

Visit With the Utays

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School Psychology and Education Specialists

Dr. Joe Utay, Director of Counseling and Evaluation Services for Total Learning Centers and former professor for Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Department of Counseling, is a graduate of University of Pittsburgh, a school psychologist, marriage and family therapist, author, national speaker, and father.

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 recognized national Athena Award winner for community service.



ADHD: You are not Alone on the Road to Success

Dear Drs. Utay: I've seen your articles and I know you're experts at learning disabilities. My son was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Inattentive subtype by our doctor. The doctor recommended several medications he could take but I am beside myself and couldn't choose. I don't really know what my question is but I could really use some help right now.

When a doctor tells you your child is different, it is not uncommon to experience a kind of shock. But we know from experience you need not despair. In a classroom of 30 there are usually between one and three students with ADHD with or without hyperactivity. These students can (and often do) participate, learn and live their lives just like the other children in the class. How? Luckily, ADHD is one of the most researched and discussed diagnoses since it involves many disciplines – medicine, education, psychology – to name a few. So, many professionals are involved in asking questions like what can be done to help maximize potential for these kids. We find keeping up with current information (from brain scans to parenting and teaching strategies) quite fascinating but it can be easily overwhelming to parents. To get you started, the following is a very brief overview of some issues to consider.

First, there is nothing you did and nothing you could have done to avoid this diagnosis. In fact, now you can help most appropriately. Like dyslexia, ADHD is not a learning dis-ability but a "learning difference." Your son can learn if taught in a way that fits how he is wired to learn combined with his own strengthened ability to attend.

Second, each medication your doctor recommended has advantages and disadvantages. There is no one-size-fits-all medication. We highly recommend you do your own research then discuss your findings, ideas, and

questions with your pediatrician or other healthcare provider.

Third, meet with your son's school as soon as possible. Aware of his needs, his teachers can be a huge asset. Most of the time, schools are very helpful and accommodating. If not, there are education consultants and advocates that specialize in working together with the school as a team. For example, at Total Learning Centers we have an experienced Educational Consultant that helps make it a win-win process for you, the teachers, and especially your son!

Finally, today, have a candid talk with your son. Gently, find out what he is going through and really listen to him about successes and challenges. Include him as a member of the team that will help prepare him today for success tomorrow.

Please call Total Learning Centers for additional information we can share. For example, we offer programs that directly train kids to develop the ability to pay better attention. Wherever you go for information and support, know that you are not alone.

Contact Total Learning Centers at (724) 940-1090. If easier, email us at success@TotalLearningCenter.com. Visit us at www.TotalLearningCenter.com and follow Dr. Carol Utay on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/carolutay>.

Recently honored by Parent Advocates for Learning Support for "**outstanding dedication, passion, and commitment in meeting the learning needs of all children.**"

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

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