



"Children and Challenging Behavior
Making Inclusion Work,"

www.inclusivechildcare.org

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Worksheet #1: Rule Out Factors—Red Cards

A. Rule out medical conditions: See a doctor to check for hearing problems, vision problems, middle ear infections, hyperthyroidism (studies show there may be a correlation between AD/HD and thyroid levels).

B. Learning difficulties: If this is a question, it is good to stop and get a complete evaluation for learning disabilities from the school district or other agency such as a hospital or therapy agency. Learning disabilities accompanying AD/HD or the AD/HD symptoms might be from frustration due to not understanding.

C. Allergies: Allergies do not cause AD/HD but they may cause look alike symptoms. Food substances such as sugar and artificial coloring were considered to be a cause for AD/HD in the late 1970s. Studies have shown that changing the diet does not help. It may help to reduce sugar, but it will not cure AD/HD. This could lead you down the road to controversial treatments of AD/HD. You may take that road now, or go down that road later.

D. Sexual or Physical Abuse: Symptoms of post traumatic stress or other anxieties of children who have been violated may look like AD/HD. If this is the case, pull off road and talk about this to a child psychologist or psychiatrist.

E. Short term environmental difficulties: Did your dog just die? Did you or someone close to you recently have a traumatic experience that would make it difficult for you to concentrate and therefore give you these AD/HD symptoms? Given the proper supports will your symptoms go away?

F. Neurological Evaluation: Could this be very small seizures and not inattention? Seeing a neurologist to rule out anything neurological is a good idea. If you have any risk factors for this such as being born premature, having a head injury, having a history of seizures in the family, it would be a good idea to stop here for an evaluation.

G. Other disorders such as Anxiety, Depression, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Sensory Integration Dysfunction, Autism, Tourette's Syndrome. Seventy-four percent of persons with depression also have symptoms of AD/HD. In children with AD/HD, inattentive types are more likely to have an anxiety disorder (35 percent). This type of AD/HD is more common in girls.