Local Family Meets the Challenge of Coping with ADHD

B.2 Positive Behavior

Living with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) can be a challenge to a child and his or her family. The affected child's behavior can be disruptive at home and in school, according to Marty, whose 9-year-old son has ADHD.

A biological disorder and often hereditary, ADHD manifests itself in a wide variety of symptoms. The child may be easily distracted, disruptive, display inappropriate behavior and speech. The child may have a speech or reading impairment or be speech or coordination delayed.

Marty's son was diagnosed ADHD by a leading doctor in the field when the child was four after she suspected something "just wasn't right." Her son is "globally affected," meaning he displays a number of symptoms including difficulties with speech, reading, and fine and gross motor skills.

She believes his early diagnosis helped him and the family cope better when he entered school. Armed with the diagnosis and a couple of years of treatment, she says she was able to talk to his teachers right away about the disorder and how to handle it properly.

So little is known about the disorder that it often goes undetected until the child is older and self-esteem is already shattered. Teachers and parents are angry at the behavior with no understanding of the disorder and its effects.

She recommends that parents who suspect their child may have ADHD look at the whole picture rather than zero in on one symptom. Children develop differently, she says, and slower development in one area is not necessarily indicative of a bigger problem.

Just as her son's disorder encompasses a variety of symptoms, his treatment encompasses a variety of disciplines. Her son is currently on the

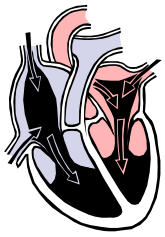
medication Ritalin, but is also taking behavior management counseling and Brain Gym® courses at Options Center for Health and Education.

Marty believes in the classes, saying she wants to give her son every chance of overcoming the disorder.

The behavior management counseling, she says, helps her son with coping skills. Brain Gym®, a series of exercises designed to integrate right and left brain thinking, has made a dramatic difference in his learning, she says.

Three exercises specifically help with ADHD and ADD children. Hook-Ups can be used when the child is presenting inappropriate behavior and needs to calm down and relax.

Earth Buttons help with centering and help the child feel s/he can succeed. Positive Points help bring blood and oxygen to the frontal lobe of the brain, which helps the child think rationally and calmly. These exercises can be effective when the child is taking a "time-out."



Like most ADHD children, her son is creative and bright, says Marty, and she wants to see him overcome this obstacle in his life and realize his potential.

"I would like for him to grow up and be a happy individual," she says, "to get through school and have a choice as to what he wants to do."

If you would like to communicate with Options, please feel free to email - options@mtco.com.

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