

**General Effects:** Many children exhibit symptoms of Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) even if they do not have an official diagnosis. These symptoms are persistent in different aspects of the child's life and over time. Here are some tips for working with a Little who has challenges with attention and/or hyperactivity.

### Advice for Mentors:

#### ● **Planning Ahead:**

- Plan outings in advance and stick to your schedule! Let your Little know when the next visit will be. This will provide consistency and also give your Little something to look forward to.
- If you need to cancel, provide your Little and their guardian with advanced notice and be prepared to reschedule.
- Create a physical calendar that highlights upcoming outings so your Little can prepare and have a reference.

#### ● **Outings- Planning Activities:**

- Tell your Little the plan at the beginning of each outing. Children need a sense of structure and often have trouble transitioning from one activity to the next (or when it's time to go home). It's helpful to tell your Little a time limit for when you will move on to a different activity and also provide reminders throughout the visit.
- Children with ADHD/ADD symptoms can be easily distracted, which means they might say "I'm bored"; don't take it personally.
- It may be necessary to plan several short activities over the course of 1-2 hours instead of trying to plan 1 long activity. It's also good to have 1-2 back-up ideas in case you finish early or have to wait (e.g., a basketball or Frisbee, a deck of cards).
- Try to plan activities that allow a Little to release energy. Some ideas are: playing sports, creating an obstacle course, playing tag, playing Wii workout/sports games, taking a long walk (e.g., Freedom Trail), Sky Zone (indoor trampolines).
- Allow your Little to be creative. Some suggestions are: make an art project, play charades, make your own comic book, or have them make a new game- board or sports.

#### ● **Safety and Managing Behavior:**

- A mentor may need to redirect a Little during an activity. This should be done in a calm, even-toned way. Be careful to avoid harsh, accusatory or punishing redirection to a Little.
- If your Little's behavior is disruptive or unsafe for others around you, end the activity and move on to your Plan B.<sup>1</sup>
- Ask your Little's guardian for specific tactics of intervention that work at home.

#### ● **If your Little is on medication:**

- Check with your Little's guardian whether your Little will be taking medication on the days you visit. Some kids do not take their medication on weekends or school vacations.<sup>2</sup> Have a conversation with your Little's guardian and provide feedback on how outings go.
- If your Little needs medication during an outing: discuss this in advance with their guardian. A guardian should be responsible for administering medication and outings should be planned around this. If the Little is old enough to administer themselves, a Big can remind them of the proper time to take it should this occur on an outing.
- Be aware of side effects. Some kids taking ADHD or ADD medication can have side effects including loss of appetite or dizziness. Make sure you talk with your Little's guardian about how the medication affects your Little.

#### Symptoms can include:

Fidgets with hands and feet or squirms in chair  
Runs around or climbs excessively  
Struggles to engage in activity  
Talks excessively  
Blurts out answers before questions are complete  
Has difficulty waiting turns, impulsive  
Fails to give close attention to details  
Makes careless mistakes  
Has difficulty sustaining attention; Forgetful  
Does not appear to be listening  
Struggles to follow through on instructions  
Struggles with organization  
Easily distracted  
Interrupts or intrudes upon others

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the "Match Safety Guidelines for Bigs" that was handed out with your new match packet.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the section on "Health, Medications and Allergies" of the "Match Safety Guidelines for Bigs"