

CHILDREN AND ADHD · 6.10

Parenting an ADHD Child When You Have ADHD Yourself

Parenting an ADHD child is hard. Parenting an ADHD child when you have ADHD yourself is its own specific picture, with its own costs and its own advantages.

FOR

Parents who have or suspect ADHD and have an ADHD child

AUDIENCE AGE

ADHD

REVIEWED

17 May 2026

PART OF

The NeuroFX resource library

IN SUMMARY

Parenting an ADHD Child When You Have ADHD Yourself

How common is the dual-ADHD family

- **ADHD is one of the most heritable conditions in psychiatry.** The 2019 Faraone and Larsson review put the heritability around 70 to 80 percent, comparable to traits like height. A parent with ADHD has a substantially elevated chance of having an ADHD child.
- **Around a third to half of children with ADHD have an ADHD parent.** Diagnosed or not. The reverse is also true: parents often realise during the child's assessment that the picture fits them too. The child's diagnosis triggering the parent's is a recognised pattern.
- **Both child and parent have the same neurotype to work with.** This produces specific challenges and specific advantages, not just one or the other.

What is specifically harder, and what is specifically easier

- **Sustaining structure is specifically harder.** Children with ADHD need predictable routines and consistent follow-through. These are precisely the things ADHD parents find hardest to maintain. A parent who forgets the bedtime routine or starts a new system every fortnight is running into the same neurotype that affects their own life.
- **Modelling regulation is specifically harder.** Two dysregulated people in a kitchen is a familiar scene. When the child melts down and the parent is also struggling with their own emotional regulation, the calm response can be hard to produce.
- **Administrative load is specifically harder.** School communications, SEN paperwork, medical appointments, EHCP documentation, prescription management. ADHD parents struggle with administrative work. Outsourcing to external systems (shared calendars, notifications, school WhatsApp groups) is one of the most useful adjustments.
- **Understanding the child's experience is specifically easier.** ADHD parents often understand their ADHD child from the inside. The 'what is wrong with you' frustration that ADHD children sometimes get from non-ADHD parents is less common in dual-ADHD families.
- **Modelling that ADHD is not a catastrophe is powerful.** A parent who has reached adulthood with ADHD, is in work, and has built a family demonstrates more than a non-ADHD parent could say. The lived example does the work.

What helps and how we support both

- **Treat the parent's ADHD where appropriate.** The 2016 Chronis-Tuscano study found that treating mothers' ADHD improved the effectiveness of parenting interventions for their children. The parent's treatment is part of the child's support package, not a separate matter.
- **Allow imperfect consistency.** Standard parenting advice ('be consistent') sets the bar at a level few ADHD parents can sustain. Aim for consistent enough. The child still benefits and the parent does not burn out.
- **NeuroFX offers parallel pathways for parent and child.** Private ADHD assessment for adults and for children aged 6 and upwards. Where the family wants both assessed, both can be done with a shared clinical understanding of the family picture.

WHEN TO SPEAK TO A PROFESSIONAL

Speak to your GP if you suspect ADHD in yourself or your child. NHS routes for both adult and paediatric ADHD assessment exist; Right to Choose in England applies to adult ADHD and in some areas to children's services. Seek urgent help via 111, 999 or A&E for any acute mental health crisis or significant safety concern.

SOURCES

NICE NG87; Faraone & Larsson 2019 (Mol Psychiatry); Chronis-Tuscano et al. 2016 (J Clin Child Adolesc Psychol); Faraone et al. 2021 (Neurosci Biobehav Rev)

NEXT STEPS**Speak to NeuroFX**

Private ADHD and autism assessment for adults and children aged 6 and upwards.
CQC-registered. Bedford Consulting Rooms, 4 Goldington Road, Bedford MK40 3NF.

neurofx.co.uk · info@neurofx.co.uk · 0333 533 3303