

Visit With the Utays

November 2009

School Psychology and Education Specialists



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Dr. Carol Utay is Executive Director of Total Learning Centers. She is also a graduate of University of Pittsburgh and an expert in learning and special education. "Dr. Carol" has experience as a principal, Orton-Gillingham reading therapist, teacher, consultant, national speaker, professor, author, and mother. She is a national Athena Award winner for community service.

Is it REALLY Attention Deficit Disorder?

Recognize any of these?

"Danny can do awesome work, IF he can focus his attention long enough."

"Tony has **great** attention, just not on what it **needs** to be on."

"Susan's intelligence and cooperative attitude allowed her to compensate for weak attention. Not this year. **We see increasing frustration.**"

"Immature so wait for Sara to catch up with her peers? **Denial is something she can't afford for US to have.**"

"Playing a video game or sport, Matt's attention problems vanish. **IS it attention or lack of motivation?**"

Do you suspect your child's attention problems are not typical? Between 30% and 70% of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) continue symptoms as **adults**. When properly diagnosed and treated, ADHD can be **significantly** improved.

Whether using your child's school or a learning center with a school psychologist, experts are available to guide you and your child through **each step** to greatly improve attention:

1. Let the expert find out if your child really has **enough** of an attention problem to warrant investing resources.
2. Then, if needed, start a **child-friendly** attention improving program known to develop those parts of the brain most associated with attention.
3. Let the expert **monitor progress**, adjusting the program as needed.

What SHOULD an Evaluation of Attention Look Like?

- Standardized academic tests (reading, writing, math, etc.) will analyze **how** your child completes academic tests as well as **possible gaps**.

- Performance on a standardized IQ test will highlight areas that may be sensitive to focus and impulsivity, as well as **intelligence**.
- A special computerized "continuous performance test" will help objectively evaluate attention. This test is repeated for a precise measure of **improvement**.
- A special interview focused on attention issues adds a **personal** side to test results.
- A history of attention problems is gathered to help find **patterns**.
- Easy but informative checklists help distinguish between ADHD and **other** issues.

So, if you're telling yourself, "I know my child CAN learn and CAN do the work, **as long as attention is focused,**" then bring your child to an expert in this area to assess whether it's **something else masquerading as ADHD**. Then, if appropriate, systematically **strengthen** that all-important ability to attend as one more way to prepare today for success tomorrow.

Note: No single test by itself exists to completely diagnose ADHD. As a parent, you should consult with your child's health care provider, teacher, and attention expert to receive a proper ADHD diagnosis and reasonable research-based recommendations.

For information on how you can help best prepare your child for success in school, call Total Learning Centers at (724) 940-1090 to discuss your own child's specific situation and needs. If easier, email us at success@TotalLearningCenter.com. Follow Dr. Carol Utay on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/carolutay>.

Total Learning Centers was voted AGAIN Best Tutoring and Best SAT Prep by Nickelodeon's Parent Picks.

Reprinted from Northern Connections November 2009.