



# Parenting Strategies for Children with ADHD

1.

Communication

2.

Shaping Behavior & Structure

3.

Boundary Setting

4.

Rewards

5.

Discipline

Psychological Services Center  
pscvb.com

757-352-4488



1.  
Communication



Provide **clear** instructions and directions for your child to **limit confusion**.



Give your child **praise** as much as possible to increase self confidence, self-efficacy, and to help them **learn**.



When talking to your child, get down on their **level** and make **eye contact** with them to increase their attention.



If your child is frequently inattentive while you are talking to them, **gently touching** your child's hand when speaking may help to **increase** their **attention**.



## 2. Shaping Behavior & Structure

 **Firmly** and **clearly** explain the rules to your child. **Reward** them when rules are followed and **correct** them when they are not.

 **Explain** to your child **when** and **how** you expect them to do things.

 Give your child **frequent reminders** about what is expected of them.

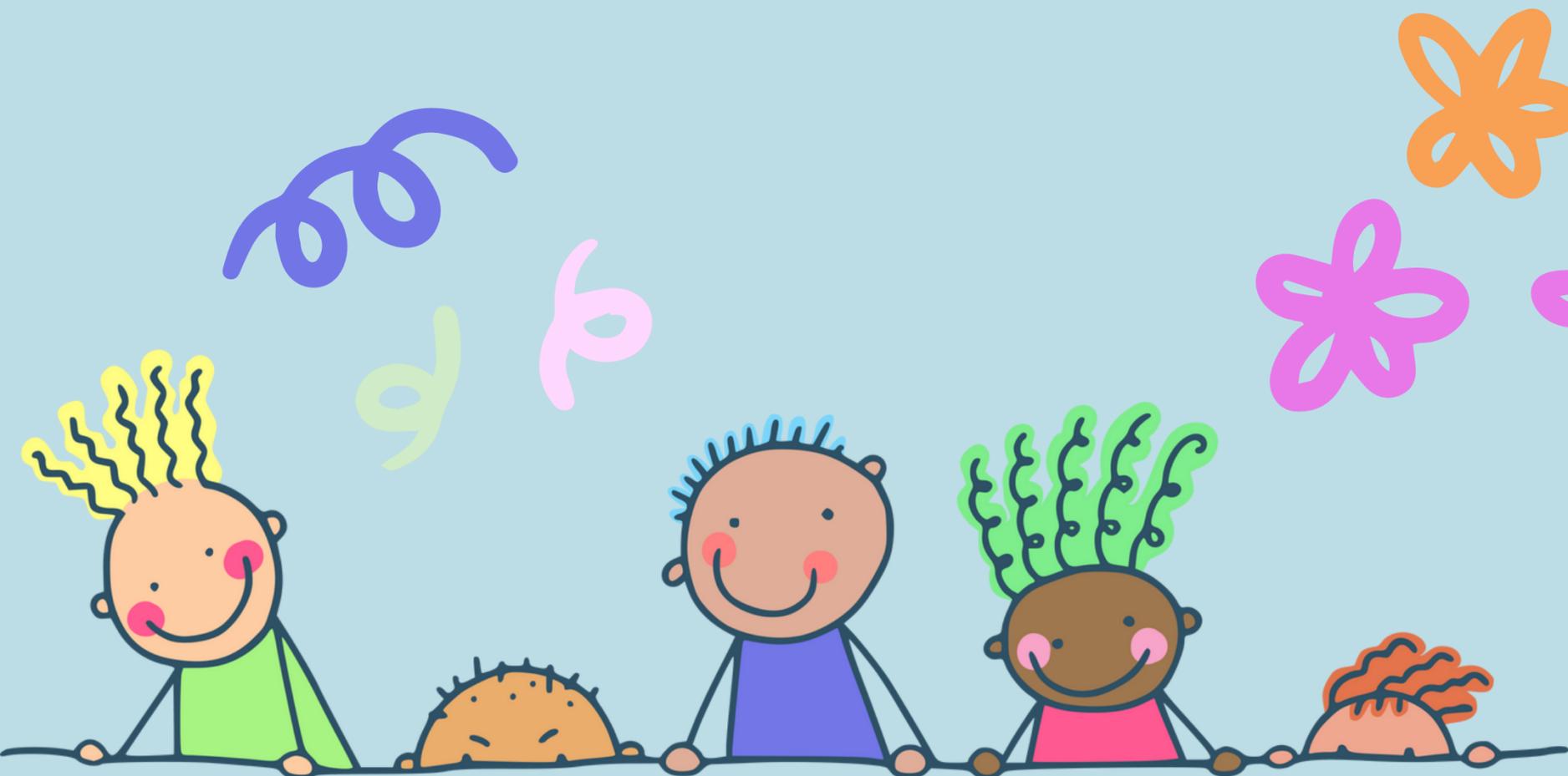
 Set **time limits**.

 Make **lists** and put them where your child can easily see them .

 Ask your child to **repeat** what they understand you to have said.

 **Teach** your child better ways to solve problems by **modeling** these behaviors.

 Observe your child's behavior, **encourage** changes, and **praise** and **reward** good behavior.



### 3. Boundary Setting



Rules must be **fair** and **clearly understood**.



Rules must be created **collaboratively** with your child by asking them what rules they think should exist and possible rewards or consequences.



Always mean what you say. **Follow through** with rewards and consequences every time.



Make sure you are on the **same page** with your partner and that you are working together to **prevent contradictions**.



Help your child to **practice thinking ahead**. For example:  
What do you think will happen if you do not study for your test?



Be **patient**.



## 4. Rewards



As children with ADHD often feel like they receive **mostly criticism** from adults, be sure to provide them with **plenty of praise**.



Reward **effort, not just results**. This will teach your child that **effort** is **positive** and can lead to **increased good efforts**.



Rewards can be **things** (i.e., toys), **activities** (i.e., zoo, park, movies), **privileges** (i.e., more play time, TV, video games), and verbal **praise**.



**Rewards** must be something of **value** to your child.



**Point systems** and **charts** can be very helpful for tracking progress. These systems are also **visual aids** for your child to see their **points, progress, and reward** that they are working toward.





## 5. Discipline



Make it **clear** what disciplinary actions will happen and **why**.



Always **follow through** on what you **promise**.



Make sure that the punishment is **fair**. Punishments that are too easy or too harsh rarely work.



Avoid **arguments** and **power struggles** by stating clearly what is **expected**, what will **happen**, and **follow through**.



Avoid punishments that **embarrass** your child or **shame** them, as this can make them feel **badly** about themselves and are **not effective** in decreasing problem behaviors.



Research suggests that **time-outs** are **effective** forms of punishment as they allow your child **space** to **calm down** and **think** about their actions.



Decide in **advance** what **behaviors** will warrant **punishment** and follow through every time. **Consistency** is key.



Allow your child space to **feel** their emotions and **validate** these emotions.

Ex: I know you are angry, and it is okay to be angry. However, it is not okay to hit mommy when angry. What can we do instead to make us feel better when we are angry?

