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# *Ask the Expert* Webinar Chat Series

Presented by the  
National Resource Center on ADHD



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# *Ask the Expert*

## Your Active Preschooler: Could it be ADHD? What to do

**George J. DuPaul, PhD**



**A recording of today's webinar will be available  
in two business days at [www.Help4ADHD.org](http://www.Help4ADHD.org)**



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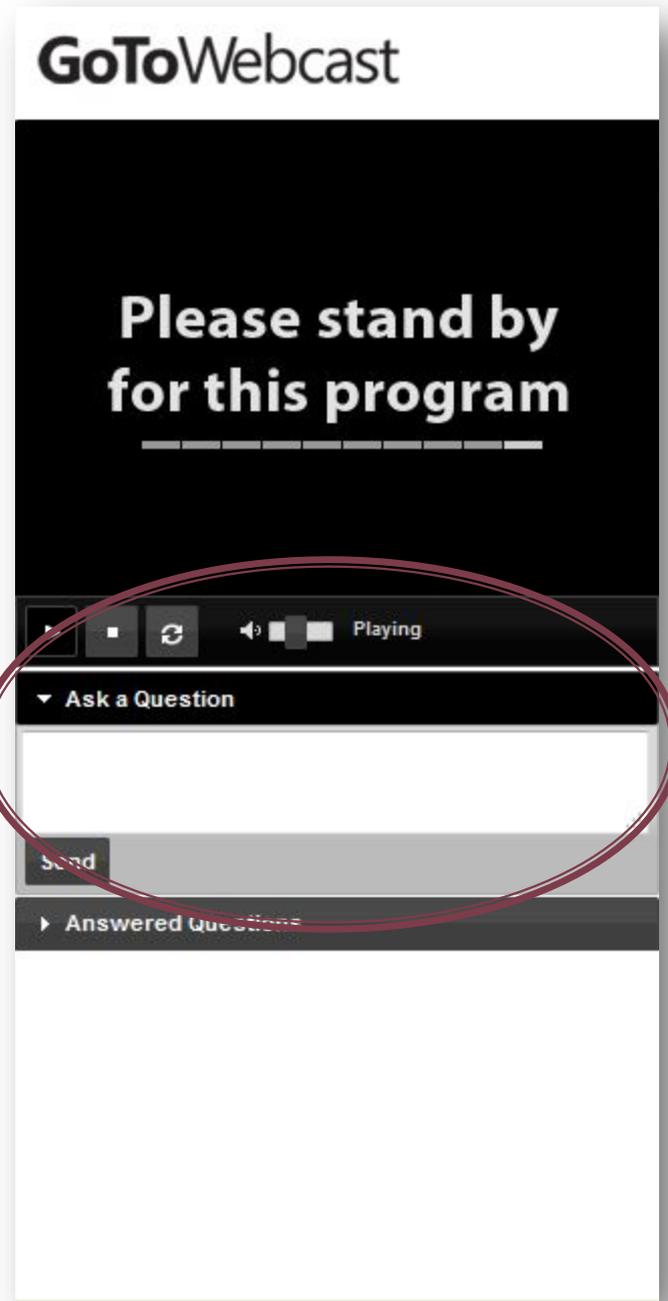
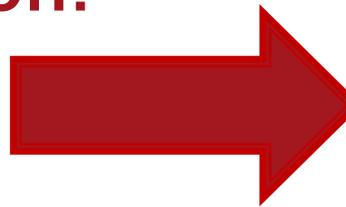
## **Your Active Preschooler: Could it be ADHD? What to do**



**George J. DuPaul, PhD**  
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**Lehigh University**  
**Bethlehem, Pennsylvania**

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To Ask A Question:





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# ADHD in Young Children

- ▶ Significant problems with inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity (APA, 2013)
- ▶ ADHD tends to be chronic for at least 50% of young children with early symptoms
- ▶ Approx. 2% of 3–4 year-olds are diagnosed with ADHD
- ▶ Symptoms in young children are associated with significant behavioral and academic impairment (DuPaul et al., 2001; Lahey et al., 1998)

# Diagnosis of ADHD in Preschoolers

- ▶ Diagnostic interview with parents re: DSM–5 criteria for ADHD and other disorders
- ▶ Parent rating scales (e.g., BASC & Conners)
- ▶ Preschool teacher rating scales (e.g., BASC & Conners)
- ▶ Direct observation of child behavior, if possible
- ▶ Rule out developmental disorders, including autism

# Challenges of Diagnosis in Early Childhood

- ▶ Symptomatic behaviors (inattention, impulsivity, high activity) relatively common
- ▶ Wide variability in behavior among children in this age group
- ▶ Critical to establish
  - High frequency relative to age & gender norms
  - Chronicity of behavior for at least 6 mos. (some suggest 1 yr.)
  - Association with social, academic, or behavioral impairment
  - Symptoms not related to other disorders and/or developmental delays

# Treatment of ADHD in Young Children

- ▶ **Behavioral interventions implemented in home and preschool settings**
  - Importance of parent/family education in use of behavioral strategies
- ▶ **Support development of early reading & math skills**
- ▶ **Injury prevention & safety promotion**
- ▶ **Psychotropic medication (primarily stimulants)**
  - Although efficacious for majority of children, may be associated with adverse side-effects
  - Behavioral interventions should precede medication use (American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines, 2011)

# References

- ▶ American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Washington, DC: Author.
- ▶ DuPaul, G.J., & Kern, L. (2011). *Young children with ADHD: Early identification and intervention*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- ▶ DuPaul, G. J., McGoey, K. E., Eckert, T. L., & VanBrakle, J. (2001). Preschool children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder: Impairments in behavioral, social, and school functioning. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 40*, 508-515.
- ▶ Lahey, B. B., Pelham, W. E., Stein, M. A., Loney, J., Trapani, C., Nugent, K., Kipp, H., Schmidt, E., Lee, S., Cale, M., Gold, E., Hartung, C. M., Willcutt, E., & Baumann, B. (1998). Validity of DSM-IV attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder for younger children. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 37*, 695-702.



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# *Ask the Expert*

The Social/Emotional Side of ADHD:  
What to Know and What to Do.  
*Guidelines for Mental Health Clinicians*

Tuesday, April 14, 2015, 3 p.m.

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