



# Ask the Expert Webinar Chat Series

Presented by the  
National Resource Center on ADHD

# Ask the Expert:

## Top Tips for Combating Stigma and Addressing Myths about ADHD



Ruth Hughes, PhD  
CEO of CHADD

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# Ask the Expert:

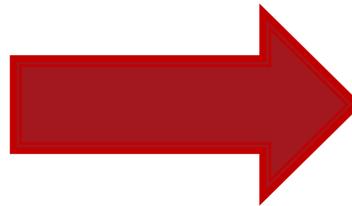
## Top Tips for Combating Stigma and Addressing Myths about ADHD



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To Ask A Question:



The screenshot shows the GoToWebinar interface with the following sections:

- Attendee List (2 | Max 201)**: Includes tabs for Attendees (1) and Staff (1). A dropdown menu is set to "NAMES - ALPHABETICALLY" and lists "Corena Bahr (Me)". A search box is located below the list.
- Audio**: Shows "Audio Mode" with radio buttons for "Use Telephone" and "Use Mic & Speakers" (selected). A "MUTED" indicator and a volume level of "00000000" are displayed. A link for "Audio Setup" is present.
- Talking: Suzie Smith**: A status indicator for the current speaker.
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A recording of today's webinar will be available in two business days at [www.Help4ADHD.org](http://www.Help4ADHD.org)



# Please take our survey!

- ▶ Send us your feedback about today's webinar! An email will arrive shortly with a link to take the survey.
  - ▶ Thank you for helping us plan future webinars that meet the interests of the ADHD community!
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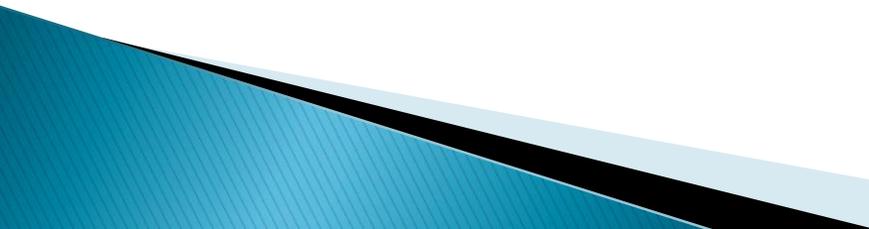
# Everyone with ADHD has Experienced Stigma

- ▶ *“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

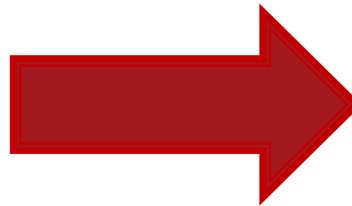
- ▶ ADHD is real
  - ▶ ADHD is highly treatable
  - ▶ With treatment and support, people with ADHD can be highly successful.
  - ▶ Share personal stories
  - ▶ If you think you or a family member has ADHD, seek an evaluation with a physician or specialist who has training and experience in the treatment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