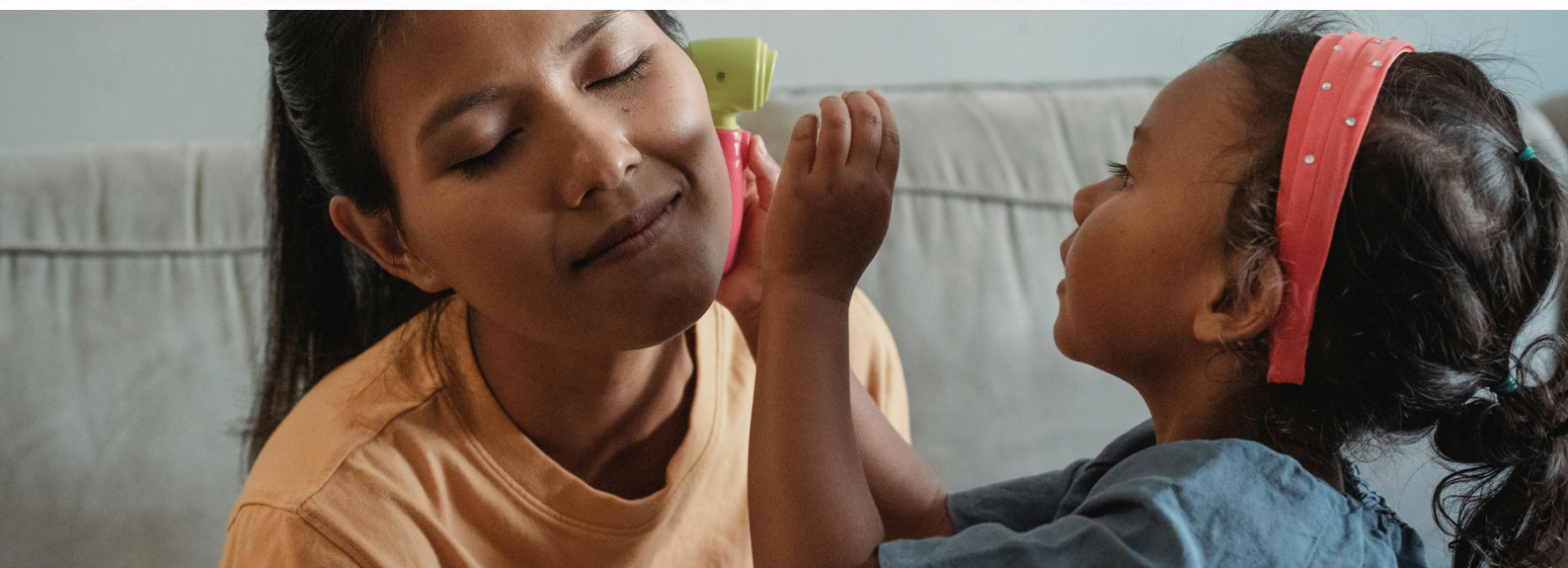


# SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR YOUNG GIRLS WITH ADHD

Practical Guidelines for Parents, Therapists and School Staff



## Communication Tips

**Use clear and concise language** by keeping instructions few and short. Break tasks into small steps and verbally walk through each step as they perform it.

**Maintain eye contact** by crouching down to be at their eye level and ask them to look at you before you start speaking.

**Utilize visual aids** such as charts, pictures, and color-coded systems to reinforce verbal instructions and expectations.

**Implement frequent check-ins** to evaluate and revisit the child's understanding or to review progress. This reinforces learning and provides consistent support.

**Provide positive reinforcement** by praising effort, not just outcomes. Recognize her hard work and improvements to boost her confidence and motivation.

## Environmental Adjustments

**Consistent daily routines** create a structured and predictable environment. This will help manage expectations and reduce anxiety. Visual schedules can outline the daily routine.

**Minimize distractions** by designating a quiet, clutter-free space for homework and tasks that require focus. However, some children may perform better with some background noise, such as white noise or music specifically developed for focusing.

**Provide a well-equipped study area** so tools needed for tasks are readily available. No need to hunt for a pencil, eraser, or paper and become distracted.

**Consider personal comfort** by adjusting the lighting, noise levels, and seating. Consider noise-cancelling headsets and stability balls or bean bags for seating or a child-size desk and chair. Even the texture and feel of clothing can impact the comfort level of a child with ADHD.

## Emotional Support

**Employ active listening** by showing that her feelings and thoughts are valid and important. You do this by setting aside time to pay complete attention to what she has to say and that you are there for her. Encourage her to express herself by making encouraging comments for her to go on, to tell you more. Active listening means not jumping in with what you want to say. Instead, you focus on getting her to express her feelings. You could say simple things, like “I understand how this must be hard for you.”

**Teach coping skills** by introducing basic mindfulness exercises such as deep breathing and guided imagery, to help her manage stress and emotional overwhelm. Recommended books: *What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid’s Guide to Overcoming Anxiety* and *Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness Exercises for Kids* and recommended videos: *Cosmic Kids Yoga* (YouTube) and *Mindful Kids* (YouTube).




**Encourage social interaction** by providing opportunities to be with peers with similar interests. Encourage her interests because children with ADHD perform their best when pursuing things that interest them, or they are passionate about. Joining activities with structure and adult supervision can be beneficial as well.

**Develop independence** by encouraging choice for activities, routines, and possessions whenever feasible. Sometimes, to prevent overwhelm when there are many choices, provide a few for her to choose from. For example, instead of asking, “What do you want to do this afternoon?” ask, “Do you want to go to the movies or the park this afternoon?” Be sure to make the choices age-appropriate.

**Provide consistent emotional support** by telling her regularly that she is loved and valued. Tell her what particular things about her you find so compelling, such as “I love it when you sing that crazy song.” Or “I am so glad you are my daughter when you smile at me like that.” Start with “I” when telling her about your positive feelings for her as these have the most impact.

## CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

 [findtheadhgirls@gmail.com](mailto:findtheadhgirls@gmail.com)

 [www.FINDtheADHDgirls](http://www.FINDtheADHDgirls)

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