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12 Things Kids with ADHD would like their Teachers to Know By Eileen Bailey

1. I forget things, even important things. There is a myth that states, "If it is important enough, you will remember it." Please understand that this is a myth, my memory may not work the same as yours. Just because I forget does not mean that it doesn't matter. I am not trying to be a smart aleck or arrogant when I say "I forgot." I really do forget.
2. I am not stupid. I may sometimes lose my place during your class or take a few minutes to get my thoughts together before speaking, but I am not stupid. ADHD does not have anything to do with intellect.
3. Please be patient if I ask the same question many times or ask too many questions. I am not trying to be arrogant – I am trying to understand. I am trying to comprehend, and I am trying to remember what you have said.
4. I really do want to do well. For many years, I have struggled with schoolwork. It is frustrating for me. I want to pass your class, I want to do my best, I want to feel good about the work I have done.
5. I do complete my homework. I often lose papers; leave my homework at home or in my locker. I often don't know where my homework is when it is time to hand it in. But I do complete it. Loose papers are the most difficult to keep track of, if it is possible to complete my homework in a notebook, I will be able to keep track of it better.
6. ADHD is not an excuse, I should not use it as one, and neither should you. ADHD is a real disorder. It causes me to forget things, to be impulsive, to act without thinking, to lose track of my belongings, to be inattentive and sometimes it causes me to process information a little more slowly. I do not like being different and would very much like to be "normal." I do not like to be made fun of for being different.
7. I need help to succeed. This is sometimes very hard for me to accept. I do not like having to ask for help. Sometimes, asking for help makes me feel stupid. Please understand this and be patient. Please sometimes offer your help without my having to ask. Please understand that needing help makes me feel inadequate and that I may resent you asking. That doesn't mean that I do not want or need your help.
8. If you notice me acting in inappropriate ways, please talk with me in private. Please do not talk to me in front of the class. This is humiliating. Please do not insult me or call attention to my differences or weaknesses in front of other students.
9. I don't like having "special accommodations" in the classroom. Sometimes they are needed to help me succeed and do well. But that doesn't mean that I like it. Please don't call attention to any special treatment in front of other students. Please do not draw attention to my ADHD.
10. Detailed explanations of your expectations will help me. I work best when I know exactly what you expect from me. I will do best if your expectations are in writing so that I can refer back to them if needed. The more detailed your classroom and class work plan is, the better I will do. Knowing what to study and how to study will help me when taking tests. Knowing how you expect projects to be completed will help me to do a good job.
11. Learning about ADHD is one of the best ways to help me. Read about ADHD, how to teach children with ADHD and talk with parents and other teachers to learn as much as you can. Understanding and learning about ADHD will help me to do better in your class.
12. Although I have ADHD, I am not ADHD. I am a person; I have feelings, hopes and expectations. I have needs. I want to be liked and accepted. I want to feel good about myself. All of this is important to me. Sometimes I act out to hide my embarrassment or shame. This does not mean that something is not important; on the contrary, it means that it is very important and I am hiding my disappointment that I failed.