

**A Scholarly Literature Review
of Classroom Management Strategies
for ADHD Students**

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One of the greatest challenges that teachers face currently is the number of students with academic or behavioral issues who are placed in the general education classroom. Teaching is requiring more and more flexibility and creativity in both instructional and behavior strategies. ADHD students are one subset of the student population that is creating unique challenges in general education classrooms. In this paper, current research studies and strategies will be discussed to help teachers give ADHD students the skills to be successful in school and life.

Basic Facts about ADHD:

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, commonly known as ADHD is a brain disorder that affects nearly 3-5% of all school children (Cook, 2005). It is not a learning disorder that would qualify a student for special services unless other disorders are present. Therefore, it is likely that many of these children will be seen in the general education classroom. This brain disorder is largely genetic, but environmental experiences can cause it to develop in different ways (Cook, 2005; DuPaul, Eckert, & McGoey, 1997). Since there is not one mold for how this disorder affects students, there is also not one method to treat the symptoms. ADHD manifests in three main issues in students including inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity (Carbone, 2001). It causes students to have both behavioral and academic problems which can make it difficult to diagnose and treat. However, there are several different strategies that have proven successful which will be explored further.

Refining the Diagnosis:

ADHD is a brain disorder and must be diagnosed from a doctor. Often teachers are the first to recognize the symptoms and suggest that a student discuss the situation with the doctor. The doctor will diagnose the student after discussing and evaluating input from the student, parents, teachers, and any other people with whom the student might regularly interact. After a

student is diagnosed, a high amount of pressure for treatment options falls on the teacher. One of the first things that schools should do following an ADHD diagnosis is to assess the student for additional learning disabilities, as it is common that these students might have multiple issues (Cook, 2005). Also, the student will not necessarily qualify for special education services without having other issues present. Many of these students will not qualify and will be placed in the general education classroom.

General education teachers should interview the child, parents, and past teachers to gain a better understanding of how the disorder affects the individual student (Cook, 2005). Often other people can recommend management strategies that have helped this student in the past. Also, ADHD students can behave very differently depending on the setting. Structure and routine are big factors concerning how students react to a classroom environment. Additionally, parents are an important resource for teachers as behavior at home and school can vary greatly. Many classroom strategies involve parental support so it is important to involve the parents in every step of the process. Lastly, general education teachers should attempt to observe the child directly (Cook, 2005). As noted earlier, ADHD affects each child differently and it is important to focus on the issues that affect the individual child.

Before academic and behavioral modifications are discussed, it should be noted that there are some medication options for ADHD students. These must be prescribed by a doctor and their usefulness varies depending on each child. Psycho-stimulants are the medications that are most likely given to ADHD students. They have been shown to be safe, with no long-term illness effects or impact on growth (Cook, 2005). These medications have been shown to improve attention, learning, short-term memory, and impulsivity however the effects have rarely led to long-term positive changes (Miranda, Presentacion, & Soriano, 2002). Most students can

function well while taking the medication, but if it is forgotten or stopped for a period, the behavior returns to normal. However, the changes with medication can lead to better interpersonal interactions which are an important benefit for these students (Miranda, Presentacion, & Soriano, 2002). Medication has not shown great improvements in academic performance, but rather the more important issue in improving academics is permanent behavior changes (Miranda, Presentacion, & Soriano, 2002). Also, since ADHD is a genetic brain disorder, medication is not helpful for all students (DuPaul, Eckert, & McGoey, 1997). It is an option to explore, but generally most useful along with other modifications to help the students make positive, permanent changes in both behavior and academics.

Behavior Symptoms:

When a child with ADHD is seen, one of the first noticed symptoms might be a lack of emotional maturity. These students tend to struggle with understanding their emotions and dealing with them in an appropriate way (Cook, 2005). They are generally not successful in using rational and productive ways to react to their feelings. Also, these students are rarely able to take personal responsibility for their behavior (Cook, 2005). Their inattention can cause them to not be able to process and think through the cause and effect of behaviors before they act. The emotional immaturity can also cause these students to misinterpret social cues from parents, teachers, or peers (Cook, 2005). Often these students struggle to find friends that will be consistent and interpersonal relationships are strained. ADHD students tend to interpret situations as negative, when in fact it might not be (Cook, 2005). Interactions with others are seen through a negative lens because of their immaturity and lack to see their personal responsibility in situations. This can become a cyclical problem as relationships become further strained due to their inappropriate negative reactions to interpersonal interactions.

Impulsivity is a common problem for ADHD students. These students generally struggle largely to think before they act (Cook, 2005). This can lead to many anger and aggression problems which strains interpersonal relationships even more. It can also lead the child to react negatively and end up in huge situations that were seemingly small to start. Anger and aggression can be a big factor for ADHD students in relationships with both teachers and peers. Along with anger issues, impulsivity also leads ADHD students to look for instant gratification (Carbone, 2001). These students often lack the ability to wait for any type of reinforcement, whether that is positive or negative. In general, these children are not able to clearly consider all of the options in a situation and reason through to an appropriate response.

Lastly, hyperactivity is a major cause of behavioral problems for ADHD students. In the classroom they are constantly moving and often seen out of their seat (Carbone, 2001). When they are in a confined location such as a desk, they often squirm and move to satisfy their hyperactive needs. The hyperactivity seen in ADHD students can lead to sleep problems and temper tantrums (Carbone, 2001). Sleep is difficult for a student with hyperactivity, but yet a lack of sleep causes a loss of clarity when awake as well. It can be a very difficult situation for these students. When angry or upset, ADHD students can erupt into temper tantrums as a way to get out their frustration and hyperactivity. Also, the hyperactivity seen in many ADHD students leads them to enjoy less structured activities (Carbone, 2001). They tend to be less successful in highly structured team sports. They usually enjoy the less-structured and more independent extra-curricular activities.

Academic Symptoms:

Academics are often a secondary symptom that is seen for ADHD students. Their behavior problems tend to be more overt and therefore are often recognized first. However,

academic symptoms will appear in these students along with the behavior problems. First, ADHD students will spend a significant amount of time off-task (Cook, 2005). These students struggle to a great degree to focus on an assignment or activity long enough to see completion. They will most likely become distracted with something else and lose track of what they were expected to complete. ADHD students will also possibly talk at an excessive level (Cook, 2005). These students must satisfy their hyperactivity and one of the symptoms that can occur is constant talking.

One of the most significant and devastating academic symptoms for ADHD students is a lack of organization and inability to remember required materials (Cook, 2005). This will show not only in the classroom, but also at home. Students with ADHD tend to forget materials at school that are needed for homework. From a more technical perspective, ADHD impairs nonverbal working memory, internalization of speech, self-regulation of affect/motivation/arousal, and analysis-synthesis processes (Miranda, Presentacion, & Soriano, 2002). Logic and reasoning is a difficult skill for ADHD students to master. They will often not be able to think through multi-step problems with long, drawn out processes. This lack of logic and reasoning will also cause behavior problems by not recognizing consequences.

Impulsivity can cause major academic problems for ADHD students. It leads to poor planning, poor test-taking abilities, and a lack of reading directions (Carbone, 2001). While these can seem like simple, menial tasks, it can be detrimental for a child on a test if he or she does not fully read the directions. One of the challenges for teachers is to determine whether a student doesn't understand the material or whether he or she simply did not read the directions fully. For children with ADHD a lack of attention for reading directions can lead to the inaccurate assumption that they lack the academic skills for a task. Lastly, these students tend to

have poor handwriting (Carbone, 2001). ADHD students often have poor fine-motor skills which leads to poor handwriting. Also, they tend to lack the attention skills to practice and master correct handwriting.

Behavior Modification Strategies:

Contingency management and consequence-based strategies seem to be the most helpful when dealing with ADHD students (DuPaul, Eckert, & McGoey, 1997). While ADHD is a disorder that affects individual students differently, research has shown that these strategies seem to be useful for all students (DuPaul, Eckert, & McGoey, 1997). One of the biggest focuses for teachers with behavior management plans is to not only focus on decreasing the inappropriate behavior, but to teach the student replacement behaviors (Reid, 1999). If teachers are looking for permanent behavior change, they must help the child find replacement behaviors that are appropriate and useful.

One of the most important things for a teacher to remember is that behavior interventions for ADHD students must be powerful, using both positive reinforcement and rewards (Cook, 2005; Reid, 1999). It is also best to supply the student with immediate reinforcement or consequences, however this can be challenging in the midst of a general education classroom (Reid, 1999; DuPaul, Eckert, & McGoey, 1997). Teachers are often busy and it is not appropriate to stop teaching in order to address one ADHD student within the classroom. If immediate attention is not possible, three important elements to remember in a behavior modification plan for ADHD students are to address the situation in the correct setting (Reid, 1999), to involve the student in the problem-solving process (Reid, 1999), and to attempt to engage positive peer attention (Carbone, 2001).

There are many different types of behavior programs that can be used with ADHD students including response cost, time out, token economy, and peer tutoring (Reid, 1999). Time out can be a successful strategy to use for some students, but the teacher must be sure to use it as a reinforcement strategy and not avoidance (Reid, 1999). If a student is struggling in relationships with peers, time out can provide them with an excuse to avoid dealing with the challenging situation. However, if time out is used in a way that allows the child to 'cool down' and gather thoughts, then it can be a successful intervention.

Token economies have been shown to be successful with many ADHD students. One of the major behavior symptoms for these students is a lack of attention to persevere in situations. Token economies can help ADHD students to stay focused on a goal. One important aspect is to keep a visual representation of the strategy in close proximity to the ADHD student (Carbone, 2001). They need to have a constant reminder of their goal to help keep focus and dissuade the student from being distracted. Also secondary, tangible reinforcements tend to work well for ADHD students (Carbone, 2001). If they earn something that they can touch, hold, or see they are more likely to remember it and continue working for the next reward. Time with teachers or peers tends to be less successful as a positive reinforcement for ADHD students.

Problem-solving training is often quite successful with ADHD students due to their lack of ability to reason through rewards/consequences of certain situations (Cook, 2005). When helping an ADHD student to problem solve, be sure to help the child define the problem, identify possibly solutions, reflect on the best solution, and try it out (Cook, 2005). ADHD students need guidance and direction in every step of the process to stay focused and attentive. It is also important for teachers to show empathy and support for the students throughout the problem-solving process (Cook, 2005) since they are often emotionally immature. Role play is an

excellent strategy to help ADHD students learn how to interact with peers in more positive ways (Cook, 2005). Since these students struggle to think through an entire situation, it helps them to be active in a role play situation. It satisfies their need for hyperactivity, while also keeping their attention. Depending on the student, anger management, assertiveness training, relaxation techniques, or conflict resolution strategies might also be needed to help (Cook, 2005). Often counselors or other school administrators might be able to help with these situations. Overall, it is important to show nurture and support for the student as they are learning and trying new ways of behaving.

Self-regulation techniques can be extremely helpful for producing positive behavior change with ADHD students (Reid, 1999). Self-regulation includes the aspects of self-management and self-monitoring (Reid, 1999). Within the area of self-monitoring, the student must learn to self-assess and self-record behavior (Harris, Friedlander, Saddler, Frizzelle, & Graham, 2005). A study of three fourth grade students in Pennsylvania completed in 1998 showed that disruptive behavior was reduced using a token economy along with self-management techniques (Hoff, & DuPaul, 1998). The first part of the strategy used a token economy to reward students when they completed appropriate behaviors for short time spans. The teachers discussed behaviors with students along with the ratings (0-5) that they received. Disruptive behavior decreased during this stage. In the second stage, the teachers introduced self-assessment to the students and they began matching their ratings. This allowed the students to practice self-assessment while still having the supervision and wisdom from the teacher. Students were rewarded based on the accuracy of their rating in comparison with the teacher's rating. Eventually the matching was faded out and students were responsible for self-assessment and recording. The results of this study showed that disruptive behavior from these three

students in both the classroom and recess setting was significantly decreased from beginning to end. Self-management was shown to be an acceptable and productive strategy to deal with disruptive behaviors.

More recently, self-management strategies have been tested in two distinct areas relating to changes in performance and academic ability. The challenge for ADHD students is that they often have behavior problems which cause what seem to be academic issues, but they may have the brain capability to do the tasks. A recent study in 2005 addressed the difference between self-management in performance (SMP) and self-management in attention (SMA) (Harris, Friedlander, Saddler, Frizzelle, & Graham, 2005). Self-management studies of this type had been conducted in the 1990's, assessing the impact of SMA and SMP procedures with learning disabled (LD) students. Both methods seemed to produce positive results, but LD students preferred the SMP (Harris, Friedlander, Saddler, Frizzelle, & Graham, 2005). The goal of the study in 2005 was to conduct the same strategies with ADHD students and see if the same results held true.

This study was again done in an elementary school, with six diagnosed ADHD 3rd-5th grade students in the general education classroom (Harris, Friedlander, Saddler, Frizzelle, & Graham, 2005). All students were using medication to control the ADHD, but their medical treatment remained constant through the study. The six students were taught a particular method to study their spelling words for 15 minutes each morning. Students wore headphones and heard random tones which reminded them to check whether they were on task or not. They used a simple yes/no tally to chart their behavior and then graphed the results, assessing SMA. Graphing was a new addition to research of this type with SMA, but was added to create a motivation factor for students. In contrast, at the end of each spelling session the number of

words that each child had successfully completed was counted. Students also graphed the number of completed words, assessing SMP.

Three students were taught SMA first, followed by SMP and the other three students learned the self-management strategies in reverse. Results showed that both SMA and SMP had a positive effect on behavior regardless of which was taught first. In other words, it did not seem to matter which strategy students began using. Interestingly SMA strategies produced a much more significant impact on academic skills. This differed greatly from the past studies with LD students where both SMP and SMA produced similar results. This is a significant reminder that LD students and ADHD students are not in the same category. While some ADHD students might also have LD status, it is not a foregone conclusion.

Unfortunately student preferences in this study did not seem to match with the academic results. Four of the six students preferred SMP strategies more than SMA. Comments included that the students felt like they learned more and had more practice time with SMP. Also, they enjoyed being able to chart their progress and visually see their growth. To the same effect, five of the six students had negative reactions following the SMA procedures, stating that the tones were distracting, ineffective, and boring. One student actually felt like hearing the tones every few seconds and marking the tally chart took time away from his work and caused more distractions, however three of the students liked hearing the beeps. Teachers found both strategies to be acceptable and feasible to use with students in the general education classroom. The results are a gentle reminder that there is not one strategy that works for all ADHD students. It is important for teachers to have a repertoire of strategies for dealing with individual students.

Both of the preceding studies dealt with elementary students, but there have been some current studies with adolescents as well. In particular, one study was conducted with six middle

school students in Connecticut (Gureasko-Moore, DuPaul, & White, 2007). This study attempted to improve both classroom preparation behavior and homework behavior. As a reminder, ADHD students tend to have poor organization and planning skills which can severely affect their performance in school. Students were taught self-monitoring and self-evaluation procedures using a student log and checklist. Teachers and parents monitored alongside students to check for accuracy, but students were not aware of this. Eventually the use of checklists and logs was faded out and students moved into the maintenance phase of the process. Students showed large gains in both targeted behavior areas. Also, teachers and parents agreed that it worked and was a usable strategy.

When teaching self-management strategies to students it is important for teachers to follow and teach all phases of the process. This is a general outline of how to teach self-management procedures to students, but it is not an absolute and some students might progress differently. First, the students must start with a baseline. This is usually recorded by the teacher prior to the student learning any new strategies. Then the students will most likely move into a teacher management stage where the teacher takes most of the responsibility for recording the desired behaviors. As the student becomes more comfortable with the recording procedure, the teacher and the student begin matching their recordings for accuracy. This is an important step for many students to be realistic about their behaviors. Lastly, the teacher begins to fade out the matching process and leads to just self-management on the part of the student. At this point, the student should successfully be able to track and monitor their own behavior.

With all of these behavior management strategies, it is important that the teacher helps focus the student on a targeted behavior. Prior to addressing the situation with the student, it is helpful for the teacher to complete a functional behavior assessment (Reid, 1999). This will help

the teacher to understand why a certain undesirable behavior is occurring. In general there are four possible functions that most behaviors serve for ADHD students including avoiding or escaping tasks, gaining adult or peer attention, gaining access to an object or activity, or sensory stimulation (DuPaul, Eckert, & McGoey, 1997). Understanding the function of the behavior is vital for teachers before choosing a behavior management plan. Reinforcements and rewards must be chosen that will satisfy the function of the behavior and therefore eliminate the need for the undesirable behavior. Peer attention is an important aspect for ADHD students that should not be overlooked in relation to reinforcements and rewards. Many behaviors can be eliminated with either positive or negative peer attention (DuPaul, Eckert, & McGoey, 1997).

Instructional Management Strategies:

Using positive and productive instructional management strategies with ADHD students can eliminate many of the problems for these students. These strategies range from the physical classroom design to teaching techniques and are often not too difficult for a teacher to accommodate when he or she is aware of the situation, however some of these suggestions will be unavailable depending on the school building and administrators.

In regards to the physical classroom, the first important aspect is to have a physically enclosed room (Reid, 1999). Open classrooms where the students have freedom to roam can provide many unnecessary distractions for ADHD students. Also, within the classroom it is important to define areas. Desks, workspaces, and floor areas should be clearly defined (Wambold, 1998). It is best to have desks arranged in rows, as it creates order and less chance for ADHD students to be distracted (Reid, 1999). Having a desk situated away from the rest or a desk for students to stand up at can be a helpful strategy for ADHD students (Reid, 1999). By allowing students to move around to various desks rather than being confined to one, it can

accommodate their need for hyperactivity while allowing them to continue working. As far as the best seating for ADHD students, it is best to seat them up front or close to the teacher (Cook, 2005; Reid, 1999). Also, it is helpful to surround the ADHD student with other attentive and focused students to eliminate distractions as much as possible. Lastly, placing bright colors on the student's desk can attract his or her attention to the desk rather than the rest of the room which will lead to more focused attention during desk work (Wambold, 1998). Colors can be a great strategy to draw a child's attention to appropriate places.

Within the classroom, it can be helpful to have one area that is stimuli-reduced (Carbone, 2001). This can allow an ADHD student to have a retreat area where he or she can regroup in order and structure. Another variation of this idea is to create small centers within the classroom with one center being a listening center (Carbone, 2001). Students can use the listening center as a place to get away and to focus. Students can use the headphones to clear classroom noise distractions or to listen to directions and assignments. Often these students do better work listening rather than reading because it keeps their attention better. Additionally, it is important that the classroom is organized and unnecessary clutter is reduced (Wambold, 1998). This is often a challenge for elementary classrooms where clutter and lots of supplies are expected. It is also helpful for teachers to help reduce classroom extraneous noise (Carbone, 2001). For some students, music and other noises in the backgrounds leads them to be distracted and inattentive to their work.

Good communication is essential for the success of ADHD students. Teachers of ADHD students should be sure to have effective, clear rules and procedures (Reid, 1999). When setting up rules it is important that the teacher be specific and short with directions (Reid, 1999). Also, it is important that the teacher repeat the rules multiple times and ensure that all students

understand (Reid, 1999). Rules should be reviewed frequently and consequences or reinforcements should consistently followed (Wambold, 1998). Immediate feedback that is constant in nature is vital (Reid, 1999) and high-structure is a strong characteristic of classrooms that are beneficial for ADHD students (Cook, 2005). Finally, teachers should be sure to surround the students with observable warnings in the classroom (Carbone, 2001). Having attention reminders to rules and reinforcement strategies helps students reach their goals.

Reading or listening to instructions is a skill that many ADHD students are lacking. Therefore, it is important to make sure that all students are paying attention before giving any instructions and they should be short and specific (Reid, 1999). One successful strategy to get attention is to foreshadow before instructions are given (Wambold, 1998). Foreshadowing allows students to focus their attention before the actual instructions are given. Also, it is helpful for teachers to repeat instructions multiple times (Cook, 2005). For ADHD students it is challenging to focus long enough to get all instructions at one time. It can also help to break assignments into small segments and to give step by step instructions to students as needed (Cook, 2005; Reid, 1999). This strategy also helps ADHD students by allowing them to work in small segments, which works well for their struggle with sustained attention. A last idea for teachers is to provide instructions in many different modes. Instructions can be written, oral or even tape-recorded (Cook 2005; Carbone, 2001). By giving students many chances to hear instructions, a teacher can be more confident that they students did hear. The goal is to give the ADHD students as many chances for success as are possible despite their challenges.

Teaching strategies for ADHD students tend to follow a lot of the same guidelines as instructions. When using large-group teaching times it is important to start with a strong attention grabber (Wambold, 1998). Teachers need to give ADHD students a reason to focus on

the lesson. An outline can also be helpful for older ADHD students (Wambold, 1998). By following an outline, ADHD students are able to stay attentive to the lesson and focus for the important points. If it is possible, incorporating movement into a lesson can be extremely successful for holding attention of ADHD students (Carbone, 2001). In the same way, curriculums that are more active or involve gross-motor work tend to be the most successful (Carbone, 2001). Since ADHD students tend to lack fine-motor skills, they need to be able to use their hyperactivity in productive gross-motor activities. When teachers use eye contact, students' names or proximity control, students are more likely to be attentive and focused (Wambold, 1998). When lecturing, teachers should closely monitor ADHD students and move throughout the room. By moving closer to students, they are more likely to be attentive and at the same time, teachers are able to monitor students more closely. If possible, giving students numerous short breaks to relax and refocus is helpful (Wambold, 1998). Finally, the use of visual images (Wambold, 1998) and overhead projectors (Carbone, 2001) can be extremely useful for ADHD students. Visual images give students something to watch while they are listening. They are able to move their focus from watching to listening, while still learning. Overhead projectors are extremely beneficial because the light draws students' attention more automatically. By having lights out and only the bright light of the overhead projector, it helps the background distractions to fade and provide focus for the lesson.

One of the biggest challenges for ADHD students can be independent seatwork. There are many potential distractions that can come during this time. First, the teacher should be sure that students are matched correctly with the task difficulty and that effective, sufficient instruction of skills has been given (Reid, 1999). If students are lacking in ability to complete seatwork, many more problems can develop. When creating worksheets or handouts, it is

important to reduce clutter. Worksheets should have large and simple font, limited clip art or borders, and page numbers (Wambold, 1998). Also, it can be helpful for students to cover worksheets with a blank page as they are working through the problems (Wambold, 1998). All of these strategies help to make worksheets simpler to allow students to focus on the actual academic work.

Some ADHD students respond well to color on worksheets (Carbone, 2001). Outlining answer boxes, instructions, or other important elements of the assignment can attract a student's attention. This is also a strategy that can be taught to individual students so that they can self-manage. Students can use colored highlighters to help themselves to focus on assignments. Another technique is to put a clock or timer on the student's desk (Carbone, 2001). They can track their time and the constant reminder of the countdown is helpful to keep focus. Also, reducing handwriting on assignments can take away anxiety and frustration for ADHD students who struggle with fine motor skills (Carbone, 2001). Taking away the handwriting frustration allows students to focus on the important academic lessons or skills. Also, some students respond well to soft background music to cover extraneous classroom noises and help them focus more efficiently (Wambold, 1998).

In order to alleviate the inattention of ADHD students during independent seatwork, it is helpful to focus on one subject area at a time (Wambold, 1998). Having a stack of papers is extremely difficult for an ADHD student to plan and manage. Also, the teacher should have a plan for how to get help which should be explicitly explained to students (Reid, 1999). One of the major academic issues for ADHD students is that they do not know when or how to get help. This also relates to their usual lack of organization and planning. If the teacher creates a structured plan, ADHD students are more likely to seek out academic help when they are

struggling. If the teacher is not available, then providing self-correcting materials for students can be helpful (Reid, 1999). ADHD students need immediate and frequent feedback which is extremely hard to accommodate in a general education classroom. The more self-correcting materials that a teacher can create, the easier it is for ADHD students to get feedback without disrupting the teacher or peers. If all else fails, it is helpful for teachers to have back up plans for ADHD students during independent seatwork times (Wambold, 1998). Sometimes it is easier to have a center or other alternate activity for those students to participate in so that they are still learning and not a distraction to the rest of the class.

As for the daily schedule and curriculum flow, it is helpful to have a written schedule of daily activities in the classroom (Reid, 1999). This allows students to follow the schedule without constantly asking the teacher. Also, teacher reminders about schedule changes can be very helpful (Reid, 1999). ADHD students will most likely not grasp information on the first try, so frequent teacher reminders can help to keep them on track. In the daily schedule, it is helpful to plan harder work which demands more focus in the morning (Reid, 1999). Most ADHD students will be most focused and attentive in the morning. Also, best practices in planning show that teachers should plan less enjoyable or interesting activities first in the schedule and then complete the interesting activities as time allows (Reid, 1999). This helps students to focus and work quickly through the challenging work to have the more interesting tasks as a reward.

Study skills and organization are one of the biggest challenges for ADHD students and frustration for teachers. It seems like a simple skill, but it needs to be taught and structured for ADHD students. In the classroom, it is sometimes helpful to designate classroom space to store materials (Wambold, 1998). This takes the organization aspect out of a child's day and allows him or her to focus on the more important academic material. Color-coding materials can also

serve to attract attention and make organization easier for the ADHD student (Carbone, 2001). Students do not have to look as closely at materials and their attention is automatically drawn to class materials.

Having a student mailbox where things can be stored to take home helps to strengthen the school-home connection and homework completion (Carbone, 2001). Getting appropriate materials home can also be achieved through using end-of-day checklists (Carbone, 2001) or oral reminders from teachers. It might be helpful to set up a system where teachers and parents communicate through notes to ensure that the correct materials are going home each day. Parents can be a great resource to help students learn how to plan time for assignments (Wambold, 1998). Additionally, teachers can tape record assignments and information, which allows students to refer back for things they might forget (Wambold, 1998). All of these measures put the responsibility in the student's hands, while giving practical strategies that could be used to continue successful organization.

Homework is an extremely challenging task for many ADHD students. School demands their focus and by the time they get home, they have little left to give. Therefore it is recommended that teachers assign less homework for ADHD students so that they have time to relax (Reid, 1999). Down time at home allows them to satisfy their needs for inattention and hyperactivity. However, at the end of the day it is beneficial to spend a few minutes reviewing assignments and needed material with the ADHD student (Wambold, 1998). This will help to ensure that they have all needed materials for homework and that assignments have been clearly communicated. If students are still struggling to take home books or materials, teachers can give an extra set to parents to keep at home (Wambold, 1998). By keeping the texts at home, it should make homework completion more successful and take away unnecessary excuses.

Final Thoughts:

Overall, it is important for ADHD students to have meaningful and new experiences in instruction that are attracting and maintaining their attention. Focusing on one task at a time, using enthusiastic and direct teaching, and allowing student choice of activities are all helpful strategies for ADHD students (Reid, 1999). Behavioral strategies also need to be novel and attractive to appeal to these students. However, the biggest challenge for teachers is that each student is different and what works for one student might not work for the next. The best strategy is to collect a repertoire of various types of strategies so that the teacher is prepared for any situation that might be encountered. It truly takes a flexible, creative, understanding, and innovative teacher to successfully teach ADHD students.

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