Interventions for ADHD in Children and Teens: A Focus on ADHD Coaching.

Ahmann, Elizabeth


Abstract:

Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is the most common neurobehavioral disorder of childhood and can be associated with emotional, behavioral, developmental, and physical comorbidities. ADHD can impact academic and later occupational achievement, relationships and social development, well-being and safety, and individual and family quality of life. Additionally, ADHD continues into adulthood for a substantial proportion of individuals. Medication alone is the most common treatment for ADHD. Although the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) urges behavioral intervention as a key component of care, in addition to FDA-approved ADHD medications, many children and adolescents are missing out on behavioral approaches, in part because few evidence-based behavioral interventions have widespread availability. This article introduces ADHD coaching as a behavioral intervention with a growing evidence base. A literature search identified 22 studies addressing ADHD coaching, of which 19 examined outcomes; seven of these studies were specific to children and teens. The studies of coaching for young people with ADHD, like those among older individuals, suggest that ADHD coaching is a promising behavioral intervention and a useful component of multimodal treatment. Pediatric nurses can help families understand ADHD; encourage them to engage behavioral intervention(s), including ADHD coaching -- as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urges; and assist families in finding appropriate resources and referrals. Additionally, nurses may consider coach training to more effectively support children and teens with ADHD.