

Children's ADHD group information sheet

Frequently asked questions

What is the purpose of the group?

The groups have been set up to address the shortage of follow-up support for children after a diagnosis of ADHD, the research that highlights their vulnerability and the feelings of difference that children with ADHD can experience. Often diagnosis is used to access medication, inform parenting or education but very little information is given to children to empower them or to thrive with ADHD. The group aims to help children with ADHD start strong; to enable them to grow up with a thorough understanding of ADHD. It teaches coping strategies, self-compassion, responsibility and gives peer support in order that they are in the best possible position to self-advocate and self-manage their ADHD in the future.

What do they learn?

These first 6 sessions of the group provide an introduction for your child to start learning about ADHD, making friends and becoming comfortable in the setting. It includes understanding the common symptoms of ADHD, what's going on in the brain, normalising and self-compassionate ways of viewing ADHD, the importance of taking responsibility, self-care, an introduction to executive skills and other self-management strategies. There is a focus on having fun and learning creatively through arts, craft, game and movement. Its designed to feel different from school!

If the group doesn't cover all the topics you are hoping for don't worry- there will be more sessions available in the future if you want them, just remember to give feedback on what you would like next at the end of the course.

What is the cost?

The cost is £300 for a 6 session term. The group is designed as a package, rather than on a sessional basis. You will be asked to pay half of the course in advance, to secure your child's place and the other half in the week before you start the group.

How long does it last?

It is a package of 6 sessions, each session lasts between 75-90 minutes (depending on the length of time taken to feedback to parents each week).

Are parents involved?

Parents are involved in the group at various points, including at the beginning and end of each session. Research suggests this offers the best potential gains for young children.

How many children are in a group?

Approximately 6 children will be in the group, so they will have a high child to adult ratio to help your child stay on track. The children are grouped by age group, similar interests and presentations.

Where is it held?

The group is held in the art room at Ham Green House (Penny Brohn UK headquarters). It is well signposted from the A369 (from Bedminster or Clifton) or off Junction 19 M5

Address: Ham Green House, Chapel Pill Lane, Ham Green, BS20 OHH

Parking

There is a large free car park.

Who will be running the group?

Dr Marianne Roberts, Clinical Psychologist - I have designed the group and have lots of experience of working with children with ADHD and of running lots of different types of groups.

Jemimah, Support worker - Jemimah will help me with the more practical tasks in the group. She is very experienced in helping out with children's groups and play schemes and is really kind and caring.

What if we can't come to a session?

Please save the dates and try to avoid missing sessions where possible as I cannot provide refunds or catch up sessions. Also, the group is only small so your child will be missed by the others in the group!

Can children be dropped off or are parents required to stay?

Parents are asked to stay nearby so as to be "on call" in case they are needed to support their child in the group (see below). This is also because there are points when your involvement will be needed in the group, especially the first session while children get settled in. Also because in the last ten minutes of each session, we will give feedback to parents on what we have learnt. Research suggests that what parents learn about ADHD can often make the biggest difference to how well young children cope with their ADHD.

Is there somewhere for parents to wait?

Yes there are lots of comfortable waiting areas. There is wifi and tables in the dining room if you need to work. Tea and coffee will be available.

What if my child wants me to stay with them?

That is ok and really understandable. They will be encouraged at certain points to take part independently if they can. This is because we want them to forge a bond with the other young people in the group. There will be lots of points when you will be invited to join in with the sessions, especially during the first week.

What if my child misbehaves or struggles to concentrate in the group?

Please rest assured that the group is designed with the needs of children with ADHD at its centre. It is paced to allow for inconsistent levels of attention, boredom and need for movement. It is designed so that children will have fun and enjoy themselves but there will be some expectations in place to ensure all children are happy and feel safe. These will be outlined at the start of the sessions. If your child is consistently struggling to follow the expectations, you may be asked to come into the group to support them.

What if my child needs to move or needs a break?

The sessions are designed to offer variety and stimulation, as well as opportunities to move around. However, if your child needs longer or more elaborate movement breaks than those

offered within the group, this may also be another time when you may be asked to come and support them to do this.

Will there be more groups?

Yes! Subject to demand I hope your child will be able to return for new blocks of support in the future. Informal play dates and meet ups are encouraged outside of the sessions!

How did the group start?

It's a long story - see 'Background' below!

Got more questions? Get in touch!

mrobertspsychology@gmail.com

Tel 07397781202

If you know other children who can benefit from the group please feel free to share.

Background

The group has been set up because I have a lot of referrals of children and teenagers with diagnoses of ADHD, coming for individual therapy, with only a very patchy understanding of their ADHD. It is common for children to have little or no understanding of their symptoms of ADHD and how it is having an impact on their daily life, including school work, revision, friendships and mental health. Without this knowledge it is difficult for children to self-advocate and negative ways of seeing themselves can develop. These pose a risk for their self-esteem and can limit expectations of what they are capable. This prevents them from appreciating the amazing ways that their brain sets them apart from the crowd.

Research backs up these observations. However, you may have discovered that very few NHS and private services provide comprehensive support for children after diagnosis. Even if children and families were offered support, if they were diagnosed at an early age, children ideally need to have the information updated periodically to match their developmental stage and level of understanding.

The group was also set up as a response to research and the observation that children with ADHD are often a minority. It can feel difficult feeling different all the time. Although ADHD is not hugely uncommon (5-7% of the UK child population), depending on the size of your child's school they might be the only child in their class with a diagnosis. This can be a lonely experience and it can be hard to know where to look for opportunities to meet like-minded friends. There is a lot to be said for "finding your tribe"!

The group follows a course designed to address all of these issues and help parents make their children as resilient as possible and offers a chance to celebrate their difference. Although ADHD can be challenging for young people, there are many advantages to having a brain that is "wired" differently, after all- how can you be outstanding in life without standing out? ...Or be *extraordinary* without being different from ordinary?