

THE HALL OF SHAME

Top 10 Myths from Teachers about ADHD

1. It doesn't exist.

FACT: ADD was first medically identified in 1902, in Great Britain. It accounts for 40-50% of all outpatient mental health clinic visits by children in the USA. Brain anomalies that cause ADD have been identified since 1990.

2. They can do the work. They're not trying hard enough.

FACT: Yes, they are capable. Skill & knowledge application is the problem. Brain scans show that increased effort results in increased difficulty for the ADD person. The belief that more effort will help denies the underlying brain problems in ADD.

3. It's the parents. It's the family.

FACT: This is the belief that parenting and/or home conditions cause ADD. Parenting style and home conditions can worsen ADD, but they don't cause it. This belief tends to victimize a family that is already feeling overwhelmed & beaten-down.

4. They just need to be more responsible.

FACT: Sounds like some moral, ethical issue, right? Just like #2, they can be responsible, but they cannot apply it consistently. This puts the blame on the person. Their brain disorder is THE problem. Learn how to deal more effectively with ADD.

5. I've seen ADD kids before, and this one isn't.

FACT: Not all ADD kids are alike! Do you know exactly what to look for? Have you read most of the recent professional literature on ADD symptomology & sub-types?

6. It's just an excuse.

FACT: Proper diagnosis & treatment of ADD is not about excuses. If you believe giving classroom accommodations is giving "excuses", then you need to re-examine your understanding of learning differences & how to "teach to" them.

7. I don't care what they have! They have to follow my rules.

FACT: Do you give different readers different reading materials? ADD students need similar flexibility. Without modifications in materials and/or teaching methods, the ADD student has more difficulty, and displays poorer performance.

8. It's not that serious a problem.

FACT: This belief usually means that the ADD student's symptoms are seen as a fairly insignificant factor in their school performance. Even mild forms of ADD can be very debilitating & demoralizing to the child.

9. I know other kids who act just the same and they don't have ADD; and they do all right in school.

FACT: Is your knowledge of all those students really that extensive and thorough, that you can make this type of clinical judgment? Roughly 50% of all ADD children still remain undiagnosed. Observation (unless structured, intensive and of many days duration) is considered a **very inadequate** method for identifying ADD.

10. They have a speech or language problem, not ADHD.

FACT: Research in the past 10 years has shown that many learning/behavior problems **coexist**, e.g., about 40% of ADD students also have Dyslexia. In addition, roughly 75% of ADD students have some degree of Central Auditory Processing Deficit, which often is manifested in problems with receptive and/or expressive language.

by

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