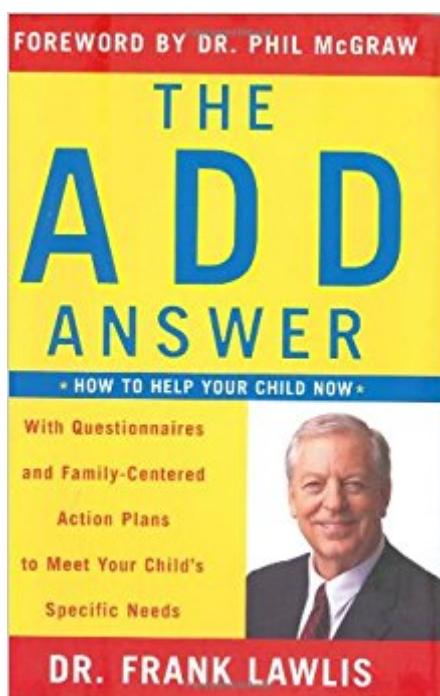


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# The ADD Answer: How To Help Your Child Now--With Questionnaires And Family-Centered Action Plans To Meet Your Child's Specific Needs



## **Synopsis**

Every year, 17 million new cases of attention deficit disorder, or ADD, are diagnosed in children. But medications designed to treat the disorder don't work for many children and often leave families frustrated and searching for more options. In *The ADD Answer*, Dr. Frank Lawlis draws upon his thirty-five years of experience as a clinical and research psychologist to show parents how they can reclaim their central role in healing their children with comprehensive step- by-step advice on dealing with the problems of ADD. His approach blends the latest medical, nutritional, and psychological treatments that can increase brain function with expert insight into the emotional-and spiritual-support kids need. Including assessment tests geared to help parents understand their child's particular needs and practical information on proven treatment options, *The ADD Answer* explores: • The role of nutrition in treating the disorder • The positive effects of counseling and goal setting • Advances in the field of biofeedback • The importance of sleep, and much more An inspiring and essential guide, *The ADD Answer* will help every family facing the challenges of ADD create a more loving, healthy environment necessary for their child to thrive.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

An essential resource for parents...I highly recommend it. -- Larry Dossey, M.D., author of *Healing Words* and *Reinventing Medicine* Bravo! This is THE book on ADD, with comprehensive approaches and clear information and strategies for teachers and parents. -- Don Campbell, author of *The*

## Mozart Effect for Children

Dr. Frank Lawlis is a renowned psychologist, researcher, and counselor with more than thirty-five years' experience working with parents and children with ADD. Dr. Lawlis is the primary contributing psychologist for the Dr. Phil Show and editor at large for Dr. Phil McGraw's newsletter, The Next Level.

I purchased "The ADD Answer" by Frank Lawlis for a friend whose daughter struggles with ADD a/k/a Attention Deficit Disorder. I first became aware of Dr. Lawlis and his book on the Dr. Phil program. He serves on the Board of Directors for Dr. Phil and offers alternative advice for people who are dealing with the disorder. Such advice includes nutrition and alternative therapies to encourage consumers, parents and other caregivers. I think teachers could especially benefit from the information in this book.

The ADD Answer: How to Help Your Child Now (284 pages) is a book written by Dr. Frank Lawlis, a renowned psychologist, researcher, and counselor. The issue of attention deficit disorder (ADD) presents a significant challenge for a number of families in this century. The causes and symptoms are varied, without a definite framework into which all people fit. Parents, schools, physicians and psychologists alike all struggle to figure out what approach is the best for each child's specific needs, and the children often suffer academically and relationally for years. An interesting point regarding this book is that Dr. Lawlis has ADD and he gives some personal insight into what growing up with the disorder is like. With much support, patience and love from his family, he was able to work through his challenges and obtain a Ph.D. in psychology. Dr. Lawlis has labored for thirty-five years with children and families to find what works best for them and their ADD life situations. To begin with, Dr. Lawlis tells parents that the diagnosis of ADD, a neurological disorder in the brain, is not the end for their child. His quote, "It's a disorder, not a disaster" is appropriate because many people feel overwhelmed at first and want to give up. It is important to remember that ADD is not a sign of inferior intelligence, but rather that the child's brain is not performing normally. A child with ADD is functioning with his brain stuck in a lower electromagnetic activity state. Although the child does not recognize it, his actions are intended to stimulate his brain. Dr. Lawlis describes it as the child feeling like he is stuck in mud up to his knees but is expected to run a race. It is no wonder, then, that the child is frustrated, and worse, does not know why. The book gives offers a multidisciplinary approach backed up by scientific and clinical evidence. Dr. Lawlis goes

over why medication is not a long-term answer, and helps parents work out a step-by-step plan of action. His three approaches are: audit, action, and assessment. Each time a new step is introduced, Lawlis has the parents fill out an audit (basically a questionnaire about the child and potential sources of his behavior within that area), then he offers specific strategies to implement for action, and then an assessment follows to see if the plan is indeed working. Family involvement, dedication to the plan, and optimism are crucial so the child does not think his situation is without hope. Family dynamics is one of the first areas covered by Dr. Lawlis because it is the core of the healing process. Parents take a parenting style assessment to find out what type of parent they are, and then Dr. Lawlis gives the strengths and weaknesses of each style so parents can be more aware of the implications for their ADD child. Having a family meeting, including siblings, to affirm all members of the family and agree to work together as a team helps build communication and willingness to help the ADD child. The child's response to his diagnosis is important and he cannot be allowed a victim mentality. His support team (family, teacher, physician and/or psychologist) can help him break out of the restrictions a label can create. Since children have an evolving sense of self, they place a high value on how other people describe them. A diagnosis of ADD can allow the child to use it as an excuse for accepting limits and not working up to his potential. However, the ADD child can learn to retrain his thoughts for positive results and break free from diagnosis limitations. Medications are often a quick fix solution in our instant gratification society. Teachers often first think of medication because they want to simply control the impulsive, distracting behavior in the classroom, rather than working to improve their teaching skills. However, the medications for ADD can be harmful and have many side effects. Some children have died as a result. Therefore, medication should be used judiciously and carefully monitored. Dr. Lawlis points out that "Medication should be used to enhance the child's abilities, not to simply control behavior". The issue of diet is also an important one when working to help the ADD child. There are a number of environmental triggers, according to Dr. Lawlis. Sugar is known to cause inflammation in both the brain and body. Children in America today eat too much sugar and not enough foods with the healthy properties that their bodies need to perform suitably. Food and water can have abnormally high levels of toxins, including heavy metals, pesticides and synthetic hormones. A diet adjustment can and often does work. Eating healthier foods can immediately reduce ADD symptoms. Studies have shown a 50 to 70 percent resolution of hyperactive behavior and increased concentration with changes in diet. Dr. Lawlis includes a sample nutrition plan but cautions that for it to be effective, the entire family needs to go on it, so the child is not stressed by the family eating things he is not allowed. Certain vitamins such as B6, B12, C, and the mineral zinc all play an important role in

healing the ADD child's body and brain. Other physical needs are discussed as well. Exercise is critical to release toxins and help the child stimulate his brain so he can concentrate afterward. Dr. Lawlis also has a chapter dedicated to sleep, entitled *Healing Sleep*. Both concentration and one's mood stability are directly related to the quality and quantity of sleep he gets. Sleep disturbances are common among ADD children. Bed-wetting (a problem for more than a third of ADD children), breathing problems, and anxiety are all hindrances to getting a good night's sleep. "Brain windmilling", or racing thoughts when the child tries to go to sleep is the main complaint for ADD. Sleep is critical for physical and psychological restoration. Dr. Lawlis offers a number of relaxation methods, including rhythmic sound, biofeedback, breathing patterns, and supplements. Spiritual healing is also addressed in Dr. Lawlis' book. Many ADD patients suffer from a low self-esteem; some feel worthless. This underscores their need to feel they are part of something bigger than themselves, a higher power, which can help give them perspective and a sense of security. ADD children can be frightened by feeling as if they are alone in the world with this problem. They need to feel someone or something else is in control, and parents can help their children recognize the power of God in their lives, asking for wisdom and healing. Sometimes family conflicts contribute to ADD symptoms and emotional problems. Professional counseling can help identify the conflict issue, help family members acknowledge their role in the dysfunction, move from the past toward forgiveness, and then come to an agreement of how to go forward. The audit for defining family roles in this chapter can help each person see how he or she functions within the family unit and begin a healthy problem-solving process. Lastly, the book ends with some educational strategies. Because people with ADD spend a significant portion of their lives in school, they need to understand how they can learn within the confines of the educational system. They need patient and willing teachers to come alongside them and be willing to accept their differences and work with them. Lawlis identifies five ways to overcome neurological gaps that ADD children have which interfere with cognitive processes of memory, concentration, and attention span. One is ineffective motor output, which keeps the ADD child from being able to write well. The child is able to do it, but the teacher needs to make allowances for his slower neurological processes and let the assignment be an exercise in pride instead of a qualitative one (i.e., writing something many times as practice). The second gap is insufficient memory. The symptoms of ADD tend to limit oxygen to the brain, and memory is influenced by the amount of oxygen in the bloodstream. A teacher can provide a more relaxed learning environment, helping the child breathe more deeply, allowing more oxygen to the brain. A third issue for an ADD child and learning is weak production control. This is "how you show what you know". The ADD student often knows the answer but is not able to express himself

effectively. Showing him how to work utilizing a step-by-step process enables him to learn to think methodically. Another cognitive gap is low mental energy, the timing of which varies in ADD children; some are morning learners, some do better in the afternoon. Believe it or not, both chewing gum and listening to music are two tools that the ADD student can use to focus. Another is being able to get up and move about the classroom. When teachers allow this freedom, they have seen ADD kids learn more effectively. Lastly, language dysfunction is a problem; the ADD child struggles with low vocabulary. This can lead to frustration and more undesired behavior, but with strategies to improve expressing himself, the ADD child is much more empowered in a learning environment and in life. Frank Lawlis' book is a forthright approach covering medical, nutritional, emotional, and psychological treatments for the problem of ADD. Dr. Lawlis gives numerous examples from his practice and scientific evidence to help parents discern which treatment path may work best for their child to improve his functioning. He notes that neuroplasticity, the ability of the brain to "create new avenues in the nervous system for tasks, both cognitively and physically" gives hope for the ADD child. With support from his teachers, parents, and doctors, an ADD child can learn to retrain his brain and accept his differences without feeling stigmatized. Parents reading this book will come away with the confidence that ADD in their child can be managed and overcome.

I read this and enjoyed as I seriously think my DH has it and it had a lot of good information. But the title is more accurate, as this is meant more for those who have children.

Good read for any teachers or parents of children with ADD or ADHD.

Wish it was an audiobook. You have a difficult child, here sit and read this lengthy book....

Dr. Lawliss notes in "The ADD Answer" that we should not put teachers, doctors, or Dr. Lawliss himself above our parental observations and intuition. There are some unproven methods in this book, but there is also a ton of insight on family dynamics and treating the environment of the child. Learn from this book and then you decide how or if to apply the methods. I have been putting teachers on a pedestal, believing they know more about child behavior. No more of this - they know more about children in general, but I know my own child best, and being that I am willing to honest with myself and my child I can effectively use what is pertinent to our situation from this book.

I have a 14 yo son with ADHD and I've read too many books on the subject. I took my son off all meds a year ago because the cure was becoming worse than the diagnosis and realized that the meds were masking his emotional problems even though he went to Psychiatrists and Psychologists, Pediatric Neurological Behavioralists-the list seemed eternal. One thing I learned very quickly is that the Dr.s never really understood. They knew-they saw-they treated, but that is not living with it. Dr. Lawlis brings in his own experience with disabilities and gives a compassionate understanding to the frustration parents and children themselves feel, and offers insight and solutions. As for the "Snake Oil" comment, again, it's easy for Dr.s to poopoo when you tell them that you think sugar adversely effects their behavior, or that you see a change after you give them dyed foods, but as a parent, you know your child and know the subtleties to their character that back up your opinions. Even if it isn't scientifically proven, is there anything to be hurt by trying to take additives out of their diet? Is there anything wrong with trying everything you can for the sake of helping your child? For the pharmaceutical companies there is. For a few dollars I think any added perspective on the situation is worthwhile. You really have nothing to loose in reading it, and everything to gain. The book costs no more than a copay of Adderall/Ritalin/Depakote/ad nauseum...

Not sure she hasn't read it yet but she didn't complain either.

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