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Understanding ADHD + Inclusive Supports

What is ADHD?

ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Difference) is a natural variation in how the brain manages attention, activity, and self-control. It is not about effort or intelligence. Many learners with ADHD bring strengths such as creativity, humor, energy, and problem-solving skills. With inclusive support, understanding, and kindness every learner and member of our community can thrive.

Key Features of ADHD

- Inattention: May appear distracted, forgetful, or daydreaming
- Disorganization: Difficulty keeping track of books, assignments, or materials
- Restlessness: Fidgeting, moving around, difficulty staying seated
- Impulsivity: Blurting out, interrupting, acting before thinking
- Hyperfocus: Deep focus on areas of strong interest

Inclusive Supports for Learners with ADHD

Accommodation Area	Examples of Inclusive Supports
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide visual schedules, assignment notebooks, and reminders• Break tasks into smaller, manageable steps• Teach and practice organizational skills
Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use multisensory methods (movement, song, visuals)• Give directions one at a time; repeat and check for understanding• Use visual aids, charts, and color coding
Classroom Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build predictable routines; practice often• Allow fidget tools and movement breaks• Give 3x more positive feedback than corrections

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Accommodation Area	Examples of Inclusive Supports
Student Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer choice in how learning is demonstrated (oral, visual, written) • Shorten or adapt assignments • Reduce handwriting demands; allow typing or dictation
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow extended time • Use flexible formats (projects, oral presentations, visuals) • Break large tasks into smaller parts with deadlines

Strategies for Jewish Learning Environments

Jewish Learning Challenge	Best Practice / Accommodation
Learning Hebrew prayers & vocabulary	Use movement and song, break lessons into short activities, give preview materials
Decoding Hebrew text	Provide transliteration alongside Hebrew text; highlight roots and patterns
Retaining Hebrew content	Use visual supports (charts, color-coded roots/prefixes/suffixes, trope symbols)
Preparing for services (Torah/Haftarah/prayers)	Offer recorded models or chant practice; chunk learning into manageable pieces
Community belonging	Celebrate ADHD strengths — energy, creativity, enthusiasm — as vital contributions to Jewish life

Students with ADHD are just like anyone else — they need calm, consistent, and caring adults, teachers, and caregivers to help them regulate, re-start, and succeed at school and at home. In Jewish learning environments, this also means creating spaces where every child can find belonging — whether in the classroom, at services, or during holiday celebrations.

For more ADHD information and resources, visit www.understood.org or www.chadd.org.

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