in mind, the facilitator can select activities from the chapters on characteristics and needs of students with ADHD, assessment and identification, and policy and legislation.

After determining the content of the preservice or inservice session using course goals or the needs assessment, facilitators are encouraged to become familiar with local school district guidelines for assessing, identifying, and serving students with ADHD. District guidelines usually can be obtained by contacting the special education director's office. University teacher educators may want to gather several examples from surrounding school districts to use as models.

Organization of the Training Chapters

The training program has been designed to involve participants actively in the learning process. While facilitators will bring their own strategies to the particular session, we have organized the chapters around the following steps:

- Give the pre-test (see Appendix I-1 for blackline master). While most teacher educators will do this, school-based facilitators also may want to use a pre/

post-test design to assess the session's outcomes.

- Provide a brief introduction and presentation of the goals and objectives for the session. At this point you may want to use an ice breaker to help participants feel comfortable, and/or to activate their prior knowledge about the topic.
- Present a brief mini-lecture on the salient information.
- Engage participants in activities that allow them to practice and apply the knowledge and skills covered.
- Give the post-test and evaluate the session (see Appendix I-2 for a blackline master of a session evaluation form). A comparison of pre-test and post-test performance will indicate whether participants have gained the desired knowledge and developed the necessary skills.

We recommend that Chapter 1 be presented first because an understanding of the characteristics associated with ADHD is essential to the following chapters. Otherwise, the chapters are self-contained, and may be used in any order that suits your participants' needs. For example, if you are working with a group of teachers, you may want to move quickly from characteristics into the chapter on effective classroom interventions. Or, if you are working with administrators, you may want to focus on the chapter covering policies and procedures. If you are working with multidisciplinary teams, it may be more practical to start with an overview from the chapter on collaboration before moving into assessment and program planning.

ORIENTING THE PARTICIPANTS

No matter where you decide to focus your

session, you will probably want to take extra care when introducing the topic of ADHD for the first time. Although each chapter offers specific suggestions for activities designed to activate prior knowledge about the specific focus at hand, this introductory section contains several general or “warm-up” activities that can be used during the initial orientation. We recommend that you use one or more of them.

Activity: Cause for Concern?

In this orientation activity, participants reflect on the statistics associated with the outcomes for students with ADHD.

Materials. Index cards; blackline master (Appendix I-3).

Procedures. Pass out index cards to participants. Show them the following facts about students with ADHD to participants:

- Between 30% and 50% have been retained in a grade at least once.
- Almost 50% have been suspended one or more times.
- Between 20% and 35% do not complete high school.

After reflecting on the facts, ask participants, “What comes to mind?” Ask participants to write a belief about students with ADHD on one side of the index card, and one thing that they feel they might be able to do to improve results on the other side. Tell participants not to write their name on the card.

Collect the cards and pass them around the room. Participants should read the new card and pass it on to another person. Continue the process until they have read a variety of cards. Discuss what participants found interesting (or disturbing) about what they read. Keep track of responses on a flip chart

or an overhead.

As a variation, especially when working with larger groups, have participants break into small groups of three to four people. Have them review cards and discuss them before passing the cards on to another group.

Use this activity to lead into a discussion of the purpose of the training program, which is to provide knowledge and skills that will help educators improve these outcomes.

Activity: Voting

In this orientation activity, participants predict what others will say about students with ADHD.

Materials. Blank overheads or flip chart paper.

Procedures. Have participants break into small groups of three to four people. Provide each group with a blank overhead or flip chart paper. Their task is to list three beliefs with which they think everyone (or the majority) in the entire group will agree. You can make the activity more challenging by having them write one belief that would be considered “politically incorrect” or “professionally unacceptable.” Collect the statements.

As you display the belief statements, ask participants to vote: Strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. Tally and discuss. Use this as a jumping-off point for discussing the purpose and rationale of the session.

Activity: Introductions

This activity serves a dual purpose: participants introduce themselves and become oriented to the session by recalling a positive experience with a child with ADHD.

Procedures. Before asking participants to introduce themselves, have them reflect on a successful experience they have had with a student with ADHD. As they introduce themselves, have them briefly share the experience.

As a variation, have participants imagine a positive experience with a child with ADHD. Prompt them with, “You just had a good experience with a child with ADHD, what happened?” Or, if you are working with a group of veteran educators, ask them to introduce themselves and include one tip they have found works with students with ADHD.

This activity makes a nice transition into the rationale for learning more about children with ADHD.

Activity: The Headline Would Read...

In this activity (which works best with large, diverse groups), small groups of participants are asked to write a headline and lead paragraph about educating students with ADHD.

Materials. Flip chart paper and markers.

Procedures. Divide participants into groups of three to four people. Pass out flip chart paper and markers to each group. The task is for groups to imagine that they have just opened their school newspaper (or professional news journal) and see an article about students with ADHD. What does it say? Ask groups to write the headline and lead paragraph. Participants should limit their headline to no more than 10 words, and their paragraph to three sentences.

Share the news stories. You may even want to tape them up on the wall. As a variation of this activity, ask participants to discuss

each news story in terms of what it would take to make the story a reality.

Use this activity to lead into the rationale for the training session. As educators develop more knowledge and skills, they will move closer to improving the outcomes for students with ADHD—and maybe even closer to making the news articles a reality.

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Videotapes

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Dr. Barkley discusses effective treatments for ADHD. Especially appropriate for parents and teachers, the focus is on the positive benefits of parent training, appropriate intervention, behavior modification, and medical management.

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ADHD in the Classroom: Strategies for Teachers

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ADHD: What Do We Know?

Russell Barkley (1992)

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Dr. Barkley describes ADHD and the problems that children with ADHD present. Parents, teachers, and children are interviewed.

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ADHD in Adults

Russell Barkley (1994)

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Dr. Barkley interviews adults with ADHD and presents various effective treatments including psychoeducational counseling, peer support, medication, and group and individual psychotherapy.

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Inclusion of Children and Youth with Attention Deficit Disorder

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Suitable for staff development and teacher training programs, the video focuses on causes, diagnosis, and treatments for ADHD including home-based and school intervention programs.

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