



Nurture Pods

EARLY INTERVENTION CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

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Help! My child has been diagnosed with Autism? What should I do?

Feeling a little lost and not sure where to begin? Fret not, you aren't alone! Moving forward from the diagnosis may seem difficult and many parents have the same question of 'what next?'. Here we share 5 simple tips to help you and your child get started:

1. Get informed

Learning more about autism is definitely a good step to take after the diagnosis. Getting informed about what autism is can better prepare you for the future - what to expect from your child, schooling and intervention options etc., it may help reduce the anxiety and worry you may have and clarify any doubts. You can consult various websites, such as www.autism.org.sg, which provide useful and comprehensive information on autism.



2. Explore your options for early intervention

Early intervention involves therapy and studies have shown that the earlier the intervention takes place, the more effective it is. Therefore, an important step to take following the diagnosis is to find out what kind of therapy is best suited for your child and where your child can receive this therapy. This often involves an assessment and researching for therapy centres or schools and the range of therapies they offer. At Nurture Pods, we have a comprehensive assessment process that will help determine what kind of therapy will benefit your child the most and set goals for the intervention program.

We offer a range of programs that will cater to your child's range of needs:

- a) Our *Centre for Child Development and Early Intervention program* will teach your child how to function independently, develop your child's social and logical skills such as literacy, fine and gross motor skills, social skills and self-regulation – all in a structured, multisensory teaching and learning environment. It also prepares your child to integrate into mainstream education.
- b) Our *Home Based Intervention* involves Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). This individualized, intensive one-on-one therapy will help develop your child's cognitive, social, language, communication and academic skills.
- c) Our *School Support Program* will integrate your child into the school environment, promote independence, facilitate personal, social and intellectual development and establish a positive learning environment through shadowing support.
- d) Our *Social Skill Class* will teach your child cognitive skills such as perspective taking and inference skill, and social skills such as turn-taking and sharing.



3. Support your child

Needless to say, one of the best ways to support your child is to show continuous love and encouragement. However children with autism often need rigorous instruction and training to improve their social skills and independence. The extensive parenting support given at Nurture Pods, such as one-to-one parent training and weekly reports, will equip you with a better understanding of autism and the information of how best to meet the needs of your child to enable you to cater specific support to your child at home. Progress reports will also be available to you so that you can monitor their progress. Also, educating your family members and those close to your family can be beneficial as they in turn can provide encouragement and appropriate support for your child as well.

4. Support yourself

Not only is supporting your child important, but supporting yourself as well is crucial for the good of you and your child! Yes, it's natural to find yourself putting your child first and above all else, but finding time for yourself to indulge in your hobbies, interests and relationships can give you the much needed 'me-time' to recuperate your drive and energy to support your child in the long run! Joining parent support groups where parents of children with autism share experiences and advice is another wonderful way you can find support for yourself.

5. Remain positive

There may be many ups and downs in the future - you may face discouraging comments and stigma from others, judgemental looks from strangers due to a tantrum or difficult behaviour in public, or you simply feel like you see no improvement. Sad to say, there will always be people who judge before knowing the full story. Remember to ignore the negativity and focus more on the positive! Remember that there might not be one huge improvement, but improvement may come in small waves - progressing and reaching developmental milestones one at a time. For more information on our services, visit www.nurturepods.com/our-services/.



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Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder - Myths and Facts

Many misconceptions and misunderstandings exist regarding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). In fact, ADHD is among some of the most misconceived medical conditions in recent times! Debunking the myths behind ADHD is necessary to prevent the spread of incorrect beliefs and the misattribution of causes for poor behaviour. Here are 6 common myths and the facts:

Myth 1 : ADHD is a 'boy problem'

Fact: Though research suggests that ADHD is much more common in boys, both boys and girls can have ADHD. In fact, there is a rather even ratio of male to female adults with ADHD! One reason for this myth is that boys are more likely than girls to be referred to health professionals for a diagnosis as they are more likely to display problem behaviours such as aggression.



Myth 2 : Bad parenting and poor discipline causes ADHD

Fact: Genetics is a key reason here. Research has shown that you are more likely to have ADHD if your biological parent has ADHD due to certain genes that are passed on. The kind of parenting and disciplinary style you have doesn't cause ADHD, and neither can it cure ADHD. However, you may find that certain parenting and disciplinary styles may work better in helping your child function better. Through an assessment of your child's background and training workshops for parents available at Nurture Pods, you can learn how best to interact with your child to suit your child's needs.

Myth 3 : Children can be 'cured' of ADHD with medication

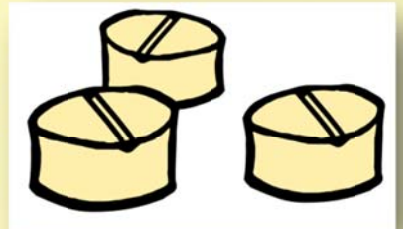
Fact: There is no cure for ADHD, however the symptoms of ADHD can be lessened through a number of treatments. The types of treatments that will yield the best results differ from child to child. Often, one of the most effective treatments involves a mix of therapy, medication, lifestyle and academic interventions. At Nurture Pods, we offer a range of interventions which span across different domains of your child's environment. In general, these interventions will help your child function normally in day-to-day tasks and aim to integrate your child into mainstream education. Of course, the interventions that would be most suitable for your child depend on your child's needs – for example, which type of ADHD your child has or whether your child lacks certain social or cognitive skills.

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder - Myths and Facts

Nurture Pods' Centre for Child Development and Early Intervention program can help improve your child's self-regulation, attention and waiting. Our Home Based Intervention is a more individualized and intensive program carried out in your home. It is based on the principles of Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA), which will help with behavior management, hone your child's ability to attend to people and tasks and build up cognitive skills. Our School Support Program will integrate your child into the school environment, promote independence, teach them how to follow class structure and focus on the task at hand. Our Social Skills Class will teach your child important fundamental cognitive skills such as perspective taking and appropriate play behaviours, as well as social skills such as waiting and turn-taking.

Myth 4 : Taking ADHD medications leads to drug addiction

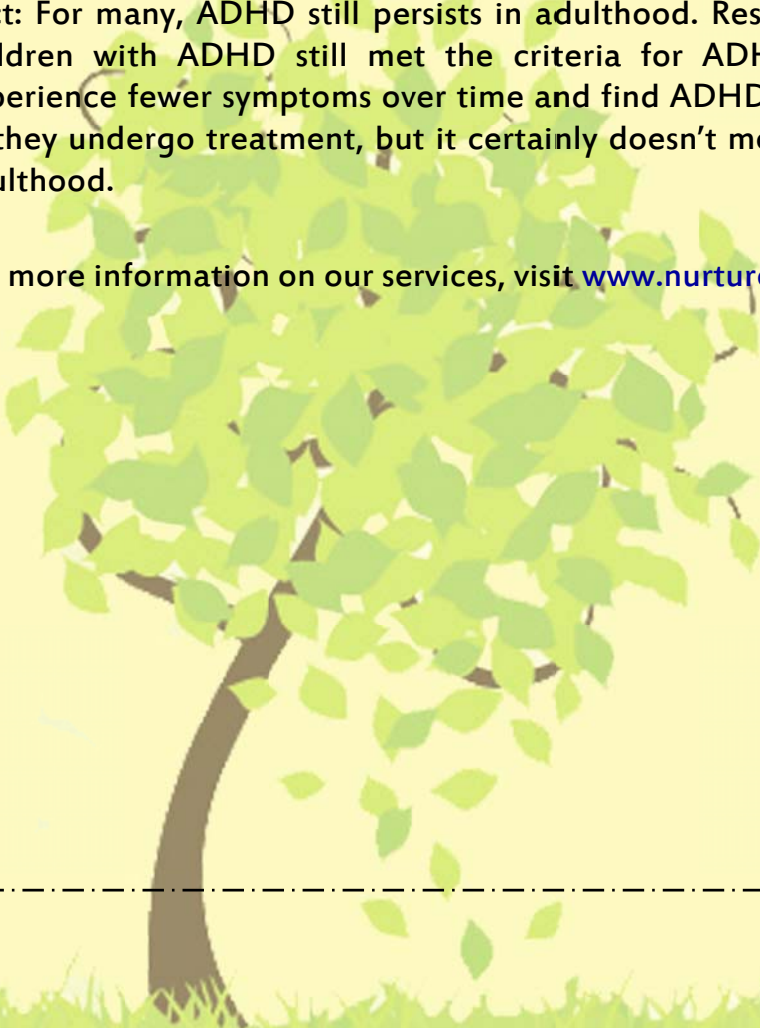
Fact: Given that some ADHD medications (e.g. stimulants) are addictive, an abuse of the medication could possibly lead to addiction. However, this will not be the case if you take the medication as prescribed. In fact, people with untreated ADHD have a higher risk of developing substance abuse issues! Taking medication to help control ADHD can prevent addiction.



Myth 5 : ADHD goes in adulthood

Fact: For many, ADHD still persists in adulthood. Research has shown that about 20% of children with ADHD still met the criteria for ADHD in early adulthood. Some may experience fewer symptoms over time and find ADHD is less of a problem in everyday life as they undergo treatment, but it certainly doesn't mean ADHD completely disappears in adulthood.

For more information on our services, visit www.nurturepods.com/our-services/.



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