

Bruce Watson, L.C.S.W.
3533 Old Conejo Road #103
Newbury Park, CA 91320

Conejo Biofeedback and Counseling

805/373-0233 FAX 805/389-9448

Laura Watson, L.C.S.W.
88 Long Court, Suite C
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Get Your A.D.D. Child/Teen Ready for Success in School!!

LET'S GET ORGANIZED!!

- All-in-one binder/notebook with pockets for homework
- Agenda book for noting assignments, due dates, etc.
- Month-at-a-glance calendar for room with spaces big enough to write assignments, appointments, test dates, project due dates, etc.
- Cork board and/or dry erase board for writing lists, notes, etc.
- Sticky notes, colored markers, pens, and other office supplies
- See-through containers to keep supplies organized

PROVIDE A STRUCTURE!!

- Post written routine for morning, after-school, and evening. Include times a task is expected to be done. Encourage your youngster to consult the list or write him/herself notes rather than expect you to keep him/her on track.
- Make sure your child is eating a healthy diet, getting daily vigorous exercise, and at least eight hours of sleep. Encourage this for your teen.
- Have reasonable, consistent expectations of your child/teen that are well-understood by the youngster and enforced by you. Be clear about whether these expectations are **NEGOTIABLE** or **NON-NEGOTIABLE**. Do not discuss the non-negotiable items.
- Use natural and logical consequences rather than nagging, yelling, arguing, fault-finding. For example, the natural consequence of your child/teen forgetting his/her lunch is that s/he is hungry; the logical consequence of your teen coming in after curfew is that the teen "owes" you that amount of time off the curfew the next time s/he goes out or forfeits the next night out if s/he is later than one hour and doesn't call.
- Spend some time everyday with your child/teen. Make sure s/he isn't over-scheduled with activities, spending too much time on the phone or computer, or over-using the television or video games. Look for tension, fatigue, or feeling overwhelmed by responsibilities/tasks, etc.

ENCOURAGE SELF-DISCIPLINE!!

- Reward regular task completion, greater ability to stay focused and responsible, and more appropriate attitude with more privileges. Likewise, if a child/teen displays inability to be responsible, reliable, focused, etc., scale back the privileges. Explain to the child/teen how s/he is in charge of gaining privileges, and that the behavior exhibited lets you know what privileges s/he can handle.
- Encourage your child/teen to put things away in the same place so things won't get lost, and there won't be a mad scramble in the morning.
- Teach and encourage effective study and work habits, tolerance of frustration and anger without acting out, and effective verbal communication skills.
- Explain to your child/teen that the more s/he can do for her/himself, the less you will have to be involved and the happier everyone will be.

HOMEWORK!!

- Check the agenda book daily. Make sure assignments with due dates are transferred to the calendar and tracked daily.
- Help your child/teen prioritize the night's homework. Generally, s/he should begin with the hardest homework first.
- Encourage short, focused bursts of attention to accomplish tasks followed by a break. Use a timer to have the child/teen play "Beat the Clock" or set a certain number of paragraphs or problems to be done within the attention burst.
- If the child/teen becomes upset or frustrated with one piece of homework, set it aside and move on to the next assignment. Return to it when the youngster is calmer.
- When each assignment is completed, it should be filed in the homework pocket in the youngster's binder. When all homework is completed, the binder, books, and materials should be returned to the backpack. The backpack should be put in the same place each evening so the child/teen can grab it in the morning.
- If the child/teen has no homework due the next day (right!!), study time should still be set aside for reading, working on up-coming tests or projects, or just reading the newspaper.
- Television, video games, instant messaging on computers, and telephone time comes AFTER all homework is completed and is a REWARD for accomplishing responsibilities. This should be non-negotiable.
- Grades are not important in and of themselves. They help measure the child/teen's effort and the effectiveness of that effort. They point to areas that are particularly difficult so more help, such as a tutor, can be provided.

BE AN ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD/TEEN!!

- Establish congenial relationships with teachers and school officials.
- Request weekly information from teachers about missing assignments and class participation. The rule is: missing assignments must be completed before the child/teen begins enjoying weekend privileges.
- A.D.D. youngsters need to sit in the front of the classroom.
- Be aware of your child/teen's becoming overwhelmed with the amount of homework given daily or distracted taking tests in the regular classroom. Ask the teacher to accommodate his/her special needs.
- Ask the principal about setting a STUDENT STUDY TEAM for your child/teen's special needs to be discussed. If this has already occurred, inquire about utilizing 504 accommodations or setting an INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN.
- Above all, EDUCATE yourself about A.D.D./A.D.H.D. so you can better understand why your child/teen acts "that way." Understanding how his/her brain works will make your parenting more effective and your home life happier.