

The Disorder Called AD/HD

With the long days of summer getting shorter and the nights getting cooler, the anticipation for a new school year mounts. For some children, however, this can bring more anxiety than excitement. Children



who have Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD) may be dreading the endless hours of trying to sit and pay attention.

AD/HD is characterized by developmentally inappropriate levels of inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. It is a neurobiological disorder that affects 3 to 7 percent of school-aged children that is largely genetic. The symptoms of AD/HD can persist through adolescence and many symptoms continue into adulthood.

Those with AD/HD can be very successful in life, however, a failure to diagnose and treat this disorder may have serious consequences including school failure, family stress and disruption, risk for accidental injuries and job failure. Therefore, identification and treatment are extremely important.

Children with AD/HD often experience delays in independent functioning and may behave like much younger children. AD/HD often occurs with other conditions, such as depression, anxiety or learning disabilities.

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August 2006

Volume 3, Issue 6

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Don't Forget!

**Grandparents'
Day**

*September
10th*

*Do something
fun!*

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Project

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More than one condition occurring at the same time can further complicate academic and behavioral problems, as well as emotional issues.

People with AD/HD have deficits in their abilities to perform a variety of functions within the brain that activate, organize, integrate and manage other functions. This hinders their abilities to appreciate the longer-term consequences of their actions and guide their behavior across time more effectively. Critical concerns include deficits in working memory and the ability to plan for the future, as well as maintaining and shifting strategies in the service of long-term goals.

If you think your grandchild may have AD/HD, a proper diagnosis is essential. Many biological and psychological problems can contribute to symptoms similar to those exhibited by children with AD/HD. Other diagnoses such as depression, anxiety and certain learning disabilities can cause similar symptoms. In some cases these other conditions may be the primary diagnosis or they may co-exist with AD/HD.

There is no single test for AD/HD. First, other conditions must be ruled out. The evaluation should include a careful history and a clinical assessment of the individual's academic, social, and emotional functioning and developmental level. Professionals who can diagnose AD/HD include school psychologists, clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, nurse practitioners, neurologists, psychiatrists and pediatricians. A full medical exam should be done to rule out other conditions that could produce the same symptoms as AD/HD. In rare cases, persons with AD/HD also may have a thyroid dysfunction. Only medical doctors can prescribe medication if it is needed.

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AD/HD predominantly inattentive type: (AD/HD I)

- Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes.
- Has difficulty sustaining attention.
- Does not appear to listen.
- Struggles to follow through on instructions.
- Has difficulty with organization.
- Avoids or dislikes tasks requiring sustained mental effort.
- Loses things.
- Is easily distracted.
- Is forgetful in daily activities.

AD/HD predominantly hyperactive-impulsive type: (AD/HD-HI)

- Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in chair.
- Has difficulty remaining seated.
- Runs about or climbs excessively.
- Difficulty engaging in activities.
- Acts as if driven by a motor. Talks excessively.
- Blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
- Difficulty waiting or taking turns.
- Interrupts or intrudes upon others.

AD/HD combined type: (AD/HD-C)

- Individual meets both sets of inattention and hyperactive/impulsive/impulsive criteria.

Reaching Out to Mental Health Professionals

By: Sandy Bailey, Ph.D., CFLE

Raising grandchildren is a tough job and stressful for grandparents. Often grandparents experience feelings of guilt, anxiety, and sadness. If these feelings persist they can affect one's physical and psychological health and children need healthy guardians to care for them.

Grandchildren too experience a variety of emotions due to the environment from which they came and the transition into living with grandparents. Often a child's misbehavior is due to emotions. A child may be reluctant to trust the grandparent if there has never been consistency in his past. Children may take unusual risks because they have not had the boundaries that are set in normal parenting.

The MSU Grandparents Raising Grandchildren project has received some funding from the Brookdale Foundation to assist grandfamilies in addressing mental health needs. In Bozeman, Helena, and West Yellowstone we have been able to offer 8-week therapeutic support groups with trained mental health facilitators. For support groups in our other areas of the state, we are offering limited funds for you to bring a local mental health professional to your group. These funds will be based on a first come, first serve basis. For example, your group may want to have a therapist come to your support group once or twice to discuss a particular issue. If the therapist charges a fee, you can apply for funding to cover that cost. Or your group may want to have a therapist come for several weeks to work with specific grandparents and you may apply for funding to cover that cost.

For more information, please contact our office at 994-3395.

Comprehensive Treatment of AD/HD

AD/HD in children often requires a comprehensive approach to treatment called "multimodal" and includes:

- * Parent and child education about diagnosis and treatment
- * Behavior management techniques
- * Medication
- * School programming and supports

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), children who received carefully monitored medication, alone or in combination with behavioral treatment, showed significant improvement in their behavior at home and school plus better relationships with their classmates and family than did children receiving lower quality care.

For more information on AD/HD:

MSU Extension has a MontGuide entitled Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: A Parent's Guide to AD/HD. You can read it at <http://www.montana.edu/wwwpb/pubs/mt200304.html>.

There are also many national organizations dedicated to AD/HD.

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder's

www.chadd.org

National Institute of Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.org

The National Resource Center on AD/HD

www.help4adhd.org

or call 1-800-223-4050.

The information in this article was obtained from the National Resource Center on AD/HD.

Office of Public Instruction Offers Help with Meals

The start of the school year can bring some much-needed solitude to your home, however it can also bring extra expenses. Kids start asking for the coolest backpack, lunch box, and clothes. With all these extra expenses, meals for your grandchild should not be on the 'How am I going to pay for that' list.

Children need adequate nutrition to learn. If your grandchild's school participates in the School Nutrition Programs (School Lunch, School Breakfast, or Afterschool Snack), your child may qualify for free and reduced school meals. If your household income is below the limits shown on the income chart below, your grandchild is eligible for meal benefits. Children in households receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps, and/or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) benefits and foster children can get free meals regardless of income.

Federal Income Chart for Free or Reduced Meals			
School Year 2006-07			
Household Size	Yearly (\$)	Monthly (\$)	Weekly (\$)
1	18,130	1,511	349
2	24,420	2,035	470
3	30,170	2,560	591
4	37,000	3,084	712
5	43,290	3,608	833
6	49,580	4,132	954
7	55,870	4,656	1,075
8	62,160	5,180	1,196
Each Additional person	6,290	525	121

Chart from the Montana Office of Public Instruction

You can download an application for the school meal program at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/> or call your local school district for more information. You can apply for this program at any point in the school year if your situation changes.

Montana Legal Resources for Grandparents

Many resources exist across the state of Montana to help consumers with legal issues. The State Bar of Montana with the assistance of [MontanaLawHelp.org](http://www.MontanaLawHelp.org) have put together a resource guide. Here is a partial listing of that guide that may be of help to grandparents and other kin caregivers raising grandchildren. A complete listing of legal resources including listings for individual Montana counties is available at <http://www.montanabar.org/forthepublic/legalresourcelist.pdf>

Internet Access to Information & Legal Resources	www.montanabar.org www.MontanaLawHelp.org
Citizen Advocate Office	800-332-2272 ~ Helps with problems or complaints related to state agencies.
Consumer Protection Office www.montpirg.org	406-444-4500 ~ Assists with consumer problems relating to complaints with vehicles, telemarketers, etc. and educates consumers about their rights.
Domestic Violence http://www.mtlsa.org/	MLSA Domestic Violence Intake 406-951-0814 ~ Provides legal assistance to victims of domestic violence.
Elder Law Issues www.dphhs.state.mt.us/sltc/	Aging Services/Elder Abuse Hotline: Adult Protective Services 800-551-3191 ~ Information and assistance, home and community based services, nursing home ombudsman, emergency intervention.
Human Rights Bureau	406-444-2884 ~ Receives & investigates complaints of discrimination.
Landlord-Tenant Issues/Housing & Discrimination Resources	Tenant-Landlord Hotline 1-888-345-7474 See internet site for information on all housing issues: www.montpirg.org Montana People's Action Housing Hotline: 1-406-728-5297 or 888-290-5711
Lawyer Referral & Information Service	406-449-6577 ~ A service of the State Bar of Montana providing referrals to attorneys and information regarding other resources in the state; <i>does not have attorneys on staff or provide names of pro bono or reduced fee attorneys.</i>
Montana Advocacy Program www.mtadv.org	800-245-4743 ~ Mission is to protect and advocate for the human, legal & civil rights of Montanans with mental and physical disabilities: provides assistance of advocates & attorneys for disability related issues.
Montana Medical Legal Panel	406-443-1110 ~ Montana law requires that you first present your claim to the Montana Medical Legal Panel before you can file suit.
Office of Disciplinary Counsel	866-288-9528 ~ Investigates claims of ethical violations by lawyers.
People's Law Center	Social Security disability cases, disability cessation, & Medicaid cases. Hotline: Bozeman/Billings: 866-650-9013 Helena/Butte/Missoula: 800-406-5567 Great Falls/Havre: 800-406-5560
Pro Bono Help (low-income/civil law) www.mtlsa.org	Montana Legal Services Eastern Hotline: 800-999-4941 MLSA Western Hotline: 800-555-5899 / 800-926-3144
State Bar of Montana www.montanabar.org	406-442-7660 ~ The State Bar of Montana is the statewide association of attorneys.
State Law Library of Montana www.lawlibrary.state.mt.us	406-444-3660 ~ Serves the legal needs of judges, attorneys, and the public by providing reference and research assistance.

Family Attorney Alert

The GRG Project would like to make a list of attorneys that practice in the state of Montana that are familiar with cases pertaining to grandparents raising grandchildren and similar custody cases. If you know of a good family law attorney that you can recommend, please call us at (406) 994-3395 or send us an e-mail with their name and contact information at grg@montana.edu.

MT Proposed Bills for Grandfamilies

In the next legislative session in 2007, the Children, Families, Health and Human Services Interim Committee will be introducing four grandfamily bills. Two of the bills are aimed at giving grandparents educational and medical consent for the grandchildren in their care. One is a form of de facto custodianship, that will grant grandparents rights after the grandchildren have lived with the grandparents for a period of 6 months with no determination of when the parent will return. The last one is aimed at ensuring visitation for grandparents with their grandchildren. Watch for further developments.

Special Needs Definition for Subsidies

Guardianship and adoption subsidies are available through the state for children with special needs. Montana's legal definition of special needs is as follows: A child who is *under the placement and care responsibility of the Dept. of Public Health and Human Services or that of a tribe with whom the State has a Title IV-E agreement,*
and:

The child has been defined as a "child with special needs" because he or she meets at least one of the following criteria:

- a) diagnosed as having a physical, mental or emotional disability;
- b) recognized to be at high risk of developing a physical, mental or emotional disability;
- c) a member of a minority group;
- d) six years of age or older;
- e) a member of a sibling group to be placed together for adoption.

The state considers other relevant information before making a determination of subsidy eligibility, but if you think your grandchild meets some of the above criteria be sure to ask your case worker about the possibility of receiving guardianship or adoption subsidies to help out with day to day living expenses associated with raising your grandchild.

Grandparent Support Groups Across Montana

Billings

Bernie Mason
P.O. Box 35021
Billings, MT 59107
256-2828

Bozeman

Fonda Porterfield
316 A Herrick Hall
Bozeman, MT 59715
994-3395

Browning

Carrie Jackson
Eagle Shield Center
P.O. Box 76
Browning, MT 59417
338-7257

Butte

Jeff Jensen
Butte 4C's
101 E. Broadway
Butte, MT 59701
723-4019
800-794-4061
jjensen@butte-4cs.com

Colstrip

Jennifer Anderson
P.O. Box 65
Forsyth, MT 59327
346-7320

Dillon

Jeff Jensen
723-4019
800-794-4061

Glendive

Carol Fuqua
Parents Resource Center
200 S. Kendrick
Glendive, MT 59330
377-7515

Great Falls

Geri Laubunetz
Partnership Project
1100 6th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59403
268-6762
Claire Delguerra
Cascade Extension
454-6980

Helena

Jeannette B. Mattfeldt
562 Broadway
Helena, MT 59601
442-8207

Lewistown

Denise Seilstadt
712 W. Main
Lewistown, MT 59457
538-3919

Kalispell

Melody Domphe
The Nurturing Center, Inc.
146 3rd Ave. W.
Kalispell, MT 59901
756-1414

Missoula

Kathy Revello, MSU Extension
Missoula County Agent
256-4208
Barb Cowen
721-7690

Poplar and Wolf Point:

Ardis Oelkers
MSU Extension
Culbertson, MT 59218
787-5312

Rocky Boy Reservation/ Box Elder:

Peggy Riotar-Aquino
395-4875

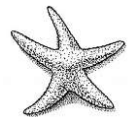
Rocky Boy Reservation/ Agency

Evelyn Gopher
395-4875

Townsend:

Nancy Marks 2263710
Jerri Paulk 266-4249

The Star Thrower by Loren Eiseley



Once upon a time, there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so, he walked faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The young man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean.

He came closer still and called out "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean."

"I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the somewhat startled wise man.

To this, the young man replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die."

Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, "But, young man, do you not realize that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish all along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it into the ocean. As it met the water, he said, "It made a difference for that one."