

Basic Comparisons Between The ADHD Child and The Pervasively Hypersensitive Child

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The ADHD Child

1. Externally distracted, often by visual stimuli.
2. Motor hyperactivity, trouble staying in seat.
3. Doesn't hold grudges (Teflon).
4. Has temper tantrums.
5. Will spend 20 minutes not doing 20 minutes of homework.
6. Most frequently uttered statement is "I don't know."
7. Rarely has an answer for anything.
8. Experiences executive function deficits.
9. Poor impulse control.
10. Difficulty with organization.
11. Often leaves tasks unfinished.
12. Often scores higher on nonverbal measures of intelligence.
13. Associated learning disabilities, often in reading decoding, math computation, and spelling.
14. Scores low on standardized measures of attention and short-term memory.
15. Scores low on both Digits Forward and Digits Backwards.
16. Has a very small "desktop."
17. Primary diagnosis is Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder.

18. Very positive response to stimulant medication, usually with few or no side effects.

19. Tend to be very "physical."
20. Don't usually think about being understood.
21. Tend not to do much thinking.

22. Tend to be high risk takers, especially in the physical world.
23. Tend not to worry about what other people think.
24. Often content to do a mediocre job.
25. Less able to engage in verbal psychotherapy.
26. Stimulants are the medication of choice.

The Pervasively Hypersensitive Child

1. Internally preoccupied, distracted by own thoughts.
2. Difficulty establishing a state of comfort, squirms in seat.
3. Holds onto things (velcro)
4. Has meltdowns.
5. Will spend two hours doing 20 minutes of homework.
6. Most frequently asked question is "why?"
7. Always has an answer for everything.
8. Experiences executive function deficits.
9. Poor impulse control.
10. Difficulty with organization
11. Completion compulsion.
12. Often scores higher on verbal measures of intelligence.
13. May experience nonverbal learning disabilities and difficulties with written expression.
14. Scores at or above the average range on standardized measures of attention and short-term memory.
15. Scores high on Digits Forward and low on Digits Backwards.
16. Has a very full "desktop."
17. Primary diagnosis may be Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Depressive Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, or other Axis I disorders.
18. Stimulant medication may lead to a decrease in inattention, motor hyperactivity, and impulsivity, but may cause side effects which may include insomnia, decreased appetite, irritability, and tics.
19. Tend to be more "cerebral" and introspective.
20. Often feel misunderstood.
21. Constantly thinking, may experience racing and/or voluminous thoughts.
22. Often reluctant to take risks, especially intellectual risks.
23. Often worry about how they are perceived by others.
24. Often tend to be perfectionists.
25. Often do well with verbal psychotherapy.
26. Respond better to anti-depressants or combination of medications.

