

ADD and Social Skills in Older Children

I always hear from kids that I see in treatment that have been diagnosed with ADHD that they make friends easily, however it never seems to last. Children and teenagers that have ADHD are usually bursting with energy and they seem to be a lot of fun to be around. Then inevitably what happens is their friends get annoyed with their constantly interrupting them, never seeming to want to share or take their turn, being boisterous or very loud, and generally being disruptive. (These are all symptoms of ADHD).

A large proportion of children with ADHD are hyperactive/impulsive and it is this impulsivity (blurting out answers, not thinking before they say something), that generally hurts their friends feelings and the ADHD child is left without a friend that they have recently made. When a child with ADHD does not truly think of what they are saying before they say it, their words can often be hurtful or callous to others. I would like to provide a few helpful hints. An article is not effective or useful if suggestions of how to remedy or fix a problem are not given.

My first suggestion is explain to your friends exactly what ADD is and how it affects you. If your friends do not understand or they make fun of you, then they are really not your friends. I have found in my experience in working with children and teenagers that most friends if told the truth are very understanding and will remark to their friend with ADHD, "Oh, that is just your ADHD talking." An apology or saying, "I am sorry," but what is more important, saying I am sorry or losing a friend. Try hard to pay attention and listen to what your friends are saying. If you are the only one talking all the time, it is not much of a friendship then. Give others a chance to talk. Make friends with people who have similar interests and goals as you. If you are hanging around people that are in trouble, guess what you will be in trouble as well. This will not help you make the right kind of friends. Lastly, be kind and considerate to your friends. ADHD children/teenagers sometimes have a tendency to be self-involved and think that everything revolves around them. Consider those around you and you will be able to keep your friends and you will have more friends. Be conscious of what comes out of your mouth.

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