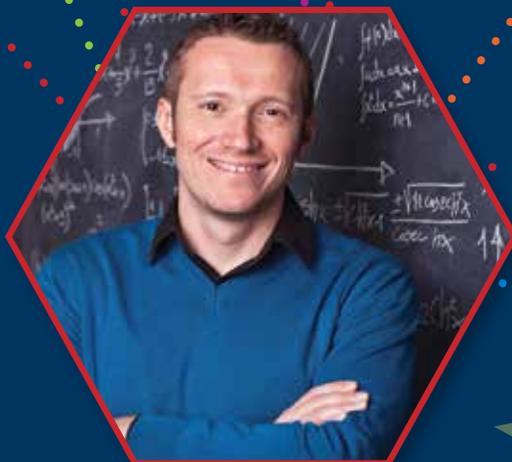


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r to Teacher

Designed By Teachers For Teachers

by Trish White

TODAY, IT IS ESTIMATED that a typical US classroom with thirty students will have three children with ADHD, and this number is expected to rise. Approximately 6.4 million US children ages 4-17 have been diagnosed with ADHD, an increase of 42 percent in the past eight years.

ADHD can cause significant impairments in school, work, and all aspects of daily life, including difficulties in functioning, interpersonal, social, academic, and professional skills. People with ADHD can be very successful in life, but without appropriate identification, treatment, and support, ADHD can have serious consequences, including school failure, depression, and substance abuse.

It is important for children with ADHD to have teachers who understand the impact of ADHD on academic performance. The more knowledgeable teachers are about effective strategies, the more successful they are in helping their students. The need for ADHD-specific teaching methods to help improve performance and increase school success has never been more critical.

CHADD's Teacher to Teacher training is designed to help teachers:

- Describe ADHD symptoms, causes, and how it impacts students in their daily life activities and in the classroom.
- Apply specific tools including best-practice instructional strategies to improve the academic outcomes of students with common learning problems associated with ADHD.
- Demonstrate how ADHD impacts organizational skills and time-management skills and provide ways to improve these skills.
- Use the understanding of how executive function deficits lead to emotional and behavior challenges in students with ADHD to design approaches to help students overcome these challenges.

- Describe key education laws that promote the educational rights of students and impact eligibility for services that support students with ADHD.

- Explain the current educational crisis facing students with ADHD and understand the forces behind the expanding rates of children diagnosed and treated for ADHD.

- Design effective educational practices to promote the success of students with ADHD and find out how CHADD's Community to Support Students with ADHD can foster ongoing collaboration, communication, and support.

School districts have an obligation under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide an equal educational opportunity for all students, including students with ADHD. According to recent guidance from the Office for Civil Rights of the US Department of Education, one step school districts can take to ensure that students with ADHD receive appropriate services to promote their academic success is to provide training to support all educators.

To meet that need, CHADD partnered with Public Consulting Group to bring CHADD's renowned Teacher to Teacher Program to educators across the country via Pepper, PCG's online professional learning network.

On average, it costs schools \$195–413 per student to provide special education, counseling, and other services. The Teacher to Teacher program provides resources that can help districts manage these costs while remaining compliant with Section 504. The course is divided into sessions. Teachers can go back at any time to review earlier material, but the self-directed course follows an intuitive linear structure. Upon successful completion of all the required components, teachers can obtain a course certificate.

Trish White is the family training manager at CHADD.





Why Teacher Training on ADHD Changes Lives

by Fereshteh Shahrokhi, LCSW

CLASSROOM TEACHERS can make a significant difference in the lives of children and teens with special needs. A knowledgeable teacher trained in using strategies known to help students with ADHD helps both the student with identified special needs and the typically learning student. I learned over many years of working in the schools that training teachers as well as parents about ADHD is critical for student success.

For years, I was the only school social worker in the Fairfax County Public Schools ADHD Partnership, which included school psychologists, counselors, and volunteer community professionals (clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, and physicians who were professional members of CHADD). School administrators, special education staff, and the FCPS training academy supported our efforts.

While training in strategies that work for students with ADHD is necessary, that alone is not enough. Certain characteristics make a teacher a good match for helping students with ADHD achieve classroom success. The best match is a teacher who is caring, has a positive attitude, is calm, doesn't react to minor behavioral missteps, and acts as an advocate for the student. Knowledge and attitude are equally important.

Although teachers in the Fairfax County schools have been better educated about ADHD than those in many other school systems, it's clear that ongoing training is needed. New teachers join the school system each year. Training programs must update every few years with new medical and educational research findings. I attended CHADD's teacher training several years ago and found it very helpful. I believe it would help parents as well.

Since even basic ADHD training is not available to many schools, the new online version of CHADD's program makes ADHD training much easier. Teachers and school staff can train on the school schedule—or even on their own. In schools, time allotted to the topic of ADHD may be limited due to the many mandatory training requirements for teachers. *Teacher to Teacher: Supporting Students with ADHD*, with its short online modules, allows for private training or short segmental training sessions. The program also offers school training certificates, which all teachers need. CHADD's Teacher to Teacher is a win for teachers and for students.

Fereshteh Shahrokhi, LCSW, is a retired school social worker and a psychotherapist in private practice.

How to Get This Training into Your Child's School

by Maureen Gill, LCSW

THROUGH WORKING WITH parents and school staff involved with children and teens with ADHD, I have learned the following:

- Parents must educate themselves as much as possible about ADHD.
- It takes a village to raise a child or teen with ADHD.

I would not have survived without the teachers, community professionals, and parents who helped us. Children spend a large portion of their lives in school. Some

school staff have training in ADHD and others do not. What a big difference it makes if the classroom teacher understands ADHD and uses teaching methods that are known to be effective for this challenge.

In 1991, as a parent, I became an ADHD co-trainer for the Fairfax County Public Schools ADHD Partnership. I learned from this experience that parents must *also* educate themselves about effective school strategies. Understanding this helped me to be a better advocate for my



two children and to be more knowledgeable when working with school staff. I have also been a trainer for CHADD's Teacher to Teacher program and witnessed its effect. One teacher, with tears in her eyes, said to me, "Now I understand."

Chris Zeigler Dendy and Anne Teeter Ellison did an excellent job of designing the program. I am excited that it is now online and available to all. The program is broken down into modules so that you can watch them at your leisure. I highly recommend this training to parents and community professionals as well as teachers.

So, how can you get *Teacher to Teacher: Supporting Students with ADHD* into your child's school? Here are some helpful tips:

- Take a friendly village with you to meet with the school: school staff, parents, and community ADHD specialists. Enthusiasm is contagious! It's challenging and a bit scary to advocate for

such a program by yourself.

- You may be able to find ways to finance the training through the PTA, a special school system training fund, a community agency, or even parent donations. Each school system has a training coordinator.
- Be positive when working with your school. Remember that parents, community professionals, and school staff need to be partners. Educating a child or teen with ADHD is difficult for you and for the school. Parent or teacher blaming is a waste of time. Remember the words of Margaret Mead: "Most successful endeavors begin with a small group of people." Partnerships between schools and parents work. 🗣️

Maureen Gill, LCSW, is an ADHD coach for parents.

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