

University Center for
Excellence on
Developmental Disabilities
(UCEDD)



American Samoa
Community College

AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

UCEDD it!

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

By: Tafa Tupuola

Did you know that Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) affects 3-7% of school age children? According to the CDC data and statistics in 2007, 5.4 million children from the ages of 4-17 are diagnosed with ADHD. This is an increase of 22% from data reported in 2003. It is also known that by the time they reach their adolescence 24% of children with ADHD will start to drop out of school by the 11th grade.

ADHD is one of several hidden disabilities along with learning disability and epilepsy overlooked in school and society. It affects boys (13.2%) more than girls (5.6%) and the diagnosis rates increase among older teens as compared to young children.

As a parent of two children with ADHD, it can be quite challenging to deal with your child's impulsive and hyperactive behavior. The demands of a child with ADHD can be physically exhausting so imagine having two. The first thing I asked myself was "what to do?" Finding information about ADHD is the most powerful tool a parent can have as an asset.

Find out what type of ADHD your child may have. There are three types: inattentive, hyperactive, and combine (inattentive and hyperactive). Get familiar with the symptoms and understand the impact it will have on

your entire family. It's extremely important to share this and any information with every family member to get the support you need. At times, too much may be focused on the child with ADHD and we forget about their siblings without ADHD or siblings become second parents unexpectedly. As a result there will be mixed feelings in the household.

As a family you may want all your children to have an organizer to demonstrate time management with chores, homework, and extra activities. This can help the child with ADHD to adopt the positive behavior of staying focused on assignments, deadlines, and organizing. Children with ADHD are often unorganized so doing an inclusive activity such as this is a beginning.

Second, get familiar with the child's school curriculum and parental rights. The Office of Special Education has a parent handbook that provides information about parental rights, eligibility, related services, and complaint procedures if your child is receiving special education services. This handbook is required at the annual Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting once a year or when a due process complaint is filed. As a re-

lated service you may want to request for positive behavior support interventions as needed.

Also, get your child involved in a sport or hobby that they enjoy. Children with ADHD can channel a lot of their attention and/or hyperactivity into this.



You can also request, with a consensus of the IEP team, to have this included in their IEP. Although I should warn you, because of impulsive and/or hyperactive behaviors, expect injuries.

Last, keep a positive attitude! You are going to experience some challenges that will test your patience. It is important to remain calm as you are teaching your child to remain focus. Also, help your child set certain goals to achieve by the end of the school year. Remember their behavior is related to the disorder so most of the time it is not intentional. It maybe humorous 5 years later when reminiscing on them loosing a pencil daily only to tell the teacher they don't like pencils when its time to take a test that requires pencil only.

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"Being disabled should not mean being disqualified from having access to every aspect of life"

~Emma Thompson

ADHD SIGNS

By: Tafa Tupuola

Inattentive Type:

- Makes careless mistakes
- Difficulty paying attention
- Easily distracted
- Doesn't seem to listen
- Doesn't follow through on instructions or complete tasks
- Difficulty in organizing or time management
- Loses things
- Often forgetful

Hyperactive Type:

- Fidgets

- Runs or climbs excessively in inappropriate situations
- Difficulty in engaging in activities quietly
- Often "on the go" or "driven by a motor"
- Talks excessively
- Difficulty waiting for their turn
- Interrupts or intrudes on others

Combined Type:

- Displays six symptoms or more from both inattentive and hyperactive type
- Symptoms lasts at least 6 months
- Evident before age 7

- Occurs across settings
- Becomes bored easily
- Displays low frustration tolerance
- Inability to recognize future consequences of behavior



*Sour: www.cdc.gov

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES FUN DAY

By: Lia Pelenato

Children dancing, laughing, and singing were some of the many signs of happiness children with developmental disabilities (DD) were displaying during the fun day event at the KFC/ Pizza Hut field in Tafuna on Friday, September 23. The Office of Protection & Advocacy for the Disabled (OPAD) hosted the day with the support of local



OPAD Dir. during the opening ceremony

agencies who work with and serve the disability community in American Samoa. Students from various elementary schools around the island were present to witness the day as gifts were passed out from the hosting agency. UCEDD staff Lesina Falaniko and Paulia Pelenato were present to support and participate by

providing raffle gifts to the audience and children with DD. During the event, students were asked to tour the booths of each agency and ask questions regarding the services provided by the agency. The event was held for four hours and concluded with each participant receiving lunch and a bag of goodies. The purpose of this event was to promote awareness of disabilities among the younger population of American Samoa and introduce the DD population to local services available.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EXPO

By: Ernie Seiuli

The American Samoa Department of Homeland Security, in conjunction with other government agencies including the University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), held a one day Emergency Preparedness Expo on September 1, 2011 at Utulei Beach Park. The Expo provided a variety of interesting topics that everyone should be cognizant about in the event of a catastrophic disaster. In

areas where preparedness is part of the norm, the devastation had less of an overall impact on the community, than in those areas with little or no preparation. The Expo was an opening activity for the Emergency Preparedness Awareness month to inform the public about the importance of preparedness for any type of emergency from natural disasters to man-made threats. The UCEDD team shared invaluable information to families

about how to prepare before during and after a disaster. Also, information about taking care of the individuals with functional needs in the event of an emergency was also handed out. The Expo highlighted what we can do to become better prepared, and featured displays, information and preparedness products. There were exhibits, children's entertainment from Mt. Alava Elementary, and an end-of-event raffle by UCEDD.

CELEBRATE OUR ABILITIES EVENT By: Lia Pelenato

Traffic was blocked for a mile away as commuters made their way in to town on Friday, September 30th, 2011. The American Samoa Department of Health (DOH) in collaboration with local agencies working with the disability community held a fun day for children with disabilities across the island. The theme for this gathering was "Celebrate our Abilities." Parents, teachers, service providers, and the public came together to cheer and celebrate the abilities of children with disabilities by chalking it up on the road pavement, wheelchair racing, face painting, making animal balloons

and other activities. DOH Acting Director Elisapeta Ponausua delivered the keynote speech with a message of working together and allowing the oppor-

tunity for children with disabilities to express their emotions through their abilities and/or talents. The UCEDD Director and staff supported the event by providing various materials for activities such as face painting, and button making, balloons, and side walk jumbo-chalks for the street expressions. Children with disabilities and their families as well as local service providers opened the event with an awareness walk from Gataivai to Utulei Beach. This event was made possible with the generous support of major sponsors such as McDonalds, Paramount Builders, and Teen Challenge.



UCEDD Dir. Tafa Tupuola, students, service providers and members of the disability community before the awareness walk commenced.

FYI CORNER: DID YOU KNOW?

STANDING ROOM ONLY

The AUCD and the Center on Disability Studies hosted a "Standing Room Only" side event at the United Nations Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons. On September 7-9, 2011, diplomatic discussions and debate were underway focused on the event theme, "Enabling Development and Realizing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities."

The Standing Room Only event focused on women and girls with disabilities because of persistent underrepresentation in data collecting, social and medical research, exclusive development practices, and policymaking. Women and girls face multiple discriminations because of their gender, poverty, and disability. In the end, the steps needed to better realize an equitable world

as well as the realization of the rights encoded in the Convention were well addressed. All agreed that more research is needed to obtain data that is disaggregated for gender, disability and age. For more information on Standing Room Only, please visit:

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention>

Exchange Program Opportunity in Cambodia

Come discover classroom Earth! Global Explorers is a non profit organization that is offering a fully paid travel scholarships for high school students and educators to participate in the American Youth Leadership Program with Cambodia. Monks stroll by clad in saffron-colored robes. Jungle temple ruins tell the story of a magnificent bygone era. Aromas of delicate

curry, steamed fish and rice waft to your nose. This exchange program gives us an authentic look at the heart of a vibrant and resilient culture and highlights the connections between our planet and all of humanity. This program, managed by Global Explorers, is funded by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Youth Programs Divi-

sion. Five educators and 30 students will be selected from a competitive pool to receive full scholarships for this unique and exciting program that features a 26-day expedition to Cambodia in June 2012. Deadline date for application submission is November 2, 2011. For more information, please visit the link below:

www.globalexplorers.org/cambodia



MISSION STATEMENT

ACRONYMS/MEANINGS

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASCC: American Samoa Community College
AUCD: Association of University Centers on Disabilities
DD: Developmental Disabilities
DHSS: Department of Human & Social Services
DOH: Department of Health
IDD: Individuals with Developmental Disabilities
IEP: Individual Education Plan
OPAD: Office of Protection & Advocacy for the Disabled
UCEDD: University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities

The University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) assures that individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages and their families participate fully in activities that will design and promote self-determination, independence, integration and inclusion in all facets of life in American Samoa. The UCEDD will ensure the delivery and purpose of the Developmental Disabilities Act through culturally competent activities.

SEND US YOUR COMMENTS

We would love to hear from you if you have comments about our newsletter, or if you would like to be added to our newsletter list!

Drop us a line at: ucedd@amsamoa.edu

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<http://asucedd.org>

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KEEP IT GREEN & KEEP IT ON THE LINK

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