

ADHD

ADHD is one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders in childhood. It's associated with executive functions, a set of cognitive abilities that help us manage our thoughts and actions, including organization, emotional regulation, self-awareness, time management, working memory, and more. In other words, executive function plays a big role in the types of activities we often give our students at church.

8 Tips For Loving Well!**1. Relationships are key!**

- Children with ADHD thrive when they feel safe and understood.

2. Create a Predictable Schedule

- Use visual schedules
- Timers
- A consistent routine helps build safety and reduces anxiety

3. Give Clear, Simple Instructions

- Break tasks into small steps and give one direction at a time.

4. Give Advance Notice for Transitions

- Use visual or verbal countdowns before changing activities. e.g., “5 more minutes of coloring.”
- Consider a transitional object to carry between activities (like a clipboard or stuffed animal).

5. Offer Fidget Tools or Sensory Supports

- If they are having trouble keeping their hands to themselves
- Use these as tools (replacement behavior), not toys! Help kids learn when they can use them appropriately.

6. Provide Movement Breaks

- Allow for short, structured movement opportunities (e.g., stretch, shake this wiggles out, run an errand).
- Include hands-on activities like crafts or object lessons to keep bodies engaged.

7. Use Positive Reinforcement

- Celebrate small successes and effort, not just outcomes.
- Offer immediate praise

8. Allow Choices When Possible

- Empower the child by letting them choose between two appropriate activities or roles. e.g. “Would you rather hand out crayons or hold the Bible for the story?”