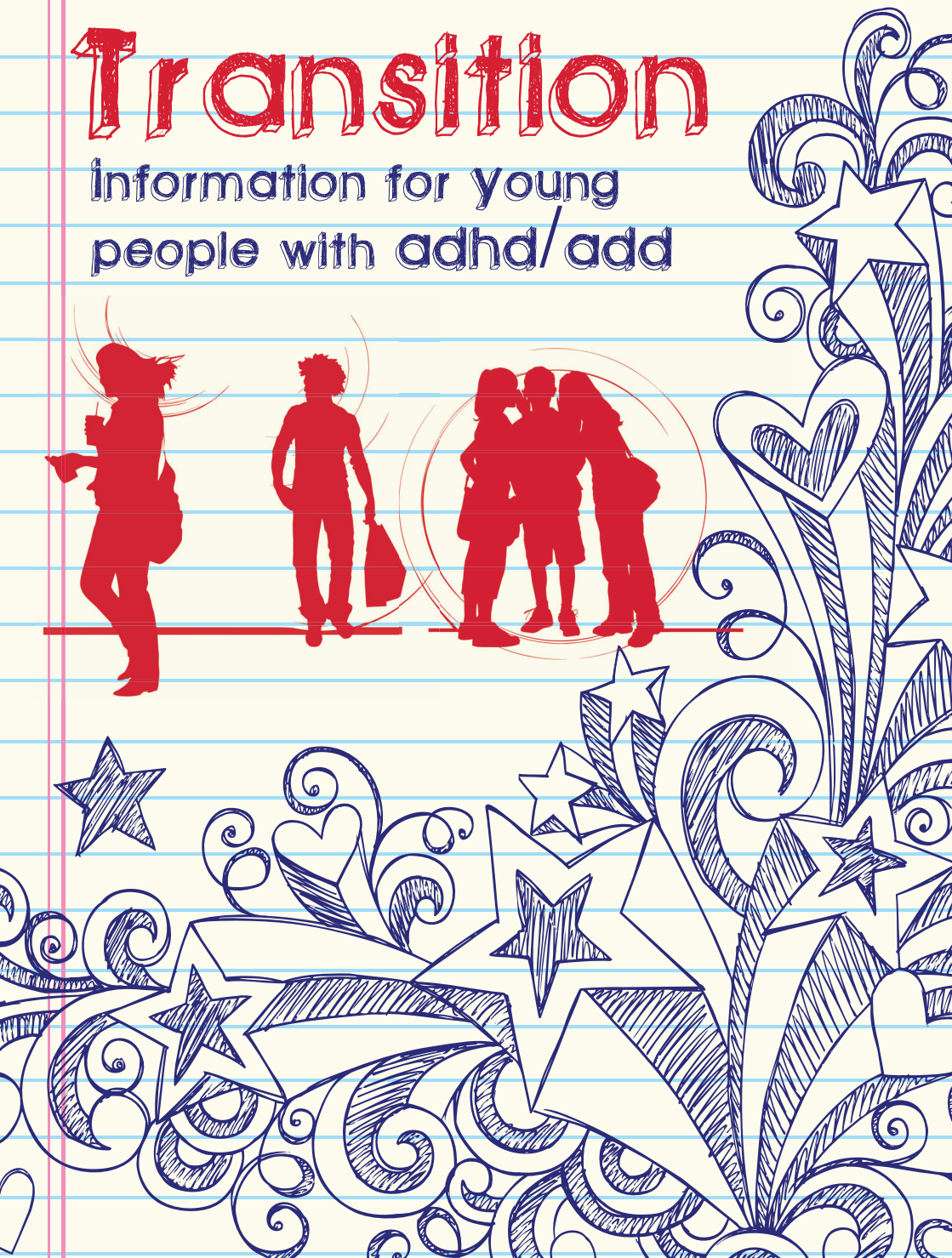


Transition

Information for young
people with adhd/add



Transition

Information for young
people with adhd/add



Dear

Teenage years can be challenging for most young people but may be even more so if you have ADHD. We would like to provide you and your parents/carers with as much information as possible to help you prepare for some of the challenges you might face as a teenager / young adult with ADHD/ADD. In this pack we will discuss:

***DRIVING**

***DRUGS** including smoking tobacco and marijuana

***DRINK** (alcohol)

***DIFFICULTIES** at School, College, Work and Competitive Sports

***DATING and RELATIONSHIPS**

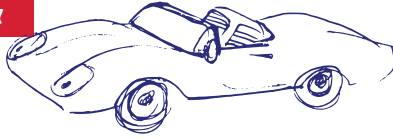
including family and peer relationships

***DEALING WITH ADULT SERVICES**





DRIVING



- ADD or ADHD may increase the risk of unsafe driving.
- Young drivers with ADHD have nearly **four times** as many car accidents and **three times** as many speeding offences as those without ADHD
- The reasons for this may be because of the following:
 - **Difficulty judging risks and making appropriate decisions**
 - **lack of organisation**
 - **problems concentrating**
 - **unpredictable driving actions due to being impulsive**
- There are many distractions that can be dangerous when driving such as using your mobile phone, playing with the radio and changing CDs and carrying many passengers.
 - **You should not use your mobile phone at all when driving**
 - **CDs or the radio station should not be changed while you are driving and it is worth considering keeping the music off altogether while driving**
 - **It may be helpful to limit the number of passengers you carry as lots of chatter may also be a distraction**
- It is also important for you to discuss driving with your parents. Together you can think of ways to help limit distractions, focus attention, and make driving a safe experience.
- Before applying for a licence it is really helpful to talk things through carefully with us or your GP
- You should contact the DVLA direct for advice on personal matters and if you are open about your diagnosis the DVLA can ensure you are provided with the appropriate support
- Medical clearance to drive is encouraged – we are obliged to inform the DVLA if in our judgement it is unsafe for you to drive
- We can complete any necessary forms which need to be sent to the DVLA.
- You will need to speak to your Insurance Company especially if you are on medication as you may find your insurance will not cover you if you have an accident and have not informed them of your diagnosis.
 - Manual cars have been found to be safer for you than automatics as they hold your attention better.

It is very important that if you need medication to help you control your ADHD symptoms and to focus and concentrate, that you take it as it may be unsafe for you to drive otherwise.



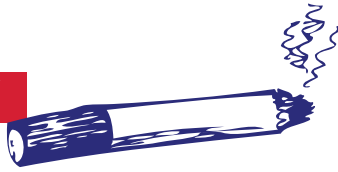
DRUGS and DRINKING

- Research has shown that ADHD during childhood may be a risk factor for drug and alcohol abuse in later life.
- A recent survey found that more than 15 percent of adults with the ADHD had abused alcohol or drugs during the previous year. Alcohol and marijuana were the substances most commonly abused.
- The impulsivity, poor judgement and risk taking behaviour can lead to the abuse of substances.
- Some research has found that those with ADHD who were medically treated as a child were less likely than their untreated peers to abuse drugs or alcohol in their teenage years or in young adulthood.
- However there are also fears that the medication prescribed by doctors for ADHD are being abused and it is very important that if you are on medication, you do not take more than what your doctor has told you to.
- It is very important that you do not share your medication with anyone else.
- Being aware of the risks should hopefully make you think harder before even experimenting with drugs or alcohol. If you are approached by anyone, even friends, speak



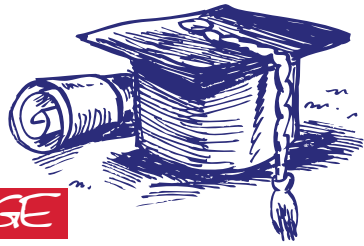


SMOKING



- Once you start its hard to stop. Smoking is a hard habit to break because it contains nicotine which is highly addictive.
- People start smoking for a variety of different reasons, some think its cool others start because their family members or friends smoke. Statistics show **9 out of 10** smokers start before they are 18 years old.
- Due to some of the ADHD symptoms you may be more likely than your friends to initiate and continue to smoke.
- Teen smokers can experience many problems like bad skin; bad breath; bad smelling clothes and hair; reduced athletic performance and greater risk of injury with slower healing. Over the long term, smoking leads to people developing health problems like heart disease stroke and many cancers.
- Each time someone lights up and smokes **a single cigarette it takes between 5 to 20 minutes off the person's life.**
- The only thing that can help avoid all these problems is to stay smoke free. This isn't always easy especially if everyone around you is smoking and offering you cigarettes.
- Smoking marijuana can have negative effects on memory, judgement and perception-all of which are already a difficulty when you have ADHD.
- Remember stop and think if you are around people who are smoking and try and get you to join them.





SCHOOL and COLLEGE

It has been well researched that children/young people with ADHD underachieve more often in school than their peers. They are also more likely to receive detentions, suspensions and exclusions. Young people may stop attending school altogether, get involved in anti-social activities resulting in poor employment prospects in the future in addition to an overall poor quality of life.

Therefore it is important to have good compliance with medication if required in order to enhance the outcome of the school experience and future life prospects.

Learning to multitask on your own and organise self learning at college can be one of the hardest things to do that is different from being at school, but even more so when you have ADHD. Some ways to help this include:

- Find a safe quiet place to study
- Use an alarm clock to set specified start and finish times for an assignment
- Take frequent breaks
- Divide projects into smaller sections
- Try to sit at the front of the class to minimise distractions and maximise attention
- Discuss any difficulties with your tutor or parent/carer

Taking your medication regularly will improve your concentration and help you to be more organised and stay focussed on school/classroom related tasks.

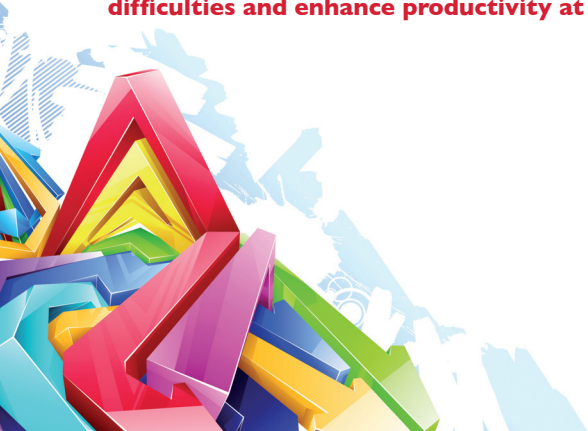




WORK

- Looking for a job can be difficult for anyone but when staying organised and finishing tasks are real problems as part of your ADHD this can be even more daunting
- However there is almost no job that you cannot do if you choose to do so just because of your ADHD
- Challenges at work you might face are:
 - Distractibility – there are often lots of distractions within and outside the workplace and it may be helpful to find a way to block out the noise around you while you work.
 - Impulsivity – acting before thinking can lead to you taking on projects you are unable to complete or quitting a job after a bad day without thinking of solutions to the problems you are dealing with.
 - Hyperactivity – constantly fidgeting at work can be misconstrued as boredom or poor motivation.
 - Forgetfulness is a common problem faced by those with ADHD and it might help to write down reminders for you and check them throughout the day. Remember to stay safe if working with dangerous equipment.
 - Time management problems – this can result in attending meetings late and not meeting deadlines.
 - Interpersonal difficulties – this can result from being too blunt and speaking your mind without thought for your colleague's feelings and interrupting others whilst speaking.

Taking your medication regularly if needed can help reduce the above difficulties and enhance productivity at work.





ADHD and WORKING for the POLICE FORCE or for the ARMED FORCES

The Armed Forces have strict guidance for enlistment. Recruits must be fit to serve anywhere in the world, in all environments where medical care and drug supply may be limited. If you are interested in a career with the Armed Forces you should personally contact them. The Armed Forces has stated that candidates with hyperactivity, uncomplicated by violence or criminality, absent for more than two years without treatment, may be fit for enlistment.

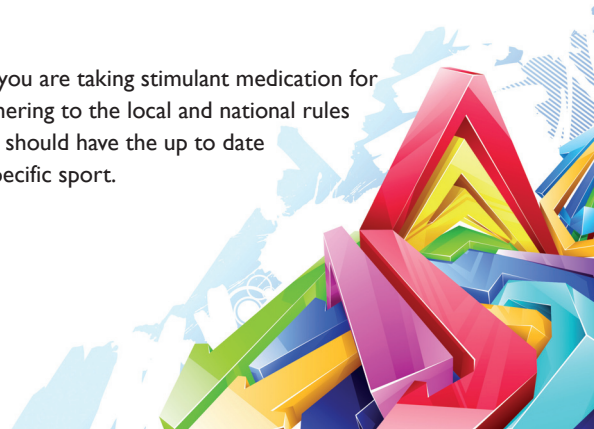
The police force has stated that "psychiatric/ developmental history is important in considering police recruits" but has no fixed policy on recruiting those with a history with ADHD.

COMPETING in COMPETITIVE SPORTS



Stimulant medications used to treat ADHD are banned by the International Olympic Committee with no exceptions even for ADHD, however there have been arguments that this needs to be reviewed. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (american) recognises that ADHD treatment with these medications is important and would assess each individual to see if an exception to the rule of banning the medication can be made.

It is very important to inform your coach if you are taking stimulant medication for your ADHD so they can ensure they are adhering to the local and national rules if you start to play competitive sports. They should have the up to date information about the regulations of your specific sport.





DATING and RELATIONSHIPS

- Dating and having relationships with others can be difficult for anyone but when you have ADD/ADHD, you might face challenges that others find hard to understand. Below are some examples:
 - **Problems concentrating and paying attention to others:**“Errrr.....What did you just say?”
 - **Missing important verbal and nonverbal cues:**“I didn’t realise you saying it was too noisy meant you wanted to leave!”
 - **Impulsively reacting or saying things that may be hurtful:**“Let’s leave your friend’s house...it’s boring now!”
 - **Quick temper and over-reacting to situations.**
 - **Forgetfulness:**“I completely forgot you had planned our date for tonight!”
- These challenges can make some people feel uncertain and self-conscious, which in turn can create problems when it comes to dating and relationships.
- Impulsivity can also mean that some people with ADHD jump into relationships that are perhaps not right for them, without thinking first. Although you may initially be attracted to someone who will provide you with the excitement and high energy you are looking for; a relationship with two people who are impulsive and leap without thinking can lead to poor decisions for both of you.
- Young people with ADHD are more vulnerable and are often involved with risky behaviours. This includes engaging in sexual activity at a young age, usually resulting in teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- Young people untreated for their ADHD are 10 times more likely to get pregnant/cause a pregnancy than young people without ADHD.
- 16% of young people untreated for their ADHD are likely to contract an STD compared to 4% of young people without ADHD. That means you may be 400% more likely to contract an STD than any friends who do not have ADHD.
 - You can always seek contraceptive advice from any health professional or family planning clinic and the information is kept confidential.
 - It is important that when you are in a relationship you both understand how ADHD might affect it so that issues that arise can be addressed more easily.

Compliance and effective treatment of your ADHD can help reduce these risks. It will help reduce the impulsivity of these risk taking behaviours



FAMILY and FRIENDS

- Adolescence can be a difficult time for anyone, as a young person moving away from childhood to adulthood expectations are raised. Peers become increasingly important in a teens life, often more influential than parents. Parents can find this very difficult and it results in increased conflicts and tension within the household. Try to be patient with your parents/carers as they too are trying to learn about giving you increased independence and responsibility.
- Your friends and family members may not understand your behaviour and judge you because of it. This can be very difficult especially as you become older and are trying to define who you are and how you fit into the world.
- Let your friends know you have ADHD and give them some information about it as this could help them understand some of the difficulties you may face. So rather than you then being left out of the group you can become included and this in turn will raise your self esteem and make you feel better about yourself.
- Remember communication is most important especially at this difficult time in your life of transition to adulthood.

Taking your medication regularly will reduce your ADHD symptoms and help improve relationships with your friends and family.





Log in

Username:

Password:

INTERNET SAFETY

- Do not give out personal information when you are chatting online
- It can be dangerous meeting someone you have only met online. Do so only if your parent/carer agrees and can be present or knows your exact whereabouts
- If you enjoy chatting online it is safest to only chat to your friends and family you have actually known first before going online
- If anyone makes you feel uneasy whilst you are online make sure you tell your parent/carer or a trusted adult



DEALING WITH ADULT SERVICES

TRANSITION

- Transition from children/young person's services to adult mental health services or back to your GP will occur between the ages of 16 to 19 years, normally it happens around 18 years of age.
- A young person will get assessed around school leaving age to establish the need for continuing treatment into adulthood.
- If treatment is necessary arrangements will be made for a smooth transition to adult services, where the need for continued medication, assessment and support can be provided.
- You may also be discharged back to the care of your GP if you no longer require medication.
- This can be a worrying time especially if you have been seeing the same doctor (Paediatrician or Child Psychiatrist) for many years. Remember if you are worried or confused about what is going to happen please speak to your doctor who can help with any questions you may have. Your views are very important to us during this transition time.
- Don't struggle alone even if you have been discharged from the professionals care and you feel your symptoms are causing you difficulties again speak to a trusted adult or your GP who can get the help for you that you need.
- It is very important you regularly attend appointments with your GP or Adult Mental Health professional following your transition and discharge from the Children's Services.





REFERENCES

This booklet has been put together with information from the following useful websites and journals you might want to read for further information:

www.driver-ed.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=253

www.adders.org/info63.htm

www.dvla.gov.uk

www.add.about.com/od/childrenandteens/a/teendriving.htm

www.add.about.com/od/adhdinadults/a/ADD-partners.htm

www.pediatrics.about.com/b/2003/08/18/adhd-and-alcoholdrug-use.htm

www.webmd.com/add-adhd/guide/adhd-and-substance-abuse-is-there-a-link

www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/1868.html

www.mentalhelp.net/poc/view_doc.php?type=news&id=121537&cn=14

www.healthcareconnectionoftampa.com/news.html

www.healthcentral.com/adhd/c/8689/74075/tips-finding-add-adhd

www.addresources.org/article_adhd_workplace_traps_nadeau.php

www.netdoctor.co.uk/health_advice/facts/smokehealth.htm

www.kidshealth.org/teen/drug_alcohol/tobacco/smoking.html

www.kidsmart.org.uk

www.add-adhd-education.suite101.com/article.cfm/attending_college_with_add

www.newideas.net/adhd/teenagers

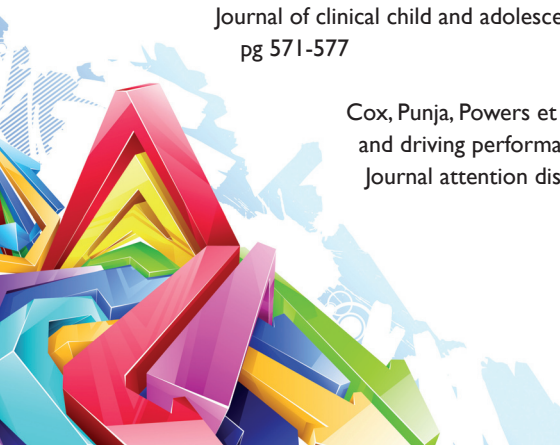
www.ncaa.org

www.pponline.co.uk

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pg 571-577

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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Diagnosis and management of ADHD in children, young people and adults. National Clinical Practice Guideline 72. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. The British Psychological Society and the Royal College of Psychiatrists

Please feel free to contact us at the Child Development Centre Danestrete Stevenage with your feedback about this information.

We wish you all the best for the future!

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