



Ask the Expert



**National
Resource
Center
on ADHD**
A Program of CHADD

Webcast Series

**Presented by the
National Resource Center on ADHD**



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www.Help4ADHD.org
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Help4ADHD@CHADD.org

Ask the Expert

Top Tips for Combating Stigma and Addressing Myths about ADHD



Ruth Hughes, PhD

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Top Tips for Combating Stigma and Addressing Myths about ADHD



Ruth Hughes, PhD
Former CEO of CHADD

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Everyone with ADHD has Experienced Stigma

- *“If you would just try.”*
- *“You are a failure and a screw up.”*
- *“Just pay attention!”*
- *“You don’t really want to give your child those drugs, do you?”*
- *If you were a better parent, she would be better behaved.”*
- *“ADHD is just an excuse for bad behavior and laziness.”*

What is Stigma?

- A set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something. It involves prejudice and discrimination.

Miriam Webster

Dictionary

Myths

- ***ADHD is not a real*** medical condition. It is caused by bad parenting and bad children.
- ***Only children have ADHD*** and they'll out-grow it anyway.
- ***ADHD is over-diagnosed*** and children are over-prescribed for it

Myths

- ***ADHD only affects boys and not girls***
- ***ADHD is caused by too much TV*** in early childhood or by too many electronic media devices.
- ***Certain foods cause ADHD*** - like sugar and gluten— cut out the foods and ADHD goes away

Myths

- ***ADHD is just an excuse*** for an adult to be lazy or not to try as hard
- ***A good dayplanner or calendar*** is all an adult needs to address ADHD symptoms
- ***ADHD is only a problem for the individual***; his spouse, family and colleagues aren't affected by it



Coping Mechanisms: Normalization

ADHD is a gift.



Coping Mechanisms: Medicalization

**ADHD is a serious
disorder needing
medical treatment.**



How Do We Change Public and Self Perception?

Advocacy

Education

Personal Contact

Advocacy: Fighting Discrimination

- Identification of discriminatory practices
 - School
 - School refuses to evaluate child for ADHD
 - 504 or IDEA plans not implemented
 - Discipline practices do not address ADHD
 - Work
 - Decision to Disclose
 - Refusal of accommodations
 - Insurance
 - ADHD treatment and/or medication not covered
 - Higher copays for mental disorders

Advocacy: Fighting Discrimination

- Join with others who share your concerns.
- Meet with people who can make a difference
- Connect with press and share your stories
- Advocate for change

Education: Raise Awareness

- ADHD is real
- ADHD is highly treatable
- With treatment and support, people with ADHD can be highly successful.
- Share personal stories
- If you think you or a family member has ADHD, seek an evaluation with a physician or specialist who has training and experience in the treatment of ADHD.

Personal Contact

- The most effective intervention is to know someone who is comfortable with who they are and who has the disorder.

“Hey – I have ADHD. It’s a genetic disorder that runs in my family and is highly treatable. With treatment and help from my family, I find it is not a big deal.”

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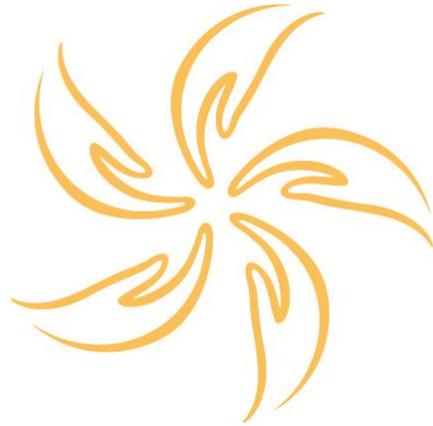


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