

## Family Story – Living with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

### Noticing the first signs

I first started to notice at play group. He was about 3. He wasn't as advanced or meeting the milestones as some of the other children - hand writing, fine motor skills, cutting with scissors and reading. He was very withdrawn and quiet. I knew there was something wrong.

Trying to get somebody to listen to me was difficult because I was told that I worry too much and that he was gonna be fine. You then think is it me, am I reading too much into it? So you tend to leave it and not pursue it.

As he got older I noticed his behaviour more. He was on an IEP (Individualised Education Plan). He was having problems in school with his friends, he wasn't happy. Generally life was hard on a daily basis.

### Referral to community health services

When my son was 10 1/2, there was an incident at home, something happened and I was crying, my son was very upset and I rang and spoke to my GP. The GP said that he would get a referral because my son had got into a state and said he didn't want to live anymore. It took 6 months between being referred by my GP and seeing the Paediatrician.

### Further involvement and diagnosis

We had the original diagnosis from a Paediatrician in training. We were in there for 2 hours. I didn't think it would take that long. They observed him, asked us some questions about home life and school life, and got him to do certain little things and at the end I was told that he did have ADHD. I was angry and relieved when they finally diagnosed him. Somebody had listened to me.

Generally when he is on medication, he's very quiet, hardly eats anything during the day at all. First thing on a morning he's very hard work. Trying to get him to take his tablets can take up to an hour every morning. He doesn't like the taste and that creates more problems.

When the medication wears off I think the school gets the best of it, round about 6 o'clock he becomes very loud and very argumentative and very hard work. If I have any problems with my son's behaviour or for example his medication, then I ring and the Paediatrician always rings me back, she always gives me advice over the phone, she's always on hand when I need to speak to her.



## What happened next?

His school work has definitely improved, teachers have said that. He's caught up now. He was never disruptive or naughty. He was just very fidgety and couldn't concentrate. He's got the concentration now that's really good. I have been seeing the Paediatrician for almost 2 years now. My son goes back every 6 months for a check-up.

Story details taken 12/5/14