

# One Step at a Time

ADHD Next Steps for Parents and Teens

## PARENT WORKBOOK

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[www.adhdnextsteps.co.uk](http://www.adhdnextsteps.co.uk)

### How to Use This Workbook

This workbook is designed to accompany your journey through "One Step at a Time." Each exercise corresponds to chapters in the book and will help you develop your own personalised roadmap for supporting your ADHD teen.

- **Take your time** - There's no rush to complete all exercises at once
- **Be honest** - Your authentic responses will create the most useful roadmap
- **Return and revise** - Your answers may evolve as you implement strategies
- **Use the progress trackers** - Copy the tracking pages at the back to use repeatedly
- **Make it yours** - Add notes, insights, and reflections in the margins

**Remember:** You are the captain of this ship, and every step counts. Progress over perfection, always.

# Chapter 1: Finding Your Bearings After Diagnosis

## ADHD Core Areas Assessment

*ADHD affects different people in different ways. Understanding which areas are most critical for your teen helps you prioritise your support and advocacy efforts. This assessment helps you focus on what matters most for your specific child.*

**Which are the most critical areas for your teen and understanding them?**

- Attention - staying focused, especially when things are boring or unimportant
- Impulsivity - acting or speaking without thinking
- Hyperactivity - being constantly on the go or restless
- Executive functioning - manager skills - planning, organising and remembering
- Emotion Regulation - strong feelings can come on fast and feel overwhelming
- Hyperfocus - getting absorbed in an activity they enjoy and finding it hard to switch to anything else

## Wider Neurodivergence Consideration

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*About 50% of young people with ADHD have other neurodivergent traits. Recognising these helps you understand the full picture of your teen's needs and ensures your roadmap takes into account their complete neurological profile, not just the ADHD aspects.*

**Other neurodivergence that I know or need to find out more about for my teen:**

- Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia)

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- Autism Spectrum Conditions

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- Sensory processing differences

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- Tourette's Syndrome

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- OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder)

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## Your Parental Toolkit

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*You are the most important part of your teen's support system. Your mindset, emotional regulation, and approach to parenting will directly impact how your teen experiences their ADHD. This assessment helps you identify your strengths and areas for growth.*

### **My key areas for developing my emotional regulation tools:**

- Acceptance - working with what is, not fighting against reality
- Compassion - being kind to myself and my teen when things go wrong
- Empathy - understanding what's underneath my teen's behaviour
- Regulation - staying calm so I can co-regulate with my teen

## Foundation Building Blocks

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*Before any ADHD strategy will work effectively, certain foundations need to be solid. These are the building blocks that make everything else possible. Tick the areas you need to focus on to ensure your teen has the best platform for success.*

### Building blocks I need to attend to with my teen for ongoing success:

- Sleep - quality, quantity, and consistency
- Routines - predictable structures that support executive functioning
- Diet - brain-supporting nutrition and stable blood sugar
- Exercise - movement that supports neurotransmitter function
- Organisation - systems and structures that work for ADHD brains

## Your Parenting North Star

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*When things get challenging (and they will), you need something to guide you back to what matters most. This becomes your parenting manifesto - the reminder of how you want to show up for your teen that you can return to in difficult moments.*

**What do you want to keep at the forefront of your mind in your onward journey?**

*What do you need to stick on your fridge or have as a phone reminder when you start the day?*

## Practical Strategy Priority

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*The book covers many different practical areas where ADHD impacts daily life. Rather than trying to tackle everything at once, focus on the 2-3 areas that are causing the most stress or difficulty for your family right now. Success in these areas will build confidence and momentum.*

**Which 2 or 3 areas are important right now and where you might get your teen on board?**

*Perhaps something that upsets them they can't do, or makes them feel angry that it happens:*

- Homework - getting started and staying focused

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- Focus and attention - managing distractions and maintaining concentration

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- Transitions - moving between activities without meltdowns

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- Morning Routine - getting ready and out the door calmly

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- Emotional Regulation - managing big feelings and meltdowns

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- Motivation - finding the energy and drive to start tasks

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- Screen time and tech - healthy boundaries without battles

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- Chores and growing independence - building life skills

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## School Advocacy Priorities

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*School takes up a significant portion of your teen's life, and getting the right support there is crucial for their wellbeing and academic progress. This exercise helps you identify what you need to focus on when working with your teen's school.*

**What do you need to keep your eye on, or progress, to support your teen through the education system?**

## Your First Next Step

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*After all this reflection and planning, it's time to commit to action. Remember: one step at a time. You don't need to change everything at once. Pick one thing to focus on first - the thing that feels most important or most achievable right now.*

**Amongst all these things I have read about and pondered, this is what I want to focus on first:**

**This is how I am going to start (where, when, by doing what?):**

## Commitment to Progress

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*Research shows that people who check in regularly with their progress are much more likely to achieve their goals. This isn't about perfection or rigid schedules - it's about maintaining momentum and being kind to yourself about the inevitable ups and downs of change.*

**How will I commit to briefly checking in with myself and monitoring the progress I make?**

- Set an alarm or calendar reminder  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Talk to a partner or friend each week  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Fill out a progress record (see tracking pages)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Other idea:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Make it specific, make it clear:**

## PROGRESS TRACKING PAGES

Copy these pages to use weekly as you implement your roadmap

***Instructions:** These pages are designed to be photocopied so you can use them repeatedly. Complete one each week as you work on your chosen strategies and goals.*

# Weekly Progress Tracker

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Week beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>This Week's Intention</b>	What's the one key thing I want to try and focus on?
<b>Action Steps</b>	What small steps will help me to do this?
<b>How Did It Go?</b>	What worked well?
	What was hard?
<b>Noticing My Teen</b>	What do I want to adjust?
	Spot a moment this week where I saw them try, succeed or surprise me:
<b>Noticing Myself</b>	One thing I handled better than before:
	One thing I'd like to keep working on:
<b>Next Step</b>	What will I focus on next week?

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## Remember: One Step at a Time

This workbook represents your journey from overwhelm to confidence, from confusion to clarity. You've created a personalised roadmap that acknowledges your teen's unique brain and your family's specific needs.

### Key reminders as you move forward:

- Progress isn't linear - expect ups and downs
- Your mindset matters as much as any strategy
- Connection comes before correction, always
- You are the calm in the storm - regulate yourself first
- Celebrate small wins and notice effort over outcomes
- When in doubt, return to collaboration and curiosity

You don't have to see the whole staircase - just take the first step. You've got this.

For additional resources, tips, and support:

[www.adhdnextsteps.co.uk](http://www.adhdnextsteps.co.uk)

*"Every step counts. You don't have to do this alone."*

*- Dr Pippa Moran*

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## Understanding Your Teen's Iceberg

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*This foundational exercise helps you shift from focusing only on visible behaviours to understanding what's happening beneath the surface. In ADHD, behaviours are often the tip of the iceberg - what we can see. But underneath are the real drivers: emotional overwhelm, executive functioning struggles, sensory issues, or unmet needs.*

*Understanding your teen's whole iceberg is essential for knowing how to help them effectively.*

**What do you see above the surface of your child's iceberg (behaviours)?**

**What's underneath the surface (things you think are going on)?**

## Choosing Your Parenting Values

*Your mindset as a parent will directly influence how your teen experiences their ADHD. If you feel hopeful and curious, they're likely to feel the same about themselves. This exercise helps you identify the emotional tone you want to bring to your parenting journey - your north star when things get challenging.*

Pick 3-4 values that feel most important to you as you parent your ADHD teen. Circle or tick those that resonate:

- Being emotionally available
- Staying connected, even during conflict
- Showing unconditional love
- Listening with curiosity
- Responding with empathy rather than frustration
- Accepting my child for who they are, not just what they do
- Being kind to myself when things go wrong
- Teaching rather than punishing
- Supporting independence gradually and respectfully

**My top 3-4 parenting values to guide my destination:**

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapter 2: What ADHD Really Means for Your Teen

### Identifying Your Teen's Core Challenges

*ADHD presents differently in every young person. While the diagnostic criteria focus on attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, the real-world impact includes executive functioning, emotional regulation, and sensory processing. This exercise helps you pinpoint your teen's specific challenge areas so you can target your support most effectively.*

**Which 3 or 4 different symptoms across ADHD feel most like they get in the way for your child?**

*Think about what gets them in trouble the most, causes arguments at home, or results in them falling out with friends.*

1

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2

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3

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4

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## Chapter 3: You Are the Calm in the Storm

## Your Mindset Anchors

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*When parenting gets overwhelming, you need clear anchor points to return to - reminders of what matters most and how you want to show up. These aren't just nice ideas; they're practical tools for staying regulated and responsive rather than reactive. Your mindset directly impacts your teen's experience of their ADHD.*

**What are the most important things to me about my mindset as a parent in this moment, that I want to remember?**

1

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2

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3

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## Your Regulation Toolkit

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*You can't regulate your teen if you're not regulated yourself. ADHD parenting is demanding, and you need reliable ways to return to calm. This exercise helps you identify what already works for you and what new strategies you want to try. Think of this as your emergency toolkit for challenging moments.*

**What are your 'go to' ways to regulate already?**

**What might you add that you haven't done in a while? Is there anything you used to enjoy that has fallen off the radar?**

**Is there anything new from the book that you would like to try?**

## Your Post-Conflict Recovery Plan

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*Even with the best intentions, difficult moments happen in ADHD families. What matters most is how you repair and reconnect afterwards. Having a clear plan removes the guesswork from these tender moments and helps rebuild trust and connection with your teen.*

### What will I say or do after a hard moment to reconnect with my teen?

*Create a simple 3-step ritual that will work for you and remind you of the important parts:*

1

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2

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3

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## Managing Overwhelm

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*ADHD parenting can push you beyond your capacity. Recognising when you're reaching your limits and having a plan to step back isn't giving up - it's essential self-preservation. A burnt-out parent cannot be the calm, confident captain their teen needs.*

**What aspects of life are feeling overwhelming right now?**

**What can I say no to for the next few days or weeks?**

**What can I delegate to others to free up space for myself?**

## Chapter 4: The Foundations

### Foundation Priorities Assessment

*Before any ADHD strategy will work effectively, certain basic needs must be met. Think of these as the foundation of a house - without solid groundwork, everything else becomes unstable. This exercise helps you identify which foundational areas need attention first in your family.*

**What are your main priorities for your teen's core needs before you can move on?**

*Choose three things you will need to prioritise in order for other strategies to work:*

1

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2

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3

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**From these, which are you going to try first - something you might have a 'way in' with your teenager to help them find a solution?**

## Exercise and Movement Planning

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*Exercise is particularly crucial for ADHD brains as it boosts the neurotransmitters (dopamine, norepinephrine) that support attention and mood regulation. It also improves sleep quality and provides a healthy outlet for hyperactivity. The key is finding movement your teen actually enjoys.*

**What are they interested in?**

**What hurdles are there to them doing a weekly class/club/activity?**

**Do they want to do it together with you or someone else? Can they join with a friend, or classmate?**

**Chapter 5: Creating a Plan That Actually Works**

## SMART Goal Setting

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*ADHD brains respond best to goals that are specific, achievable, and immediately relevant. Vague intentions like "be better at homework" set everyone up for failure. SMART goals create clear targets and reduce the overwhelm that derails so many good intentions. This is about progress, not perfection.*

**What are the problems that your young person comes up against most, that you could get their sign up to work on?**

*Make them SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely:*

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2

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3

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## Mindset Check-In

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*Your mindset going into strategy implementation matters enormously. If you're trying too many things at once, forgetting to collaborate, or missing the dopamine piece, even the best strategies will fail. This reflection helps you prepare mentally for success.*

**What are the important issues around mindset for you here?**

*Examples: "I know I will try too many things at once" or "I need to work harder to make it collaborative", or "I need remember my teen will need dopamine to make this work!"*

1

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2

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3

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## Commitment to Consistency

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*The most brilliant strategy in the world won't work without consistent follow-through. ADHD families especially need predictable routines and regular check-ins to build new habits. This exercise helps you commit to the ongoing work of change rather than hoping for quick fixes.*

**How can you hold yourself accountable to checking in with progress?**

**I am going to make this consistent by:**

## Chapter 6: Practical Tools for Everyday ADHD Parenting

### Strategy Implementation Plan

*With so many potential strategies available, it's tempting to try everything at once. But ADHD brains (both parent and teen) work best with focused, collaborative efforts. This exercise helps you choose your starting point wisely and set yourself up for success.*

From all these strategies, what do you want to focus on first?

- 1 Have I got my young person's sign up? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 What sort of time will I talk to them about this? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 What might I say? (Think collaboration, shared problem solving) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 What options could I offer as a dopamine hit for them to give this a go? \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 7: Making School Work

## School Success Definition

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*Academic achievement isn't everything, especially for neurodivergent young people navigating systems not designed for their brains. Defining what success actually looks like for your teen - beyond test scores - helps you advocate more effectively and celebrate meaningful progress.*

**What does success look like for my teen this term; emotionally, socially, and academically?**

*List 3-5 signs of success (beyond test results):*

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5

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## Chapter 8: Keeping Yourself Afloat

## Parenting From Your Values

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*When parenting gets challenging, returning to your core values helps you respond rather than react. This isn't about being perfect - it's about being intentional. Your values serve as your North Star when everything else feels chaotic or overwhelming.*

**When things are hard, I want to parent from a place of:**

*(e.g., compassion, patience, honesty)*

**What helps me stay there?**

*(e.g. remembering that I need to work with the brain, remembering connection is the key, remembering to be kind to myself)*

1

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2

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3

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## Chapter 10: Creating Your Own Roadmap

### Understanding Your Teen's Whole Picture

*After reading through the entire book, you now have a much deeper understanding of what's happening for your teen beneath the surface. This exercise helps you synthesise everything you've learned into a comprehensive picture that will guide your ongoing support.*

**What is underneath my teenager's iceberg that is impacting on the behaviour I see on the surface?**

1

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2

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3

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