



ADD/ADHD

ADHD and Oversharing: What You Need to Know

By [Alexis Clark, MA, MS](#)

At a Glance

- Some kids with ADHD have a problem with oversharing information that should be kept private.
- They may not realize that oversharing can upset people.
- You can help your child understand what's OK to share, and what's not.

At some point, most kids will say something they really shouldn't be sharing with others. Some people call this *oversharing*. It might be embarrassing bathroom talk or something private about their sibling or parent. But if your child with [ADHD](#) often overshares, you might wonder if there's a connection between the two.

There are a number of reasons why many kids with ADHD overshare. It's usually not on purpose, though. They may not even realize they're giving too much information or saying the wrong thing.

Here's what you need to know about ADHD and oversharing.

What Is Oversharing?

Oversharing is saying something personal or inappropriate in the wrong setting or to the wrong person. But it's not always easy to tell when your child is actually doing that.

You might think your child gives up way too much information. But younger people tend to share things more freely than adults do. Plus, today's idea of too much information may be different than it was when you were growing up.

A good way to know if your child is oversharing is to find out *how* the information is being used. If your child is saying things that embarrass someone or hurt their feelings, that's probably oversharing. Another way to tell is if kids can use the information to bully or harass your child.

This includes sharing things like family difficulties, health issues or poor grades. It can also mean showing unflattering or risky photos.

Why Kids With ADHD Might Overshare

Kids with ADHD overshare for many reasons. Some are related to [challenges with executive function](#), a set of skills some people refer to as the *CEO of the brain*. Weaknesses in these skills can make it harder for kids to “filter” what they're saying. Here's an example:

You've invited your extended family over for dinner. During the meal, you ask if they'd like to get together for dinner once a month, and your child blurts out, “But Mom! Dad says he doesn't want to do that. He thinks we already see each other too much.”

You may feel embarrassed or angry in the moment. But chances are, poor executive function kept your child from thinking before speaking.

Here are some executive functioning skills your child might struggle with:

- **Impulse control.** Kids may blurt things out without thinking about the consequences.
- **Self-regulation.** Kids may say things in the heat of the moment and out of emotion.
- **Planning.** Kids may not be able to think ahead and plan out how to say what they really want to say.
- **Flexible thinking.** Kids may not be able to see things more than one way or understand how others see things.
- **Working memory.** Kids may not be able to hold on to information and follow the flow of conversation.

Another reason kids with ADHD might overshare is trouble with social skills. It's common for kids with ADHD to [misread social situations](#) and social cues. They might not recognize when it's not a good time or place to say something, or not the right person to say it to. Kids may also not pick up on the reactions of other people.

Let's say your child has an assigned seat next to another student. Since the two of them have worked on a few projects together, your child thinks they're friends and talks about failing the last science test. The next day, some students whisper “dummy” when your child walks by.

In this scenario, your child was trying to bond with someone by revealing something sensitive. But oversharing with the wrong person can sometimes lead to [bullying](#).

Some kids with ADHD also overshare because they have low self-esteem. They can have difficulties in school and have trouble keeping friendships. They might [try to be the class clown](#) and share something embarrassing to get attention and make kids laugh, even at their own expense.

Oversharing on Social Media

Social media can be great for some kids who struggle socially. But it can be risky for kids who overshare. The information they give out reaches a much wider audience, including people who might use it in negative ways.

It's important to know what your child is posting online. A good way to stay on top of this is to make sure you're on the same social media sites. (Kids have to be 13 or older to open an account on most social media sites.) Set a rule that your child has to "friend" you and give you access to posts to set up an account.

Let's say your teen posts an inappropriate picture of some friends on Instagram. The friends see it and get really mad, but your child thought the photo was funny. Some kids who overshare don't realize they've done something wrong. And they don't understand the impact of posting things the entire world can see.

If you're "there," you can see what your child posts. Then you can find a good time to talk to your child about posts that reveal too much or that might hurt others. And if a post is unsafe or likely to have negative consequences, you can have your child take it down. At the same time, you can explain why the post is a problem.

Watch an expert explain [how to know if your child is oversharing on social media](#).

Ways You Can Help

When kids overshare, they usually don't think about how their actions might make someone feel. (Although sometimes kids do it deliberately to get back at someone.) There are things you can do to help your child understand the consequences of oversharing.

Be a role model: Try to be careful about what you share with others, including what you share with your child. Kids look to parents as models of how to behave.

Encourage empathy: When kids put themselves in someone else's shoes, it can help them understand consequences better. Discuss how you might feel if someone posted an unflattering photo online or shared something private about you. Tell your child to do the same. Learn more about [how to teach empathy to your child](#).

Discuss what's OK to share: Talk about what information is safe to post and what isn't. Be clear: No talking about family matters, health issues, sexual issues, or other people's personal business. (However, stress that it's important to tell a trusted adult about abuse or other family issues.)

Talk about consequences: Kids need to know what's at stake when they overshare. They can lose friends and cause people to feel embarrassed. Make sure your child understands that online posts can last forever.

It's possible that your child will share something very personal or sensitive that you find upsetting. No matter what it is, however, try to stay calm when you talk about it.

Kids with ADHD [often feel great remorse](#) when they realize they've done something wrong or hurt others. And that can keep them from hearing your message and learning to think through what they share with others.

ADHD can impact kids' behavior in many ways. Learn why some kids with ADHD [often take risks](#). Discover the connection between [ADHD and frequent lying](#). And understand why [controlling anger can be so hard](#) for some kids with ADHD.

Key Takeaways

- Kids with ADHD don't always think about the consequences of oversharing.
- They might miss social cues and share information with the wrong person.
- Help your child understand the consequences of oversharing, and talk about what's OK to share.

About the Author

Alexis Clark, MA, MS is a freelance editor for Understood and an adjunct professor at Columbia Journalism School.

Reviewed by

Stephanie Moulton Sarkis, PhD is an ADHD/ASD expert and a best-selling author.