



# National Association of School Psychologists

Effective partners in the commitment to help school children and youth achieve their best. *In school. At home. In life.*

## **Attention Problems Strategies for Parents**

by **Marcia Weill**  
**Folsom-Cordova (CA) Unified School District**

### **Hyperactivity: Provide External Structure**

#### ***Physical Controls***

- Include regular exercise, balanced diet, adequate sleep, medication if appropriate
- Check schedules: mornings usually best for learning, need calm routine at bedtime
- Check environment for safety and remove treasured items, prevent problems

#### ***Predictability***

- Use consistent rules across time and place
- Prepare for changes to new activity
- Practice simple daily routines
- Have regular contact with school

### **Distractibility: Focus on Priorities**

#### ***Priorities***

- Organize backpack and notebook
- Have a "Launch Pad" area for next morning's materials and messages
- Encourage on-task behavior
- Request special education assessment if appropriate

#### ***Directions***

- Use simple, positive directions showing what to do instead of what not to do

- Give visual clues

### ***Distractors***

- Provide regular time and clean area for doing homework
- Limit and balance extra curricular activities

### **Impulsivity: Build Self-Confidence**

#### ***Social Skills***

- Build on strengths
- Teach game-playing skills, taking turns and making choices
- Encourage noncompetitive sports (karate, gymnastics, swimming)
- Teach friendship skills (making requests, giving compliments, less rough play)

#### ***Parent Support***

- Enroll in classes in behavior management
- Join support groups
- Use "special time" for bonding

#### ***Counseling and Management***

- Use strategies to reduce impulsive behavior
- Model positive self-talk and goal-setting
- Reward frequently

*Adapted from material previously published by the California Association of School Psychologists in CASP Today, August, 1994.*

**© 1998 National Association of School Psychologists, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda MD 20814 301-657-0270.**

*School professionals and organizations (e.g., the PTA) can print the fact sheets individually for hard copy distribution. However, all fact sheets must be disseminated in the **original form** with the **NASP logo** and the information credited to NASP, whether in print or online format.*