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CDC Recommends Behavior Therapy as First Line of Treatment for Young Children with ADHD

Only 1 in 2 young children diagnosed with ADHD are receiving psychological services, which may include the recommended first steps of behavioral therapy through parent training, according to the CDC *Vital Signs* report released today. Behavioral therapy has been shown to improve the symptoms of ADHD in young children and can be as effective as medication.

The *Vital Signs* report urges healthcare providers to help improve the number of young children receiving the recommended behavioral treatment by referring the parents of their young patients, 2-5 years old, to training in behavioral therapy before prescribing medication. CDC researchers report that approximately 75 percent of young children being treated for ADHD received medicine, and only about half received any form of psychological services, which might have included behavior therapy. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends healthcare

providers refer parents to training in behavior therapy before prescribing medicine to a young child. [Read on.](#)

What parents learn when trained in behavior therapy



Positive Communication



Positive Reinforcement



Structure and Discipline

What to Expect with ADHD in Young Children

What should you do if you suspect your young child has the symptoms of ADHD? What are the typical behaviors of 3- and 4-year-olds and when should a parent be concerned?

Mark Mahone, PhD, director of the Department of Neuropsychology at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore, Md., talks with parents about differences between typical behaviors for preschoolers and behaviors that may indicate ADHD, along with answering questions about when to seek an evaluation, recommended behavioral management for ADHD in young children, and research to help parents in this [free webcast](#).



Treat ADHD in Preschoolers with Behavioral Therapy First

More than 6 million children between the ages of 4 to 17 have been diagnosed with ADHD. Two million of these children were diagnosed between 2 to 5 years of age. For their parents, there are questions about evaluations, treatment plans, and working with specialists and preschools.



How do their families, and perhaps your family, approach this new diagnosis? Where do you look to find a provider for an evaluation, behavioral treatment, and parent training? *Preschoolers and ADHD*, which first appeared in CHADD's *Attention* magazine, looks at the personal stories of parents of young children affected by ADHD and shares information from experts in the field. Included are tips on picking a preschool for children with ADHD and helpful strategies that work from preschool teachers. [Read more.](#)

Evidence-Based Treatment for ADHD in Young Children

by:
Dr. Mary Margaret Gleason
May 23, 2016 1-2pm ET



Did you know the recommendations for treatment of children and youth with ADHD varies depending on the patient's age? The guidelines for treating young children with ADHD between the ages of 3 and 6 are to provide behavior therapy as the first line of treatment. For those of you who are a pediatrician, other primary care clinician or mental health professional, you will leave this webcast with the knowledge to:

- Appreciate the many factors that may influence the presentation of ADHD in young children
- Identify specific evidence-based parent and/or teacher administered behavior therapy options
- Describe the importance of tracking and monitoring patients throughout the treatment process
- Recognize when behavior therapy is not offering improvements
- Identify how to proceed with weighing the option of medication

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- More U.S. kids have chronic health problems: Study
- Children with ADHD may benefit from following healthy behaviors, new study

suggests

- Factors that help children thrive in the face of adversity
- A promising new approach to treating children with ADHD

Read these and other articles in the [ADHD in the News weekly digest](#).

Did You Know?

It's Teacher Appreciation Week! Behavior management training for parents has the most evidence of being effective. Keep in mind that teachers and early childhood caregivers can use behavior therapy in the classroom as well. Thank a teacher today and visit [CDC for more info on behavior therapy](#).

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