ADHD & Mental Health Checklist
----------------------------------for Parents and Educators
From Book Overcoming ADHD Without Medication

Art
If a child is visually oriented, what about enrolling your children in an art program or private lessons?
Have you looked into professional art therapy?
Do you have art books available at home for your child so he or she might develop their interest in art?
Can you spend some time teaching your children to enjoy art?

Diet
Does my child eat a good breakfast every day?
If my child has breakfast at school, do I know that he or she actually eats breakfast daily? What is he or she eating for breakfast at home or at school?
Can improvements be made in diet and nutrition? Does my child consume a lot of sugar in different forms?
Does my child consume caffeine through soda or coffee/tea?

Green Therapy & Exercise
Have I included “green time” in my child's daily or weekly schedule? Parks, walking, hiking?
Does my child get exercise at least several times a week, at other times besides at school?

Environmental Contaminants
Is lead poisoning a possibility? Other environmental contaminants?
Can I contact the local lead poisoning agency for testing if my home or apartment might be susceptible to lead or other environmental contamination?
Is my child very sensitive to additives in food?
If so, can adjustments be made in a balanced way for a more healthful diet?
Might my child or teen be experimenting with drugs or alcohol?
Education
Am I satisfied that my child is receiving the individualized attention he needs within the school system?

Do I take an active interest in his or her school work, sitting down and helping with homework after school?

Do I communicate regularly with his or her teachers?

Does the school have an after-school program to help with homework or reading?

Is there a program for free tutoring or mentoring within the school or school district?

Does the local or county library have any special programs in tutoring or reading that can be of help?

Are there provisions within the school system for a personal assistant for my child?

Have you considered, or are you in a position to volunteer in the school that your child attends?

Is there a special summer program that my child could benefit from?

Are there academies within the school district where there may be fewer children in the classroom, or where the atmosphere might better facilitate my child's special needs?

Would simply changing classrooms help my child to concentrate better in school?¹

Social, educational, spiritual and support
Have I made any efforts for him or her for wholesome association with other children in the community, congregation, or school, or is he or she largely isolated?

Have I looked into music lessons for my child after school or on the weekends?

Have I looked into mentoring programs, especially if the child's father is absent? Some cities (such as Newark, NJ) have free mentoring programs for qualifying teens or older children.

¹ Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, April, 2012.
How much time do I spend with my child giving him/her undivided attention?

If my child is a pre-teenager, do I spend time every day or night reading with him or her?

If the child has supportive grandparents, does he or she spend time with them regularly?

Have I instilled in my child a value system, and am I providing spiritual training? Would a regular Bible study give a child needed support, or would some other form of mentoring?

What about seeking the assistance of a professional coach?
If my child needs the help of a psychologist or therapist, do I realize that medicine is an option, not a requirement?

**Sexuality**
In the case of a teenager or even some pre-teens, is he or she sexually active?

Might your teenager (or child) be dabbling in, or be exposed to, pornography on the Internet, television, with friends or elsewhere?  

Do you have parental control filtering software installed on your computer and/or on your child's cellphone, if the cellphone has access to the Internet?

**Discipline**
Am I consistent? Do I give discipline with firm but reasonable limits? Is the discipline administered with love?

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2 Exposure to pornography can make it difficult for children to concentrate in school and can contribute to symptoms related to some mental health difficulties. Pornography exposure can be an issue for young children, as well as for teens.

3 You can purchase software for parental internet control that can be installed on cell phones. Cell phones that have access to the Internet are a common mode of downloading and transmitting pornographic images for some children and teens.
Music
What music does my children or teens listen to? Is it intense or soft? How much time does he or she spend listening to music daily or weekly?

Electronics
How many hours of television does my child watch every day?
How many hours of video games does my child play daily?
How many hours of movies does my child view each week? What types of movies does he or she view? Are they calm, or are they aggressive or violent?

Is my child regularly being exposed to violence in the media? Cartoon violence? Action violence? Video game violence? Has he developed a fondness for fantasy creatures, or violent fantasies? (Armstrong, T., 1997)⁴

How many hours a day does my child spend on online social networking communities such as Facebook, and surfing the Internet?

Is he or she largely isolated from real social contacts after school? What adjustments can be made?

If a child stays late in school daily, how is he using his time there? How does he use the computer system at school after hours?

Emotional and Support
If a child has deep-rooted emotional wounds from the present or past, has he or she opened up and talked to you or to a counselor?

Is there professional support for talk therapy available in school?⁵
Would you or your family benefit from family therapy, family counseling, or a support group?

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⁵ Talk therapy, or Interpersonal Therapy, is sometimes especially helpful for children and teens.