

Why Do Kids With ADHD Need So Many Reminders?

Practical guidance for understanding what may be happening underneath behavior and helping families move forward.

“Shoes.” “Backpack.” “Lunch.” “Did you brush your teeth?” “Homework.” “Do not forget your water bottle.”

Parents can feel like human reminder apps. Eventually everybody gets frustrated. ADHD can affect the executive-function processes that help a child hold information in mind and act on it.

Working Memory Matters

Working memory helps us hold information in mind long enough to use it. A child may genuinely hear, “Go upstairs, get your shoes, bring down your backpack, and grab your jacket,” then arrive upstairs and remember only, “I was supposed to come up here for something.”

Move Reminders Outside the Parent

The long-term goal should not be for the parent to become better at reminding. It should be for the family to develop systems that require fewer reminders.

Visual morning checklists, backpack stations, launch pads near the door, alarms, whiteboards, routine cards, calendars, and checklists can turn the environment into part of the child’s executive-function support system.

Gradually Transfer Responsibility

A useful progression is: Parent tells → Parent asks → Child checks system → Child initiates.

Independence usually develops through scaffolding, not through suddenly removing support.

ETHOS SHORELINE REFLECTION

Do not just remind the child. Build a system that remembers for the child.

Related Ethos Shoreline pathway: Chaos to Consistency™

A Note for Parents

Behavior makes more sense when we understand what is happening underneath it. Ethos Shoreline resources are designed to help families build practical structure while protecting connection, responsibility, and belonging.

Educational Disclaimer: This resource is for general educational purposes and is not a substitute for individualized mental-health, medical, educational, or emergency services. Consider consulting an appropriately qualified professional when concerns are persistent, worsening, affecting daily functioning, or creating safety concerns.

