

HOW TO NAVIGATE YOUR DAUGHTER'S ADHD DIAGNOSIS: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

If you suspect your daughter has ADHD, it's important to find the right balance between acting quickly and taking the time to understand what this means. A proper diagnosis can open the door to essential support and effective treatments



WHO TO SEE FOR A DIAGNOSIS

Both physicians and psychologists can provide a diagnosis, but only physicians can prescribe medication.

Because the diagnosis is a clinical judgment –there are no tests that prove or disprove the existence of ADHD—you want a provider knowledgeable about ADHD in young girls.

ADHD in girls often appears differently than in boys, commonly showing inattentiveness, dreaminess, and withdrawal rather than physical hyperactivity.

If your family physician is unable to diagnose your child, request a referral. If you lack local resources for an evaluation, our handout for finding an ADHD provider may help.

THE DIAGNOSTIC JOURNEY

To make the diagnosis, most clinicians:

- Review the child's behaviors as described by parents and teachers,
- Conduct parent interviews
- Evaluate the child
- Employ rating scales or request a full neurological evaluation.

If you have been tracking your daughter's behaviors, share this valuable information with your clinician. There are many apps for tracking behaviors with GUAVA being one we recommend.

If you implemented strategies at home to improve your daughter's day-to-day functioning, but she still struggles, you will be confident in seeking a diagnosis.

THE EVALUATION

The clinician will consider all the information and determine if your daughter meets the criteria for ADHD based on the severity, frequency, and settings of the symptoms as described in the DSM-V. (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) .

The clinician needs to be satisfied that the symptoms are observed in more than one setting (e.g., both at home and school) and that they significantly impair your daughter's daily functioning.



AFTER THE EVALUATION

If the clinician confirms an ADHD diagnosis, he should discuss treatment options with you, such as parent training, educational support, and medication.

Sadly, too often, parents are only offered medication for their child and are on their own to learn about parent training, reliable ADHD resources, and online support groups.

Prepare in advance how you will share the diagnosis in age-appropriate language with your daughter. By laying the groundwork now for open and honest communication, you let your daughter know that her ADHD is nothing to be ashamed of.

It is critically important that you believe that her ADHD does not define her or limit her. It is a bump in the road that together you will learn how to navigate it.

ADHD is just one aspect of your daughter's vibrant personality. With the right tools and support, you can guide her through this journey confidently.

FINDtheADHDgirls.org provides many resources for parents and teachers to learn how to identify and help girls with possible ADHD.

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION



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www.FINDtheADHDgirls



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