

The Hallowell Center Newsletter

Fall 2004

Exciting News! On July 7th, 2004, the U.S. Senate unanimously voted to designate September 7th, 2004 as National AD/HD Awareness Day. This effort was spearheaded by the Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA), the National Mental Health Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Counseling Association, and CHADD. Events planned for this day will help educate the public about AD/HD and its effect on the daily lives of so many people. It's a tremendous opportunity to inform millions of Americans about the realities of AD/HD. (Of course, here at the Hallowell Center we think that every day should be National AD/HD Awareness Day... But you have to start somewhere!)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Start Your Engines!

Back to school, back to work, back to schedules and deadlines. Fall can be a challenging time for adults and children with ADHD — a time of increased demands and transitions. As the days get shorter, the leaves turn red, and the frost accumulates on the pumpkin, here are some things we like to remember.

Prepare for transitions: Take your child to school a day or two early. Walk around, look at the classroom, talk about the school day. Talk over the most challenging and most rewarding parts of the school day. Make a plan for the first day back. Or if you're going back to work after a vacation, try going to the office a day early and organizing your desk, catching up on e-mail, or clearing your voice mail.

Make schedules: Schedule your day. Schedule your week. Get up a little early every weekday, review the schedule, and plan for important or unusual events that day.

Don't overschedule: People with ADHD may need more free or flex time to "just hang." Good scheduling includes cutting things OUT of the schedule.

Enlist your "support crew": If you're going to climb Everest, you'll need lots of people to help you. If you're going to do well at school or work, the same rule applies. Make a list of the people you can rely on to support and assist you or your child. Make sure each member of the crew is knowledgeable about ADHD, knows what his or her job is, and is in close contact with you.

Procrastination ↓, Task Completion ↑

1. Start each week with a planning session, and use a weekly/daily planner. Write down important deadlines or appointments, as well as reminders on previous days.
2. Are you a morning person? Or are you sharper in the evening when everything has quieted down? Plan your day around your most productive periods.
3. You can do anything if the end is in sight! Time limits make unpleasant tasks more bearable, so set yourself a one hour time limit, hold your nose, and jump in!
4. Get rid of the "maybe later" pile. Decide right away if something is worth keeping. Otherwise, toss it!
5. Do at least one undesirable task first thing in the morning and get it over with.
6. Balance your day. Schedule enjoyable tasks between those you aren't so thrilled about.
7. Break large tasks into "chunks" of 30 minutes or less.
8. Prevent interruptions! Turn off the phone, don't answer the door, or use a babysitter. Without distractions, you can accomplish much more in a shorter time.
9. Avoid over-planning. Once you have a plan in place, act on it. You don't need to make it perfect.
10. Reward yourself for your accomplishments!

Is It Worth The "A"?

We agree that college is important. And we agree that students who do well in high school have a greater range of college choices. But often we see students with ADHD who feel such unrelenting pressure to "get the grade" that they're burned out on school and engaging in daily battles with their parents as a result. If you find yourself pressuring your child to succeed at all costs, remind yourself that you could end up with a straight "A" student at Harvard who *will always hate your guts!*

School achievement is not worth the destruction of your relationship with your child. We know a lot about appropriate treatment and support for students with ADHD. And we know that your child can enjoy learning, can "learn how to learn" in ways best suited to his or her strengths, and can feel understood, supported, and assisted by you! Give us a call if you'd like some help.

THE HALLOWELL CENTER, 142 NORTH RD., SUITE F105, SUDBURY, MA 01776 TEL # 978-287-0810
THE HALLOWELL CENTER, 21 CENTRAL ST., ANDOVER, MA 01810 TEL # 978-474-6270
WEB ADDRESS: www.drhallowell.com

Workshops

Sudbury ~ with Marvin and Renee Goldberg

Workshop attendance is \$60 per person
or \$90 for parent and child
Call 978-287-0810 to register

School Planning for Students with AD/HD

Sept 23: 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

For parents.

If you are considering a boarding or day school for your child, let's develop a successful plan for admission. We will discuss how to make a good match for your child and how to access the services he or she needs.

Writing the Personal Statement

Oct 6: 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

For high school seniors. Students only.

We will help you focus on a good topic and outline how to address it. If you have already started, we will help you finish it. Bring copies of your applications with the questions the college wants answered.

College Planning for Students with AD/HD

Oct. 20: 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

For high school students and their parents.

We'll walk you through the steps for finding a good fit for college. Researching the colleges, self-advocacy, and successful tips for surviving your first year will be covered.

Groups

Call 978-287-0810 for more information

Sudbury

Adult ADD Support Group

Leader: Catherine Birgeneau, Ph.D.

Tuesdays 6:30 - 8 p.m., starting September 28, 2004

Adult ADD Group Therapy

Leaders: Ned Hallowell, M.D. & Catherine Birgeneau, Ph.D.

Thursdays, 6:30-8 p.m., starting November 4, 2004

Couples ADD Support Group

Leaders: Ned Hallowell, M.D. & Theresa Lavoie, Ph.D.

2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m., ongoing

Andover

Adult ADD Support Group

Leader: Theresa Lavoie, Ph.D., Mondays, 6 - 7:30p.m.

Academic Coaching

Beginning this Fall, Carol Gignoux presents new coaching services for students of all ages. If you are an adolescents or adult student looking for better academic management skills, or the parent of a younger student looking for effective strategies and on-going support for homework management, call the Hallowell Center to schedule a brief informational phone call with Carol Gignoux. Limited spaces are available for these services, so call soon!

Seven Steps To A Better Daily Schedule

A Daily Schedule will help you plan every part of your day, increasing your control over how you spend your time — letting you get more done and feel more productive. Here's how to make one.

1. Using a ruler, draw a chart of all your waking hours, using one square for each half hour. If you're awake for 16 hours each day, you'll need 32 squares: 8 across, 4 down. Label each square with the starting time for that half-hour block of time. For example, if you wake up at 6:00 in the morning, label the first half-hour square 6:00 a.m., and the next one 6:30 a.m., etc.
2. Make a list of all the things you will do that day, from getting up to going to bed.
3. Write things into your schedule chart, beginning with those things that have specific start times. For instance, if you know you have to a half hour trip to school and class starts at 8:00 a.m., fill in that 7:30 square with "leave for school." Allow an extra 15 minutes if you expect traffic or weather delays.
4. Next, move on to the things you need to do that don't have specific start times. When finding blocks of time to fit them in to, think about the time of day you're choosing. For example, it may be a good idea to schedule homework before dinner, since after your meal you may get too sleepy to concentrate.
5. Give yourself breaks! If doing all of your homework in one chunk is too much for you, schedule a little bit of free time between subjects.
6. Use a different colored marker to color in different types of responsibilities. You could use yellow for family chores, red for school events, blue for sports and activities, and so on. This way, you'll get a good sense of how your day is *balanced* just by glancing at your schedule. If there's way too much blue, for example, you'll know that you're probably overloaded with sports and activities.
7. Remember that we can't predict what's going to happen every day, and good time management means being flexible when necessary. If you have a big exam one week, you may have to schedule over some less important activities - and that's okay!