



ADHD and the classroom: Positive attitudes, positive strategies, positive results

Never Stand Still

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ADHD - Introduction

- ❖ 3 different types – Hyperactive/Impulsive, Inattentive, Combined type
 - 6 out of 9 criteria
 - Present before the age of 12
 - 2 or more settings
 - Can be in partial remission
- ❖ 5% of school aged children
- ❖ Boys to Girls 2:1 in children

- ❖ Highly Comorbid with Learning Disabilities - Approximately 31-45% (DuPaul et al., 2013) of children with ADHD will also present with a comorbid SLD and are three times more likely to have an SLD in reading, writing and/or mathematics than their peers who do not have ADHD (DuPaul et al., 2013)
- ❖ Comorbid with Autism, Mental Health disorders, and Conduct disorders

ADHD - Aetiology

- ❖ No known cause
- ❖ High heritability
- ❖ Risk factors
 - ❖ very low birth weight (birth weight less than 1.5kg), although most children with very low birth weight never develop ADHD
 - ❖ smoking during pregnancy. Although a causal relationship is yet to be established
 - ❖ A minority of ADHD may be related to aspects of diet and a small subset of people with ADHD will also have food sensitivities that may exacerbate their ADHD symptoms

ADHD - Symptomology

- ❖ Difficulty determining where to focus
- ❖ having difficulty maintaining focus/easily distracted
- ❖ Difficulty following instruction
- ❖ losing things/being forgetful
- ❖ Difficulty with organisation
- ❖ fidgeting and squirming
- ❖ talking non-stop
- ❖ interrupting conversations/difficulty waiting their turn
- ❖ blurting out an answer before a question has been finished
- ❖ Leaving their seat

ADHD - Impacts

- ❖ Inability to make or keep friends
- ❖ Negative learning and school experiences
- ❖ Often in trouble at school
- ❖ Struggle with group work
- ❖ Can impact further education
- ❖ Can impact career choice and opportunities
- ❖ Can impact earning capacity

ADHD - Myths

- ❖ Children with ADHD grow out of it in adolescence
- ❖ Children with ADHD can choose not to misbehave
- ❖ ADHD is caused by poor diet/too much sugar
- ❖ Special diets are an effective treatment for ADHD
- ❖ Children with ADHD just need stricter schooling/parenting

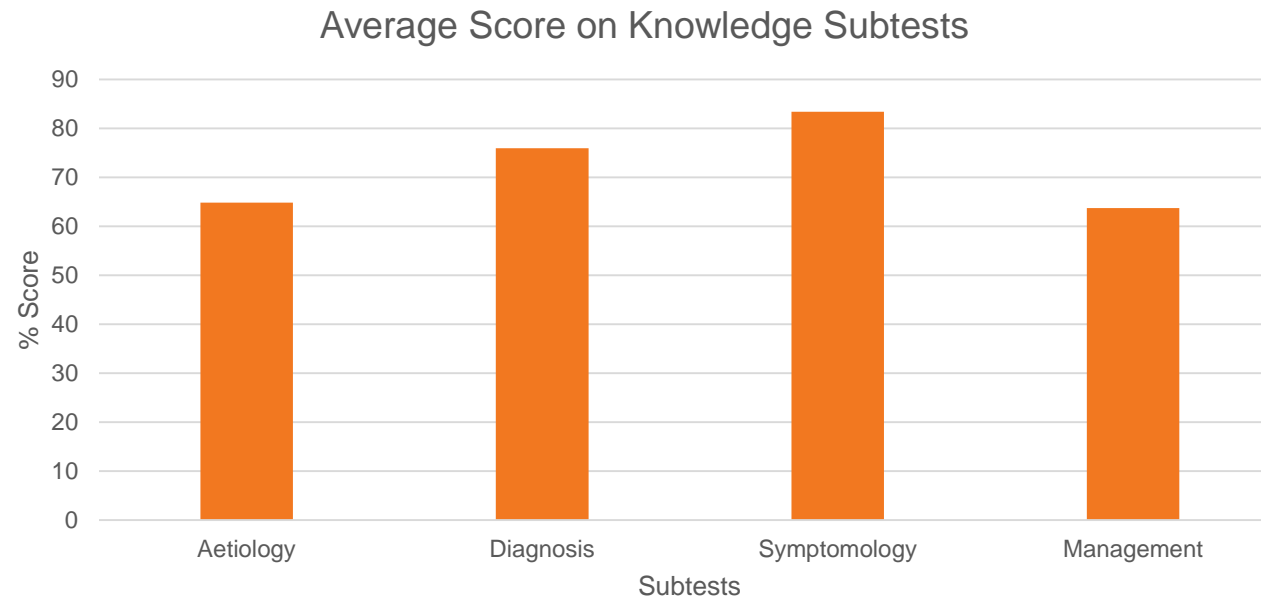
Data Collection Phase

- ❖ All public schools in NSW contacted via email
 - 2245 Department of Education schools, distance and environment education centres in NSW
 - 154 principals agreed to have their school involved
 - 1800 individual teachers received the survey and a request to participate
 - 592 responses
 - 32.89% response rate

Data Analysis Phase: Knowledge Section

❖ Correct Response Analysis

➤ Teachers scored an average of 73.32%



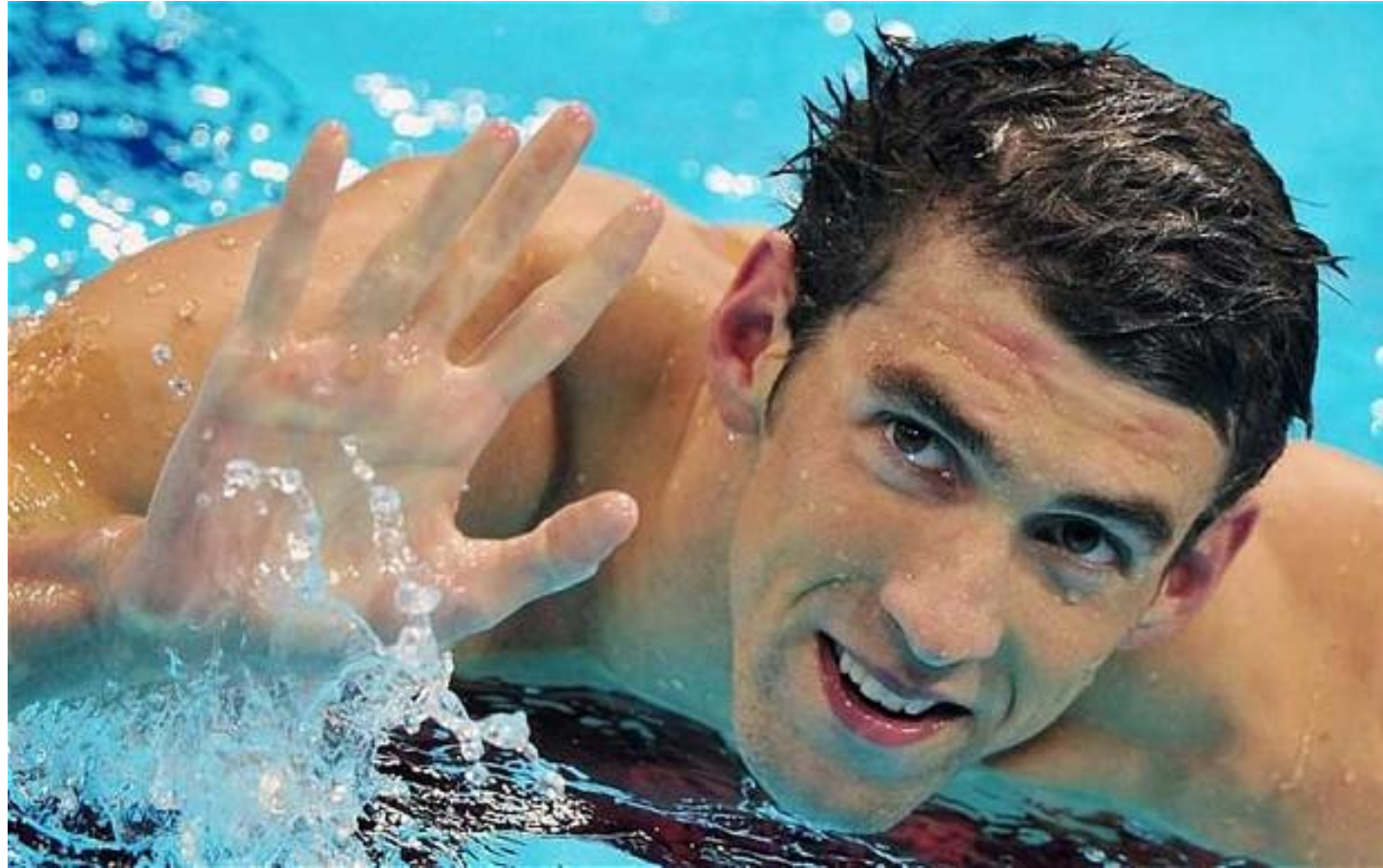
❖ Frequency Analysis

- 79.67% were able to correctly acknowledge that ADHD is not caused by too much sugar in the diet
- Only 26.01% of teachers correctly identified that special diets (e.g. reduced sugar, wheat free, lactose free, additive free) are not an effective treatment for ADHD.
- Just over half of teachers (51.83%) identified that they didn't believe that children with ADHD would benefit from stricter parenting and schooling
- Analysis also shows that teachers were most unsure about the heritability of ADHD with 41.94% 'I don't know' to the question 'ADHD can be inherited'

Attitudes Section

❖ Frequency Analysis

- In general teachers hold favourable attitudes towards teaching students with ADHD.
 - 71.08% agree to some extent these students are rewarding to work with
- Generally have negative attitudes of ADHD-type behaviours themselves.
 - 70.89% agreed to some extent that they find behaviours associated with ADHD irritating in the classroom,
 - 67.30% of the respondents agreed to some extent that these students cause them to experience stress
- Over 90% of teachers surveyed indicated that they would like to know more about ADHD and interventions to assist them in the classroom



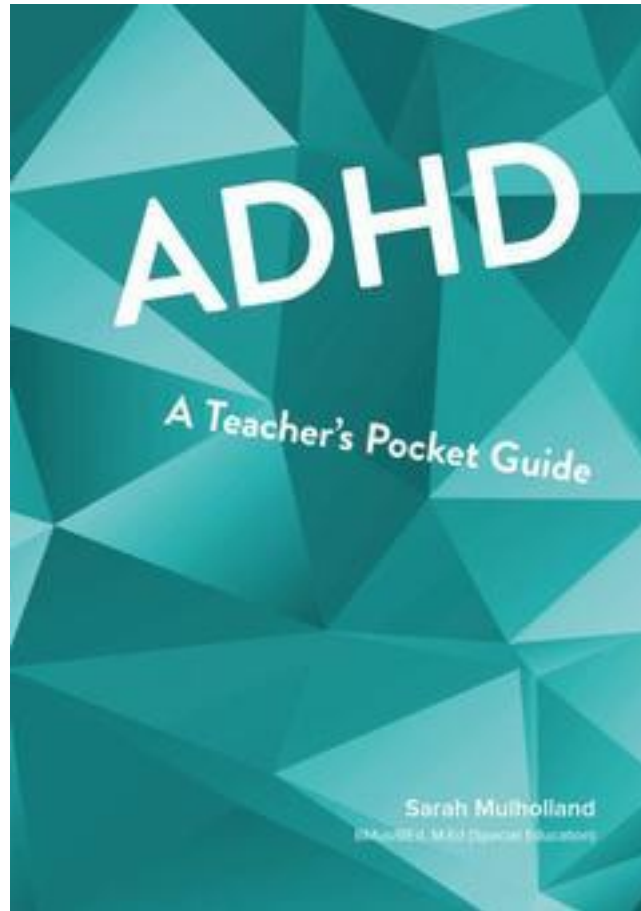
Michael Phelps?

“Your son will **never** be able to **focus** on anything”

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ADHD - Management

- ❖ The management of ADHD is often multi-modal, with pharmacological and behavioural management interventions used in conjunction with strategies for secondary disorders including SLD and/or learning difficulties
- ❖ The most often recommended medication in the management of ADHD is stimulant medication, however, non-stimulant medication can also be effective. These medications are available under a variety of trade names.

Interventions for Classroom Teachers

❖ General Behaviour Management Strategies

- Establishing classroom rules that are few in number, and positively phrase, can have strong positive results in increasing class engagement and decreasing disruptive behaviour.
- Specific positively framed instructions should be given as negative instructions have the potential to reduce the compliance of students to the positive instructions in their classroom.
- Instituting a class routine can create a highly structured classroom environment, providing a productive learning environment for all students.
- Specific immediate feedback should be given to all students to reinforce correct behaviour and academic performance, and give suggestions for further improvement.

Targeted Behaviour Management Strategies and Interventions

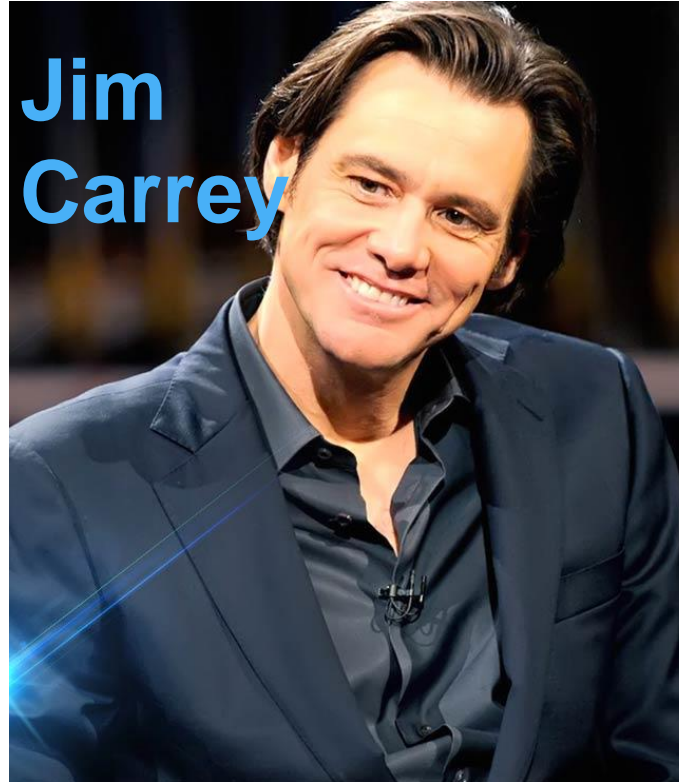
- ❖ Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) should be used.
- ❖ A recent study has found that the hyperactive behaviours of children with ADHD play a large role in the retention of information and complex cognitive tasks.
 - The use of fidgets such as stress balls and Theraputty® can give students an alternative outlet for their hyperactivity.
 - A study has shown that on-task behaviour can be increased by the use of therapy balls instead of traditional seating for students with ADHD.
 - Therapy balance ‘wobble’ cushions can be used on regular chairs for classrooms where therapy balls might be a distraction from learning activities. Weighted vests and lap pads may also increase on-task behaviour.
 - Standing Desks

- ❖ Time-out from positive reinforcement is sometimes used to reduce problem behaviour and is often effective when managing aggressive or disruptive behaviour. Time-out usually involves removing the student to a separate area of the classroom for a brief period following disruptive, defiant or aggressive behaviour.
- ❖ Self-management skills can improve the maintenance of appropriate behaviour, particularly in non-educational settings.
- ❖ Token economies are commonly used as a whole-class approach to classroom behaviour management.

Academic Adjustments and Strategies

- ❖ Increasing computer assisted instruction can assist in the engagement of students with attention and motivation deficits by decreasing disruptive behaviour, whilst increasing academic motivation and engagement.
- ❖ An iPad provides a portable computer assisted instruction option that meets the unique curriculum needs of students with ADHD.
- ❖ Reducing the amount of written work required has a positive effect on the quality and quantity of work produced and can increase attention and sustained effort in academic work.
- ❖ Scaffolded work – ‘I do, we do, you do’.
- ❖ Modify task duration
- ❖ Scheduling
- ❖ Visual/Audio cues
- ❖ Graphic organisers
- ❖ Explicit Instruction of planning/test taking skill

Supportive
Knowledgeable



Positive
Encouraging

Had a teacher who used his ADHD behaviours
to support him in his interests

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Questions or Comments