ADHD PATHWAYS MAP (Post Diagnosis)

A practical guide for families navigating ADHD supports

1 Understanding the Diagnosis

Clarity, acceptance, first steps

What ADHD is:

- A neurodevelopmental difference in attention, activity, and self-regulation.
- Something that every individual experiences differently.

What ADHD is NOT:

- Laziness, defiance, or a phase.
- A result of bad parenting.
- Something you simply "grow out of".

First steps:

- **Monitor**: sleep, food, routines, behaviour, school feedback.
- Write down the observations and share with your GP/ educator/ teacher. It helps them see patterns & guide next steps.

Health services & support:

- **0 to 8 years**: Child and Family Centres.
- **0 to 6 years**: Child Development Service.
- **CAMHS** (severe distress)

2 Healthcare & Treatment Options

Professional care, referrals, affordable access

Your GP is your main guide

- First point of contact, referrals, care plans, overall health.

Who helps & how - Key doctors:

- **Paediatrician**: medication, developmental concerns
- **Psychiatrist**: complex needs, teenagers/adults.

Who helps & how - Others:

- **Psychologist**: self-monitoring & behavioural strategies.
- **Occupational Therapist**: routines, sensory needs, motor coordination.
- **Speech Pathologist**: communication, language, social skills.
- **Dietitian**: nutrition, sleep, energy balance.

Practical supports

- Medicare rebates & Mental Health Care Plan (via GP)
- For co-occurring conditions: Carer Allowance, Health Care Card, Companion Card, NDIS depending on your child's needs and circumstances.

3 Daily Life & Wellbeing

Routine, coping skills, social connection

Routines & structure:

- Try visual schedules and checklists.
- Break down big tasks into smaller, manageable steps.
- Celebrate small wins.
- Allow safe outlets (movement, music, art).

Behaviour & emotions:

- Behaviour support plan can guide consistency.
- Talk openly with your child about ADHD.
- Focus on effort and progress, not only results/ problems.

Health & activity:

- Regular sleep, meal times, daily physical activity.
- Self-care for parents is essential, not optional.

Free Inclusive local programs

- Tuning in to Kids
- Dads Tuning in to Kids
- Tuning in to Teens
- Circle of Security
- NEIST Playgroup
- PlayConnect+

4 Connecting with Education

Support, learning, inclusion

Steps to take:

- Share diagnosis with ECEC/school if comfortable.
- Talk to your child's ECEC educator or classroom teacher if you have concerns.
- Ask about available supports & adjustments. e.g. quiet space, breaks, flexible homework, ILPs.
- Ask about Preschool Pathways Program (preschool children).
- Ask for referral to the student wellbeing team if needed.
- Visit the Commonwealth Department of Education's website for Disability Standards for Education resources.
- Explore Positive Partnerships (free workshops for parents/ carers & professional learning for educators/teachers).

Advocacy tips:

- If support is not working, request a meeting with the ECEC centre or school to discuss additional supports/ complaints process.

5 Family & Parent Support

Respite, peer connection, practical strategies

Peer support

- Parents of Kids with ADHD in Canberra Facebook group.
- ADDACT, ADHD Foundation, ADHD Australia.

Parent supports

- Ask for respite or short breaks
- Circle of Security, Tuning in to Kids Suite, Parenting, and Mentoring programs can help.
- Counselling or coaching can help with coping & confidence.

Practical strategies:

- Keep routines flexible.
- Write down what helps at home and share with your child's ECEC centre/ school.
- Expect good days and tough days - adjust without guilt

Remember

- ADHD affects the whole family.
- Support for parents and carers is part of care, not an extra.
- Parentline ACT - **02 6287 3833**

715 health check

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of all ages can get their free 715 health check at Aboriginal Medical Services and bulk-billing clinics.

> **It is normal to feel exhausted or overwhelmed. You are not alone. There is help available, keep asking for it.**

Important realities

- Wait times and costs are common.
- Services may not be available immediately, ask GP about interim supports.

Scan for an interactive map with service links and tips

SCAN ME