Follow this link for the slides!!

ADHD and Anxiety

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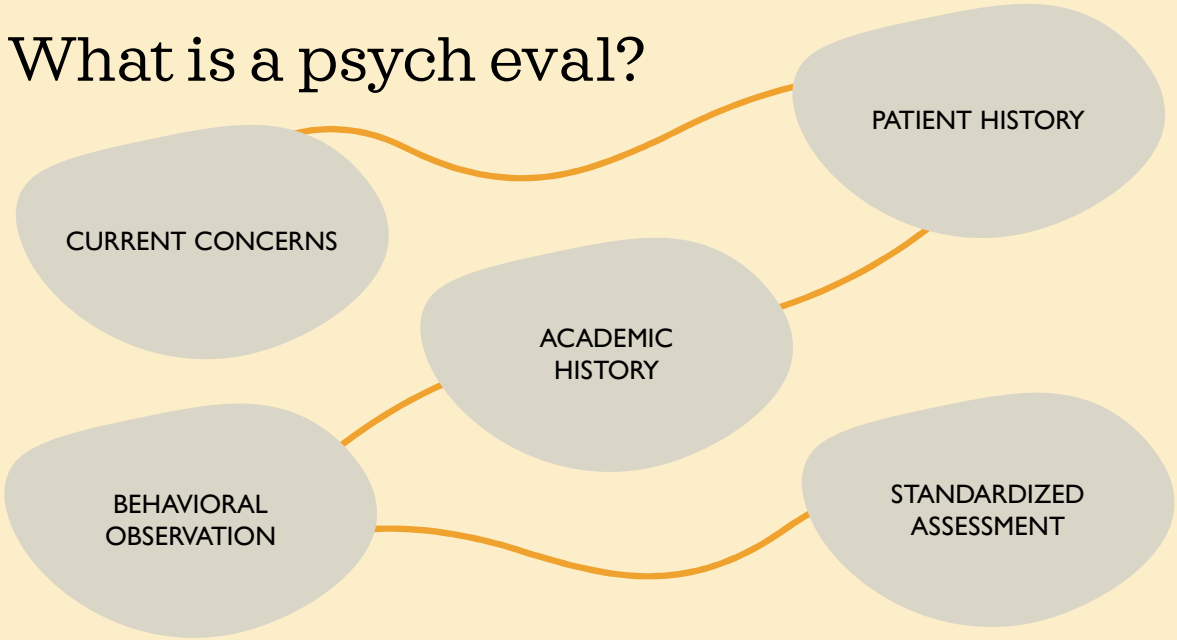
Housekeeping

- Use the QR code for digital access to the slides
- Watch for learning objectives, marked by number

1 2 3

What is a psych eval?



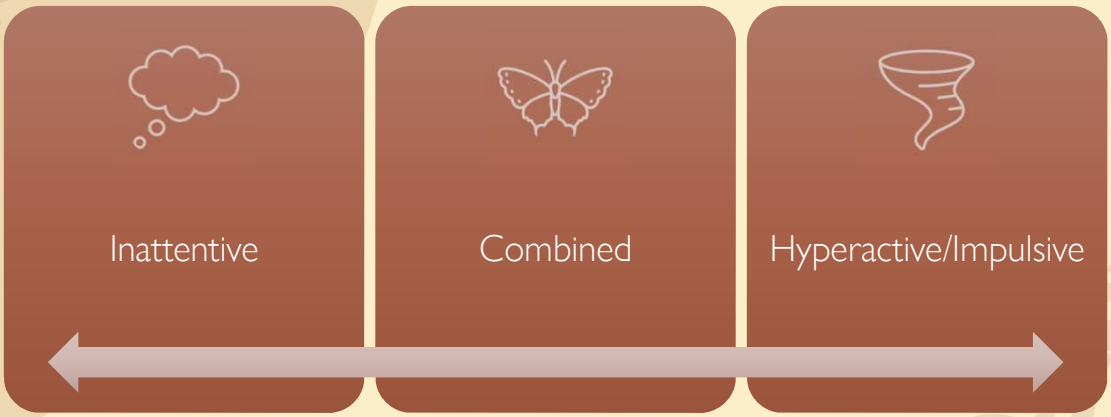
Parent interview

Onset of symptoms	Grades	Current academic intervention	Special education accommodations	Social development
Sleep	Diet	Physical activity	Behavioral compliance	Emotions/mood
Home environment	Recent changes at school and home	Family history	Developmental milestones	Medical issues and history

About ADHD

- Deficits in executive function
- Difficulty finishing tasks
- Cannot work independently
- Emotional reactivity
- Blurting out
- Impatient
- Poor planning/organization

Types of ADHD



Anxiety in Children and Adolescents

TRUE OR FALSE:

ALL STRESS IS BAD FOR YOU.

Some stress is needed in life

Without any possible stressors, people would likely be

- Less productive
- Less responsible
- Less motivated toward self-improvement
- More likely to encounter danger

Healthy stress is appropriate and manageable

- Not causing impairment in function

Anxiety Disorders

The term "anxiety" includes a number of disorders

- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Selective Mutism
- Specific Phobia
- Social Phobia
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- Panic Disorder
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Generalized anxiety disorder

- Excessive anxiety and worry about several events or activities, such as performance at school or work
- Patient cannot easily control feelings of worry
- The most common anxiety disorder

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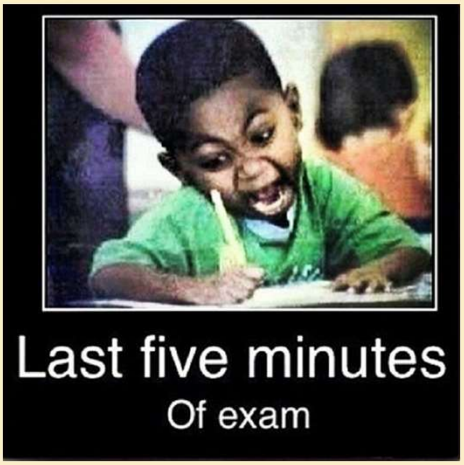
Symptoms of GAD



- Restlessness or feeling keyed up or on edge
- Being easily fatigued, sleep disturbance
- Difficulty concentrating
- Irritability
- Muscle tension
- Free-floating anxiety

Just imagine you're in second grade….

Parents and teachers start noticing "problems"

Your grades are slipping

Your papers always get lost

You feel like you are trying your best

"When she wants to pay attention, she can."

Just imagine…

What does homework time look like for you?

- Distractions
- Remembering how to complete work
- Lost papers
- Balancing other activities

How does the classroom feel for you?

- Missing verbal instructions
- Social comparison
- Lost items
- Make-up work

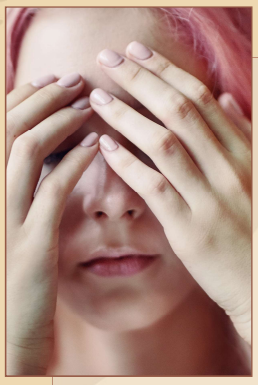
THINK ABOUT IT:

Do you believe this child is aware of the difficulties he/she is having at school and home?

Talking with your child

- ADHD is not shameful
- Brains are not broken, they are different
- Create conversations which promote strengths
- Examples of what parents could say:
  - "You have so many gifts and talents, and we can find ways to let them shine. You can show everyone what your amazing brain is capable of doing. I cannot wait to see all you accomplish!!"
  - "Think of it like your best ability is locked behind a door. It's always there, but sometimes harder to get to… the medicine acts like a key. It doesn't make you 'better', it helps you be your best."

ADHD and Anxiety



The two of the most common childhood psychological disorders

- ADHD in 10% of children
- Anxiety in 20% of children
- 25-30% of children with ADHD have an anxiety disorder

Anxiety presentation

Volcano response

- Answering too quickly
- Quickly frustrated with difficult tasks
- Give up easily and say, "I don't know"
- Irritability

Deer in the headlights

- Frozen, lack of response
- Extremely hesitant
- Afraid to answer if they are unsure

Spotting Anxiety in Children

Worries

- Grades
- Tests
- Friends/Family
- Adult issues

Fearful

- New things or people
- Making mistakes
- Disappointing parents/teachers

Spotting Anxiety in Children

Emotional

- Cries easily
- Irritable
- Defensive
- Sensitive to perceived criticism

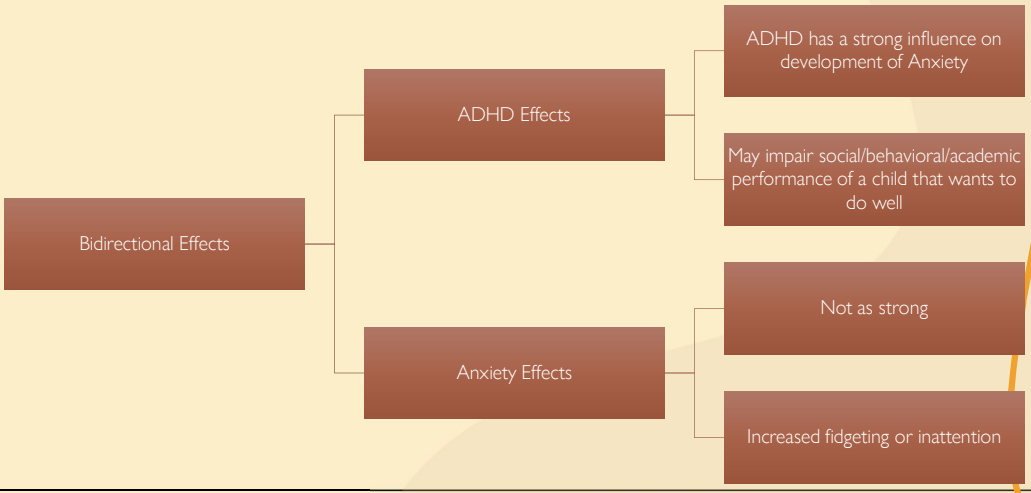
Physical

- Dietary issues
- Sleep difficulties
- Stomach aches
- Headaches
- Panic attacks

Anxiety presents differently in children with ADHD

ADHD presents differently in children with anxiety

Which came first?



Masking ADHD

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Better response inhibition	• Decreased impulsivity
More attention to detail	• Less careless mistakes
Increased motivation to perform well	• Less apathetic appearance
Increased awareness of behavioral expectations	• Fewer potentially inappropriate classroom behaviors

Overlapping symptoms

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Appearing "inattentive"

Fidgeting/restlessness

Inconsistent academic performance

Eagerness to please others

Anxiety alone

- What things might make us believe a child who was referred for an ADHD evaluation is actually experiencing anxiety, but *not* ADHD?
  - Situational symptoms
  - Organized
  - Good at multi-tasking
  - Sudden onset of ADHD symptoms

KEY QUESTION:

When did the symptoms START?

Prevention and Treatment

School-based intervention

Avoid shaming students who need directions repeated

- This may reduce the student's likelihood to approach you for help in the future

Consider potential for embarrassment when redirecting inattentive students

- Create "secret" ways to send signals to students

School-based intervention

Appropriate goal setting

- Create opportunities for success
- Build self-awareness and confidence

Give extra time for verbal responses

- Learn to live in the awkward silence

Attention grabbers

- Change it up!
- "Look at me!"

Home-based intervention

Focus on effort rather than grades

- Do not expect perfection – or encourage it

Find your patience

- As a parent, maintain your composure
- You are the adult!!

Home-based intervention

Take breaks

- Sing. Walk. Go outside. Play. Change the environment, refresh the mind.

Seek outside help

- Treating ADHD may create "wins" for your child
- Counseling will build coping skills to reduce anxiety-related symptoms

ADHD and the parent-child relationship

- Higher risk for parent-child relationship difficulties
- Higher child-specific parent stress
- Ineffective disciplinary procedures
- Lower parent confidence

Differences in ADHD type

Which types cause the most parent stress?	• Hyperactive/Impulsive and combined
Which cause more frustration with discipline?	• Hyperactive/Impulsive and combined
Which lead to lower parent confidence?	• Combined type

Now let's add anxiety to the mix…

Parents of children with anxiety also have higher levels of stress

ADHD + anxiety

- Higher levels of parental stress than ADHD alone

STRESS IS THE GATEKEEPER TO LEARNING

Watch your words

Say less of this

- Hyperactive
- Oppositional
- Day dreamer
- Dare devil
- Aggressive
- Lazy
- Argumentative
- Impulsive
- Bossy
- Distractable
- Slow processor

Say more of this

- Full of energy
- Persistent
- Imaginative
- Adventurous
- Assertive
- Laid back
- Persuasive
- Spontaneous
- Born leader
- Curious
- Deep thinker

What is the number ONE determining factor which predicts future success?

RESILENCE

The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness

Mindset matters!

Growth mindset

- Believes change is possible
- More willing to push through difficulty

Fixed mindset

- Does not believe change is possible
- More likely to give up when challenged

ENCOURAGE "GROWTH" MINDSET

Avoid equating academic grades with being "smart"… Focus on how hard the child is working.

How EVER did you do that??

Kids with ADHD need someone in their corner. Be that person.

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