



EVERY DAY WITH ADHD

Celebrate Abiding
disabilities

ASD/ADHD Comparison

ASD and ADHD Brief Comparison

It is useful to have some awareness of the differences between ADHD and other disorders such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Autism, and Aspergers.

There are some similarities between all of these disorders; however, below I have highlighted a few basic differences. The DSM IV has more comprehensive criteria.

ODD

Many children with ADHD are diagnosed with ODD as well. Personally, I try not to focus too much on the ODD because the strategies suggested for ADHD have a strong impact on ODD behaviours as well. However, I do suggest that if there is a strong ODD component then rephrasing questions and demands into suggestions and fewer choices minimises the opportunity to be oppositional. State expectations around them rather than directly to them.

ASD and ADHD

The most common misunderstandings with Autism, Aspergers and ADHD are based around interpretation of wording, for example, impairment in communication and social interaction or repetitive patterns of behaviour or interests. It may suffice to consider the following:

Social Interaction

ADHD	Wants to be social. Feels sadness and confusion over isolation Cannot draw the link between their behaviour and its reaction Will respond with pleased emotion to improvements and training in this area
Autism	Has no great desire to be social Can be taught (almost by rote) the appropriate way to behave in most Situations Has little to no emotion over the issue
Aspergers	Same as for Autism



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Repetitive Patterns of Behaviour or Interests

ADHD	<p>Do not usually have repetitive patterns of behaviour other than perhaps a routine that has been put in place but independence does not rely on these.</p> <p>Have little interest in or find many areas boring. Therefore the area that does hold their interest becomes their focus of choice.</p> <p>They do have the ability to be refocused</p> <p>The area is often an area where they can achieve</p> <p>Can be spontaneous and imaginative</p>
Autism	<p>Repetitive patterns of behaviour often serve no function</p> <p>Patterns are more restricted, for example, wringing of hands</p> <p>May have little to no sense of achieving in the area of interest</p> <p>It is difficult to refocus</p> <p>Needs to rigidly adhere to a given routine</p> <p>Are rarely spontaneous or imaginative</p>
Aspergers	Same as for Autism

Communication

ADHD	<p>If language is delayed they will catch up</p> <p>Will use gestures for communicating</p> <p>Once a topic is of interest there is no problem with conversation</p> <p>Will imitate others language, behaviours</p>
Autism	<p>Spoken language may be absent or delayed</p> <p>No attempt to use gestures</p> <p>Difficulty having a conversation</p> <p>May not imitate</p>
Aspergers	No delay in language