

# 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

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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

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

**Practically every kid we knew took ADD drugs. I finally contacted the center to see what help was available.**

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 the center 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.

kid stats



Patrick Holcomb

**12 years old**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

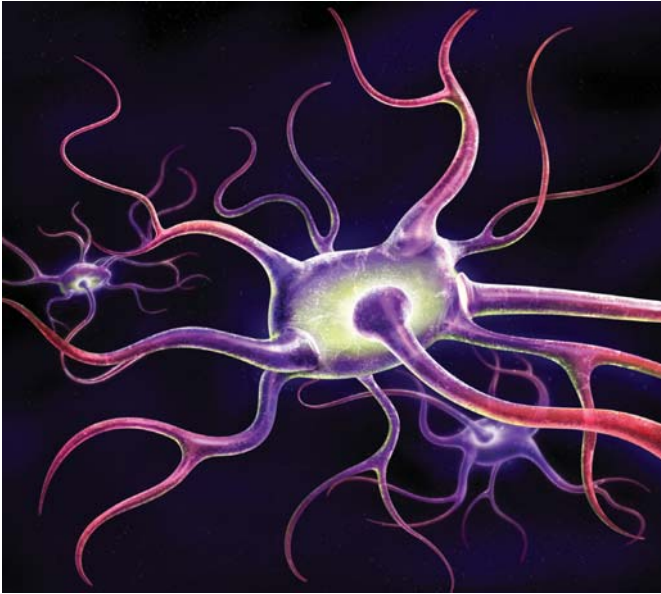
**Parents**  
David and Anne Holcomb

**Brain 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)



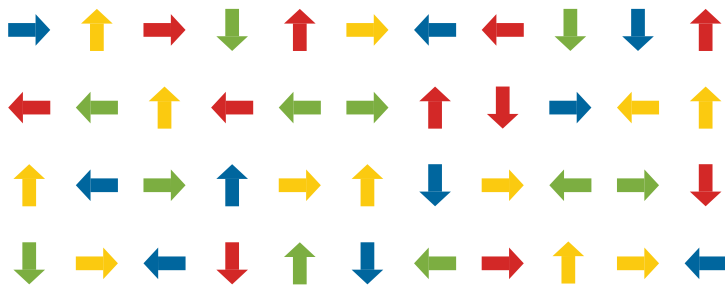


**Train YOUR BRAIN.** Imagine getting an edge in academics or at your job by loading your brain up with more synapses, the gaps between brain cells that carry information (*artist's rendering to the left*). More connections means more processing power, translating into faster thinking and learning. Enhancing your brain is possible through new, repetitive, high-intensity cognitive training.

## Try this Exercise

Feel the power of training your brain! Find out what it's like to do training with IQRx. Follow the directions below as a fun way to improve your attention skills, enhance working memory, and build visual manipulation skills. Each level increases the difficulty by adding a second mental challenge. Don't worry...your brain can adapt and grow! Try it alone or try it with your child.

Many people can actually FEEL THEIR BRAIN WORKING. That's because when done with intensity and frequency, this exercise will actually map new neural pathways in your brain!



### DIRECTIONS

From the top row, left to right, call out the color of each of the arrows without a mistake. Simple.

Now call out the direction of each arrow. Do it without error in 40 seconds. Keep practicing until you can do it in only 20 seconds. Next, call out the direction of the arrows as if they were turned a quarter-turn clockwise. Get that time down to 20 seconds without error.

#### Now comes the fun...

Call out the color of the UP and DOWN arrows, and call out the direction of the LEFT and RIGHT arrows (this requires divided attention). Once mastered, increase the difficulty by saying red for yellow and blue for green. Try substituting different colors. Keep track of your time and stay with it until each exercise flows quickly and smoothly.

Last, call out the direction of the arrow as if red and green arrows were turned a ¼-turn clockwise and yellow and blue were turned ¼-turn counterclockwise. You will find yourself not only doing the familiar ones easier, but mastering each new variation faster as well. This is because your brain is growing new connections to handle the challenges!

