Explaining ADHD to Teachers

Share this infographic, created by Chris A. Zeigler Dendy and Alex Zeigler, with your teacher (artwork adapted by ADDitude magazine).

The Tip of the Iceberg: The Obvious ADHD Behaviors

- Hyperactivity
  - Can't sit still
  - Fidgets
  - Talks a lot
  - Runs or climbs a lot
  - Always on the go
- Impulsivity
  - Lacks self control
  - Difficulty awaiting turn
  - Blurs out
  - Interrupts
  - Intrudes
- Inattention
  - Disorganized
  - Doesn't follow through
- Impulsivity
  - Talks back
  - Loses temper
- Inattention
  - Loses track of time
  - Often late
  - Forgets long-term projects or is late
- Difficulty planning for future
- Impulsive learning style
- Impaired Sense of Time
  - Doesn't judge passage of time accurately
  - Loses track of time
  - Often late
  - Forgets long-term
- Sleep Disturbance (56%)
  - Impacts memory
  - Doesn't get restful sleep
  - Can't fall asleep
  - Can't wake up
  - Late for school
- 3-Year Delayed Brain Maturation
  - Less mature
  - Less responsible
  - 18-year-old acts like 15
- Neurotransmitter Deficits Impact Behavior
  - Insufficient levels of neurotransmitters, dopamine and norepinephrine, results in reduced brain activity.
- Weak Executive Functioning
  - Working memory and recall
  - Getting started, effort
  - Internalizing language
  - Controlling emotions
  - Problem solving
- Impaired Sense of Time
  - Doesn't judge passage of time accurately
  - Loses track of time
  - Often late
  - Forgets long-term

Hidden Beneath the Surface: The Not-So-Obvious Behaviors (2/3 have at least one other condition)

- Neurotransmitter Deficits Impact Behavior
  - Insufficient levels of neurotransmitters, dopamine and norepinephrine, results in reduced brain activity.
- Weak Executive Functioning
  - Working memory and recall
  - Getting started, effort
  - Internalizing language
  - Controlling emotions
  - Problem solving

THE ADHD ICEBERG

Only 1/8 of an iceberg is visible. Most of it is hidden beneath the surface.

- Less likely to follow rules
- Difficulty managing his own behavior
- Doesn't study past behavior
- Acts without sense of hindsight
- Must have immediate rewards
- Long-term rewards don't work
- Doesn't examine his own behavior
- Difficulty changing his behavior
- Bipolar (12%)
- Tourette Syndrome (11%)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (4%)
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder (54-67%)
- Serious Learning Problems
  - Specific Learning Disability (25-50%)
  - Poor working memory
  - Can't memorize easily
  - Forgets teacher and parent requests
- Impulsivity
  - Lacks self control
  - Difficulty awaiting turn
  - Blurts out
  - Interrupts
  - Intrudes
  - Talking back
  - Loses temper
- Disorganized
  - Doesn't follow through
- Low Frustration Tolerance
  - Difficulty controlling emotions
  - Short fuse
  - Emotionally reactive
  - Loses temper easily
  - May give up more easily
  - Doesn't stick with things
  - Speaks or acts before thinking
  - Difficulty seeing others' perspective
  - May be self-centered

ADHD is often more complex than most people realize! Like icebergs, many problems related to ADHD are not visible. ADHD may be mild, moderate, or severe, is likely to coexist with other conditions, and may be a disability for some students.

You can order the original color ADHD Iceberg poster at chrisdendy.com.