



INSIGHTS ON ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

FROM YOUR STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM



HELLO!

Last year we introduced our *Insights on Adolescent Development* newsletter, and we are thrilled to bring it back this year as we continue to partner together to nurture each student’s growth—academically, socially, and emotionally.

This month we will be diving into the important and sometimes complicated world of learning differences - specifically ADHD. Each of our brains work a little bit differently and that means that we all have different experiences in the classroom. Things that are easy for one brain may feel insurmountable to other brains, and vice versa.

ADHD is a diagnosis that has been around for a very long time, but it is being diagnosed with more and more frequency. There are a variety of reasons for this, but regardless of what the reason is, this only emphasizes the importance of fully understanding ADHD rather than making assumptions about how those with the diagnosis may experience it. Let’s dive in!

Lauren Garrett, Head of Student Support Team and High School Counselor

AT A GLANCE

- 1) WELCOME
- 2) ARCHIVED NEWSLETTERS
- 3) REMINDER ABOUT WIN @ SOCIAL
- 4) HIGHLIGHT ON ADHD
- 5) FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

October is ADHD awareness month! The mission of ADHD Awareness Month (supported by a coalition of ADHD focused nonprofits) is to educate the public about ADHD by disseminating reliable information based on the evidence of science and peer-reviewed research.

Explore the links below to learn more!

- [ADHD Myths & Facts](#)
- [ADHD FAQs](#)
- [Daily Tips for Success](#)



If you missed any of our previous newsletters, not to worry! They are all archived and easily accessible through the Altamont website.

Follow this link to explore:

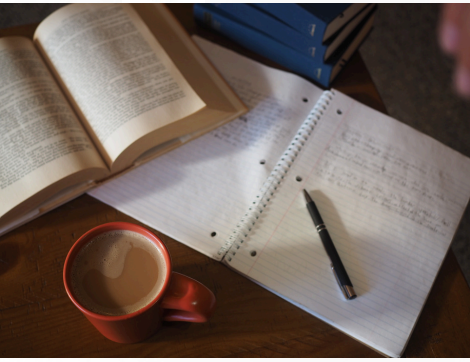
Counseling and Support at Altamont



ADHD AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

ADHD places strain on our executive functions. This is what makes those with ADHD likely to forget things, get sidetracked, miss directions, struggle to regulate their emotions, and so on. Here are some tips to help.

- **Visual Supports:** Keep planners, color-coded calendars, or sticky notes visible to track assignments and deadlines.
- **Break Tasks Into Steps:** Large projects can feel overwhelming. Divide them into smaller, manageable pieces and celebrate progress along the way.
- **Set Timers and Alarms:** Use short, focused work sessions to maintain attention and reduce procrastination.
- **Create Routines:** Consistent routines for morning prep, homework, and bedtime reduce decision fatigue, help the day feel more predictable, and make you less likely to forget something.
- **Designate “Home Bases”:** Keep a specific spot for essentials like your backpack to cut down on last-minute searches.
- **Externalize Motivation:** Use rewards, accountability partners, or visual trackers to make progress more engaging and satisfying.
- **Plan Backward:** Start with the due date and work backward to plan when each step of an assignment needs to happen. This helps with time management and reduces last-minute stress.
- **Build in Movement:** Physical activity boosts focus and working memory. Stand, stretch, or take quick walks between study sessions to reset your brain.



HOW DO I TALK TO MY KID ABOUT GETTING TESTED FOR ADHD OR ANOTHER LEARNING DIFFERENCE?

Are you considering pursuing testing for an ADHD diagnosis for your child but unsure how to talk to them about it?

Maybe you don't want them to think something is "wrong" with them. Maybe you don't want them to be labeled. Maybe they've told you they don't want to be tested. Despite these things, you know they are struggling and that an explanation and support resources would be helpful.

We suggest approaching these conversations through a strength-based lens. Focus on their strengths and unique ways of thinking. You might explain that ADHD isn't about something being "wrong" with them—it's about how their brain works differently, which can bring both challenges and amazing strengths. Many people with ADHD are creative, energetic, and great problem-solvers. Emphasize that understanding their brain can help them find tools and strategies to make things easier and help their strengths shine even more.



Like ADHD, **other types of neurodivergent brains also gain strengths from their differences**, so this strengths based approach works for conversations about a wide range of diagnoses! **The more we understand our brains, the more we can harness our strengths!**





FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

Reading:

[ADHD Is Awesome](#) by Penn and Kim Holderness

Videos:

[ADHD and the Parent-Child Relationship](#)

[How Effective is Medication?](#)

['How to ADHD' YouTube Channel](#)

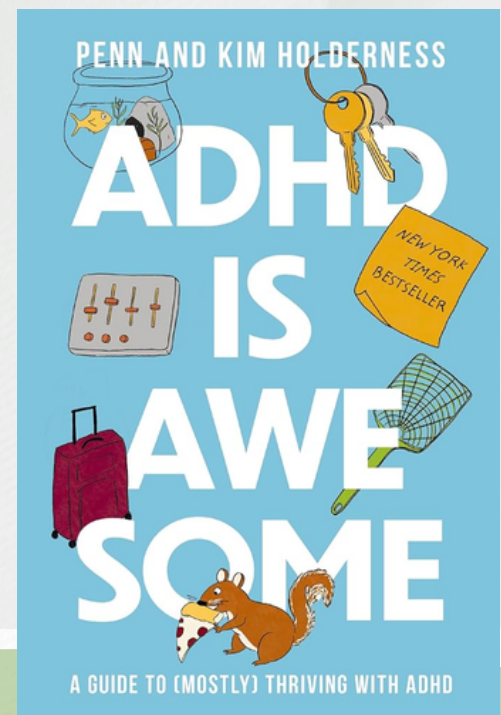
Podcast episodes:

[Embracing ADHD](#)

[Helping a Kid with ADHD](#)



particularly good for helping your kid understand how their brain works!



Support for ADHD at Altamont

Students are encouraged to attend **weekly planning sessions** with Mrs. Garrett to build their executive functioning skills! (Monday and Thursday after school).

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