Ask the Expert:
Top Tips for Combating Stigma and Addressing Myths about ADHD

Ruth Hughes, PhD
CEO of CHADD
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To Ask A Question:

Q: Is there a volume discount?
A: Yes! We will send you more info after the event.
A recording of today’s webinar will be available in two business days at 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
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
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.
ADHD is a gift.
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.
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.
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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