

# The Ups & Downs of ADD

In her own words, one mom shares her son's struggles with attention.



**It** was brought to our attention that Patrick might have learning difficulties when he took private school tests at the ripe old age of 6. The school was concerned he had severe learning problems, the first anyone said he might be anything but bright and creative. We were alarmed. Independent testing revealed he was average or above average in all areas. We chalked it up to the school not being a good match and went elsewhere.

**First grade was great, but 2<sup>nd</sup> grade** brought reports of inattentiveness, disruptive behavior, not finishing assignments, etc. More testing revealed a mild auditory processing deficit and ADD. He had no problem playing video games or skateboarding for hours, but focusing on assignments was challenging.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, he began public school and started taking Concerta®. It made a big difference in his ability

to focus. Though he worked slower than most kids, he didn't spend three hours a night on homework anymore. Patrick's grades were As and Bs, but how hard he worked for them depended on the meds. With them he worked more quickly and had a better idea about what he was supposed to do. But his personality flat lined—no silly kid stuff, no bubbly laugh. He was a quiet, somber ghost of himself with

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lots of headaches and no appetite. We wondered whether drugging someone to modify their behavior to suit someone else's needs was ethical let alone desirable, but we did it.

Fourth grade was good; 5<sup>th</sup> grade wasn't. There were missing assignments he'd done that would or wouldn't surface in his backpack. We didn't know what was normal for 5<sup>th</sup>-grade boys and what was ADDrelated.

Practically every kid we knew took ADD drugs. I finally contacted BrainRx to see what help was available. We were skeptical whether it was necessary or if it was just a jump-on-the-bandwagon reaction to Patrick's difficulties—but it's been one of the best investments of time and money we could make.

Now, he reads more fluently, breaks down words for spelling and meaning, and remembers instructions better by creating mnemonic devices. He believes in himself and has a positive approach toward difficult things. Speed for attention arrows [a BrainRx procedure; see exercise on the next page] helps him read percussion rhythm patterns in band more easily.

Patrick still has mild ADD, but now his new tools don't involve meds.

The transition to middle school is big, but so far Patrick has As and Bs and seems to be thriving. He has a stronger foundation for whatever comes with the benefit of being himself—a happy, well-adjusted, drug-free kid.

— Anne Holcomb

kid stats



Patrick Holcomb

**12 years old**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Parents**  
David and Anne Holcomb

**BrainRx Training**  
2006

**Stuff**

- Boy Scout
- Enjoys skateboarding, scootering, working on his own Web site
- Plays keyboard & percussion in band
- Pets: one dog (Skipper), two cats (Ash and Sonja), two hermit crabs (Heike and Crystal)



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