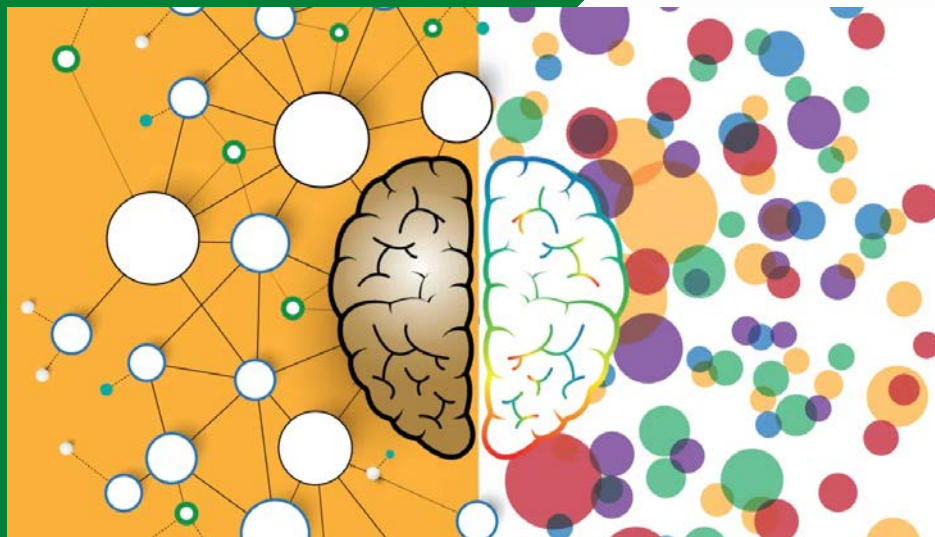


BMC JOURNAL

The monthly newsletter of
Behavior Management Consultants



Do I have AY..DEE.AITCH.DEEEE?

Guest Author: Ms.Fitz!

As my students read aloud from Rick Riordan's novel, 'The Lightning Thief', we discussed the main character, Percy Jackson, and how his impulsivity and struggles with reading make school, well, not the best experience for him. While my students and I bring the characters to life, and examine and analyze every character trait mentioned in the book, my students start to ask me questions...

“Ms. Fitz, do I have AY..DEE.AITCH.DEEE?”... “Ms. Fitz, Miss Fihhhhhhtz, do I have dis-leh-ksia?” I respond with, “Hmmm, what do you think about the way ADHD and Dyslexia affects Percy?” “Is this familiar to you?”

“MS. FITZ, THIS IS ME!!!” “I have trouble with reading!” ... “Ms. Fries (as they like to joke around), I think I have ADHD...”

Just like Percy, almost all of my students struggle with either the hyperactivity that is caused by one type of ADHD, or the tendency to daydream and focus on anything and everything that is not right in front of them, which is caused by the other type of ADHD.

BUT-

Did you know that the most brilliant, creative, and innovative thoughts, ideas, suggestions, and creations come from those of us that are wired-differently, especially, if you are blessed with ADHD! Yes, I said it, blessed. I know we are not in Church here, but, I have to tell you that with ADHD comes the ability to hyperfocus in your area of great interest, which often becomes an area of expertise.

Plus, students that think differently challenge teachers to bring out the best in their approach to teaching, by really paying attention to what truly motivates a student that is not motivated by boring teaching whatsoever

My students ask questions, pose different points of view, do research, think outside-of-the-box, and have lots of energy. When a young person comes to my classroom, and they've gotten themselves in trouble for the first 10 or 11 years of life, and feel as though there's no hope for them in the classroom environment, it is then that I tell them that whatever they experienced before, well, this is going to be quite different.

To help a child focus that thinks differently is to find out what works for them, not for you, but, what works - - -for them- and stick to it. Furthermore, when you have ADHD, you just don't want to sit there all day in a chair, you want to move your body, create something with your mind and hands, and use the energy you have for good. If not for good, well, we know what usually happens... that child starts to act-out, usually, out of pure frustration, boredom, and the like, and the teachers can't handle it.

In my classroom, we teach our students how to self-regulate their energy, emotions, and how to know their brain-wiring, how it works, and how it affects us. My students can tell you themselves that they have ADHD, and it is indeed a Super-Power.

I almost forgot that I was also writing about Dyslexia.

This is a learning disorder that affects the way vowels and consonants, letters, blends, and digraphs, and all that Jazz, are seen and processed by someone with this unique wiring in the brain.

Some students see a 'b' as a 'd' and vice-versa, but it's not that simple. Having Dyslexia is like knowing a first language, and then, when my students learn English, it's like learning a second language. A person that has Dyslexia sees one way, and has to translate in their mind to see like someone that does not have Dyslexia.

I cannot tell you how many students have come to me over the years that have gone through years of schooling, and no one could figure out how to reach these students! It's heartbreaking and frustrating for the students, and families. Then, they come to me, and I have to break down that teenage wall of "I cannot do this!!!" to build the new foundation of "Yes, I want to read, I want to read!!!!!"

As a teacher and role model, especially during this time in education, it is vital that we are open to discuss ADHD and Dyslexia, so that our students, our children, our kiddos do not carry on the 'stigma' of yesteryear. One thing I make sure to talk about is mental health and how our brains work, and how important it is to know how we learn best.

I want my students to be empowered young people, to know themselves, and to be experts in how their brains work, and to be able to say to their next teacher, "I know how I learn best...let me show you."

Helene Fitzpatrick M.Ed. has been a Middle School Self-Contained Special Education Teacher at a private NYS approved 853 school in Manhattan for the last eight years. Ms. Fitzpatrick has 20+ years of experience. She is an inspiring educator, coach, and advocate who brings joy, fun, creativity, and excitement to learning. Her mission is to empower students, families, colleagues, and the next generation of educators. Ms. Fitzpatrick now, in addition, offers education consulting services to teachers, students and their families, and school communities at large. You can contact Ms. Fitz at coachingcounselingtutoring@gmail.com

POSITIVE CHARGE: HOW TO REINFORCE GOOD BEHAVIOR



Nagging doesn't work. Neither does yelling or spanking. You know why? Punishments tear down children, whereas positive parenting builds up their self-esteem and behavior.

Strong Self-Esteem Is Job #1

If you're raising a child who has ADHD, you probably spend a lot of time focusing on his weak points – intentionally or not. There's nothing wrong with trying to work on your child's impulsivity or lack of focus – in fact, it's important for parents to do so. But focusing too intently on your child's shortcomings may be doing a number on his self-esteem. How can you keep him believing in himself while also respecting the rules? Start by using these positive parenting techniques.



Focus on the Positive

Like all kids, our children have strengths, passions, and dreams. Positive parenting means encouraging your child in all of her pursuits. Find areas where your child excels, and praise her for them. Sounds simple, right? Not always.



Be A Detective

If your child struggles academically or socially, pinpointing and highlighting his strengths may feel challenging. David Giwerc, an ADHD coach, encourages parents to be detectives – to pay close attention to what your child enjoys and does well. If your child excels at math but struggles in other subjects, talk to him to find out what he loves about math – and what he can do to keep that success going.



Redefine Success

Don't force your child into a narrow definition of success. If you excelled academically and your child struggles, you may worry that he'll fail to succeed later in life. But academics aren't the only measure of success. Your child may have a natural athletic ability, or a knack for handling animals. Maybe he's a four-star chef in the making. Expand your idea of what success can be, and you'll be a more positive parent to your child.

The Right Words, the Right Time

The key to effective praise is timing. If you praise everything your child does, he'll come to expect it – and it will start to seem phony. If you withhold praise entirely, your child will lose hope and stop trying. Offer him authentic praise and positive reinforcement when he really succeeds – not every time he puts a dish away.

Token System

For younger children, a reward system demonstrates praise and helps establish goals. Whenever your child does something praiseworthy – finishing all her homework ahead of schedule, for example – grant her a “gold star” that can be later exchanged for a reward. This helps make the praise a little more concrete, and gives the child real-world goals to work toward.

Don't Forget to Parent

Don't mistake good parenting for a lack of discipline. For a lot of parents, discipline comes naturally – most of the time, it's easier to spot bad behavior than good! But in enforcing healthy discipline, you also need to make sure you don't take good behavior for granted. Praising our kids takes creativity, vigilance, and effort to notice the good alongside the bad.





PMS and ADHD: How the Menstrual Cycle Intensifies Symptoms

“As an OB-GYN nurse, I can tell you that when progesterone levels are high, dopamine levels drop. So, for women with ADHD, the week leading up to menstruation is an awful time to try and get anything done.”



PMS and ADHD share a volatile relationship. Due to hormonal fluctuations during the menstrual cycle, an individual may see their productivity and focus climb in lockstep with her estrogen during the second week of her cycle. Then, the humming motor comes grinding to a halt as estrogen plummets and PMS kicks in following ovulation. During the week before menstruation begins, increasing progesterone and declining dopamine can provoke and exasperate ADHD symptoms such as irritability, forgetfulness, and impulsivity (often at the same time) and heighten emotional dysregulation.

“My working memory is most severely affected three days before my period. I can’t remember what I’m doing, and I’ll walk into the kitchen 100 times. I’m terrified that when my estrogen drops during perimenopause and menopause, I won’t be able to hide my symptoms at work anymore, and it will impact my ability to have a career.” — Kay, Scotland

“I definitely notice a difference in my ability to regulate my attention as I move through my cycle. I find it easier to be mindful when I am in the middle of my cycle (before ovulation). I am much more likely to forget everyday things or have lapses in attention as I get closer to my period.” – Ryland

“My ADHD symptoms become more intrusive the week leading up to my period. My executive functioning dips, my distractibility increases, and my energy levels are lower. First, I’ll be completely unfocused at work. Then I’ll look at my calendar and realize where I’m at in my cycle, and it’ll click.” – Chloe B

“I find that as my first week (flow) subsides, my ADHD symptoms are so much better – I get so much more done on those days. I’m more stable, motivated, focused, and mentally competent. The closer ovulation gets, though, the worse my symptoms become. I am more agitated and struggle to focus. Then the symptoms drop miserably right before my flow, where I can barely concentrate. I am even more forgetful, and I struggle significantly with emotional dysregulation and motivation. I feel terrible for my kids and husband, who have to tolerate my unpredictability. Learning about hormonal fluctuations throughout a woman’s cycle has helped me understand what I experience. However, I’m still trying to figure out how to work with my body and lessen my symptoms. I hope more studies will be conducted to help women like me thrive – not just scrape by – based on hormonal patterns!” – A Reader

“I’m more anxious and have trouble sleeping in the week leading up to my period. It’s also more challenging to articulate my thoughts, concentrate, and stick to a routine. I also react more emotionally at work. I feel out of control. Over the years, I’ve gotten a better handle on my symptoms, but one week out of the month, I feel like my old self – not in a good way.” – A Reader

“My hormone cycle and ADHD have always been cumbersome. At peak ovulation, I think I am a superhero and over-estimate everything that I want to do and can do. Then it wanes as I get closer to my period. My emotional dysregulation gets the best of me, and I am a basket case with no focus. I do irrational things like quit my job and a week later think, ‘That job wasn’t so bad.’” – Michelle, New York



Throughout its history, the United Nations family has celebrated diversity and promoted the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities, including learning differences and developmental disabilities. In 2008, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force, reaffirming the fundamental principle of universal human rights for all. Its purpose is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. It is a vital tool to foster an inclusive and caring society for all and to ensure that all children and adults with autism can lead full and meaningful lives.

The United Nations General Assembly unanimously declared 2 April as World Autism Awareness Day (A/RES/62/139) to highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism so they can lead full and meaningful lives as an integral part of society.

Autism is a lifelong neurological condition that manifests during early childhood, irrespective of gender, race or socio-economic status. The term Autism Spectrum refers to a range of characteristics. Appropriate support, accommodation and acceptance of this neurological variation allow those on the Spectrum to enjoy equal opportunity, and full and effective participation in society.

Autism is mainly characterized by its unique social interactions, non-standard ways of learning, keen interests in specific subjects, inclination to routines, challenges in typical communications and particular ways of processing sensory information.

The rate of autism in all regions of the world is high and the lack of understanding has a tremendous impact on the individuals, their families and communities.

The stigmatization and discrimination associated with neurological differences remain substantial obstacles to diagnosis and therapies, an issue that must be addressed by both public policy-makers in developing nations, as well as donor countries.



THE WHITE HOUSE



**A Proclamation on World Autism
Awareness Day, 2023**

There is no one way to be autistic – each individual with autism experiences it differently – but together, autistic people make industries, communities, and our Nation stronger. Today, we celebrate the achievements of neurodiverse people everywhere and champion the equal rights and dignity of all those living on the autism spectrum.

Here in the United States, more than 5.4 million adults are autistic, and 1 in every 44 children has been diagnosed with autism. Yet this developmental disability is still misunderstood. Autistic people continue to face obstacles when seeking employment, health care, education, and housing, and the immense contributions of people with autism are often overlooked. We owe it to our fellow Americans to address the disparities they face and to support autistic people with tools that facilitate clearer communication, increased productivity, and greater independence.

That is why my Administration is funding cutting-edge research to enable earlier autism diagnoses and to develop more resources to help neurodiverse people of all ages thrive. Recognizing that Autism Spectrum Disorder is categorized as a disability, my American Rescue Plan provided \$25 billion to States to make it easier for people with disabilities, including autism, to receive care at home. We also rolled out new tools and strategies for partner organizations to connect disabled Americans with stable housing while helping them pay rent, fight eviction, and prevent homelessness.

Last year, I was proud to reauthorize Kevin and Avonte’s Law, which expands training for first responders and others giving care to people with autism. And in my recent State of the Union Address, I called on the Congress to increase its support for community living for people with disabilities.

My Administration is also boosting employment opportunities for autistic and other historically marginalized Americans. I was proud to sign an Executive Order advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the Federal workforce, which will help create new jobs for Americans with autism and make space for their voices in the policy-making process.

We are helping State and local governments, employers, and nonprofits tap Federal funds to hire more Americans with disabilities like autism through competitive integrated employment practices. We are cracking down on employers who discriminate on the basis of disability, and we are fighting to end the unfair use of sub-minimum wages. I continue to urge States that have not yet expanded Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act to do the right thing and provide health insurance to those currently locked out of Medicaid support that would otherwise be available to them from the Federal Government. Medicaid expansion would help many Americans with disabilities, including those with autism.

To support students with autism, the Department of Education is ensuring that public schools uphold their obligation to provide free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to all students. My Administration has also issued new guidance to help schools avoid the discriminatory use of discipline, which too often impacts autistic students, whose needs and behaviors are commonly misunderstood.

As we build a more inclusive, just, and equal Nation, we aim to lead by the power of our example. I reestablished the role of Special Advisor on International Disability Rights at the Department of State to prioritize disability rights in our policy discussions with foreign nations. The United States Agency for International Development is advancing disability inclusion as part of its democracy, climate, humanitarian, and peacebuilding activities. And as co-chair of the Global Action on Disability Network and a participant in the Global Disability Summit, the United States continues to promote the equal human rights of people with disabilities worldwide.

America is founded on the idea that all people are created equal and deserve to be treated equally throughout their lives. Today and always, let us strive to live up to this ideal. Let us embrace our diversity; empower each other to reach our full potential; and promote the basic decency, acceptance, and fairness we know is right.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 2, 2023, as World Autism Awareness Day. I call upon all Americans to learn more about autism to improve early diagnosis, to learn more about the experiences of autistic people from autistic people, and to build more welcoming and inclusive communities to support people with autism.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-seventh.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.



Wings for Autism / Wings for All

Making the Skies Friendlier for Everyone

Part of living a full life in the community includes being able to travel to faraway locations for both work and pleasure. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are entitled to this piece of community participation—just like anyone else—and should be able to navigate air transit comfortably to experience the same opportunities as every other traveler.



Why It Matters

People with autism and other I/DDs often experience barriers to participating in air travel.

Airports and airplanes can be overwhelming and full of unexpected and overstimulating variables, such as bright lights, noises, TSA security screening, and crowds. Too often, there is a lack of understanding among airport and airline staff—leading to confusion on how to handle accommodations or unexpected behaviors when a flier is overwhelmed or nervous about navigating the air travel process.

Combined, these barriers lead to hesitation and fear, inhibiting participation in air travel. As a result, people can miss out on new experiences and connecting with family members and friends that live far away.



What The Arc Is Doing

The Arc's Wings for Autism®/Wings for All® (Wings) program gives families and aviation professionals the confidence to take to the skies with ease by providing an airport "rehearsal," as well as a presentation on the aircraft features and in-flight safety protocols. Chapters of The Arc, local partners, and airport/airline/TSA personnel work collaboratively to design and carry out each Wings event.

For Individuals and Families

Wings alleviates some of the stress that people with autism and other I/DDs and their families experience when traveling by air by providing families with the opportunity to experience and learn about how their loved ones will react to different stimuli in the airport.

For Aviation Professionals

Wings gives airport, airline, TSA professionals, and other personnel the opportunity to observe, interact, and deliver their services in a structured learning environment—improving their disability competency and processes for accommodating ALL passengers who fly.

During a Wings Event: Participant Activities

- Check-in to receive boarding passes
- Pass through the TSA security checkpoint
- Wait in the boarding area
- Board an aircraft (that does not take off)

Wings for Autism® was created by Charles River Center, an affiliated chapter of The Arc, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Port Authority. For additional information about bringing Wings to an airport near you, please email wingsforautism@thearc.org.

Upcoming Wings Events

We hold dozens of Wings events each year. Check back often to see when new locations/dates are announced near you.

Upcoming Events (dates are subject to change)

April 1, 2023 – Piedmont Triad International Airport (PTI)
Participant Registration
Volunteer Registration

April 11, 2023: Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL)
Participant Registration
Volunteer Registration

April 15, 2023 – Charleston International Airport (CHS)
Participant Registration
Volunteer Registration

April 29, 2023 – Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT)
Participant Registration
Volunteer Registration

IMPORTANT
NUMBERS



IF YOU NEED
HELP, PLEASE
MAKE THE CALL



GET THE SUPPORT
YOU NEED



YOU ARE NOT
ALONE



National Suicide
Prevention Hotline:
1-800-273-8255

National Domestic
Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-7233

Runaway and
Homeless Teen
Hotline Help:
1-800-246-4646



Coalition for the
Homeless:
212-776-2000

Drug and Alcohol
Hotline:
800-622-2255

Food and Hunger
Hotline:
866-888-8777

Homeless Services
Hotline:
212-533-5151

Rape Crisis Hotline:
212-227-3000

National Child
Abuse Hotline:
1-800-422-4453

National Teen
Dating Abuse
Helpline: 1-866-
331-9474

Crisis Lifeline for
LGBTQ Youth:
1-866-488-7386

Boys Town National
Hotline:
800-448-3000

American
Pregnancy Helpline:
866-942-6466

Behavior Management Consultants believes that, "No Child is Born Bad". Our mission is to educate, mentor, and assist parents, caregivers, and professionals to cope with, socialize, and identify values important to today's youth.

The goal is to serve public and private social service organizations including, but not limited to:

- Residential Treatment Facilities (RTFs)
- Juvenile Detention Centers
- Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs)
- Public Schools
- Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

We are confident that we will meet our goals thereby ensuring that our clients are being kept abreast in the ever-changing landscape of Human/Social Services.

Quote of the Month

"One person plus one typewriter constitutes a movement."

—Pauli Murray



If you'd like to buy some ad space for your upcoming events or business ventures, please reach out directly to Artemus X. Smith for details and pricing. All proceeds go to helping fund Behavior Management Consultants.

Email: Smith@bmcofnyc.org