



Healthy Children
& Healthy Schools

Behavior Therapy for ADHD

what parents need to know

What is behavior therapy?

Behavior therapy helps parents, teachers, and other caregivers improve children's behavior through behavior management tools. These techniques involve providing rewards for positive or neutral behaviors and negative consequences for poor behavior. This treatment can be used successfully by itself or in combination with medication treatment.

Are the techniques learned in behavior therapy hard to do?

There are a variety of behavior management techniques to learn in behavior therapy. Some are as simple as verbal praise and some are as challenging as using time-out correctly. The rule of thumb is that behavior management techniques are relatively easy to use, but even easier to use incorrectly without the proper training.

Why does behavior therapy work?

Behavior therapy is based on the belief that children want to please their parents, feel good about themselves, receive positive rewards for good behavior, and avoid negative consequences for poor behavior. When behavior therapy techniques are used properly and consistently, children's behavior significantly improves and the entire family benefits.

What are the benefits of behavior therapy?

Behavior therapy treats ADHD symptoms and related social and school difficulties. It can also help parents and children talk to each other more effectively and decrease oppositional and defiant behaviors in the child. It is important to remember that if behavior problems are left untreated they tend to worsen over time, putting the child at increased risk for academic, emotional, and social problems.

Can behavior therapy be used in school to treat my child's ADHD symptoms?

Yes, caregivers should work with the school to develop a behavior plan for helping their child in the classroom.

How do I find a behavior therapist?

Contact your insurance provider to find a list of qualified mental health professionals in your area that provide behavior therapy for ADHD. If you are uninsured, contact your city's Community Services Board. If you would like more information on behavior management programs, email: glefever@regent.edu.