

ADHD & Teen Pregnancy; Micronutrients & Behavior Improvement

IN THIS ISSUE, we highlight two studies: One focused on risk for early pregnancy among youth with ADHD, and another describing a randomized controlled trial for a vitamin-mineral treatment in children with ADHD.

RISK OF EARLY PREGNANCY

Are children with ADHD at greater risk for early pregnancy and why?

Many prior studies have revealed that individuals with ADHD are more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior and are at heightened risk for early pregnancy. This study took the next step by asking what factors account for this heightened risk.

The authors studied 579 children with ADHD and 289 children without ADHD, following them over the course

of sixteen years. They found that those who were diagnosed with ADHD as children were indeed at elevated risk for early pregnancy (defined as becoming pregnant for females or impregnating a partner for males by age 18), *and* that delinquency/substance use was the primary factor driving this risk. Other factors contributing to risk for early pregnancy included persistence of ADHD symptoms into adolescence and academic performance/achievement.

These findings suggest that interventions focused on substance use/delinquency among youth with ADHD could reduce risk for early pregnancy.

Meinzer, M.C. et al. (2017). Childhood ADHD and involvement in early pregnancy: Mechanisms of risk. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, epub ahead of print.

MICRONUTRIENTS & ADHD


Do broad-spectrum micronutrients improve ADHD symptoms?

This study asked whether broad-spectrum micronutrients—also known as vitamins and minerals—could improve behavior in children diagnosed with ADHD. A total of 93 children participated in the study and were required to be off of ADHD medication for at least four weeks, in order to ensure that any improvements were not due to another treatment. Half of the children were randomized to receive the vitamins/minerals while the other half were given a placebo for ten weeks.

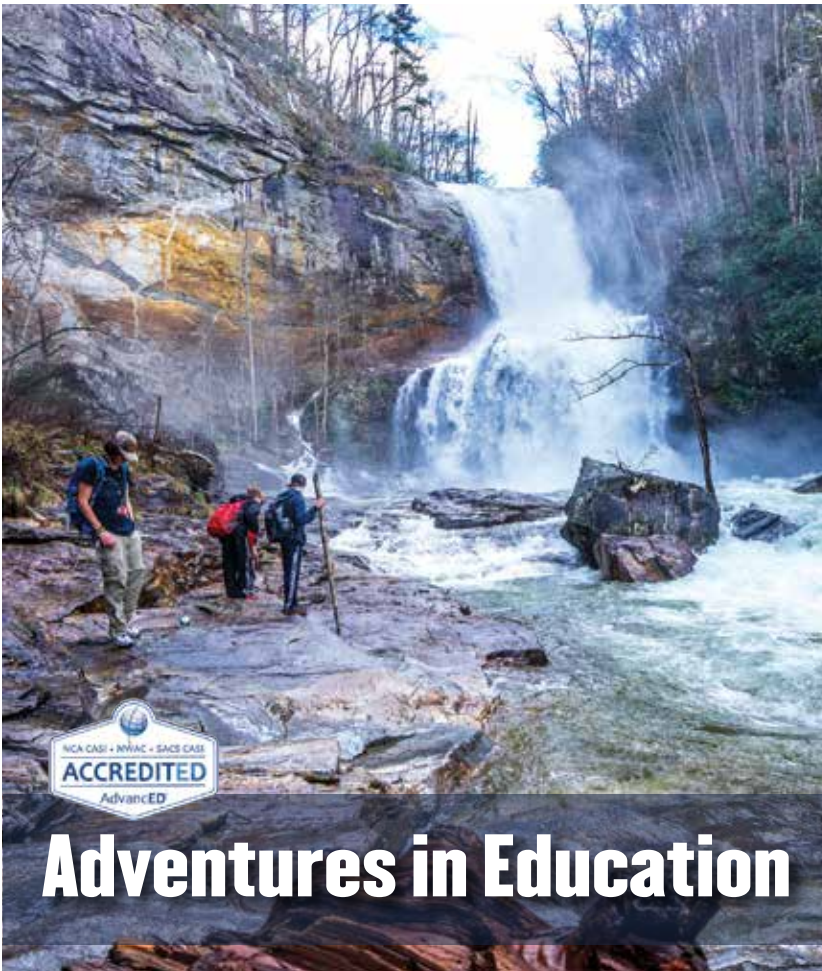
After the ten-week period was over, clinicians, parents, and teachers completed ratings of the child's behavior. There were no changes on two of the primary outcome measures, which were clinician- and parent-rated overall ADHD symptoms. However, clinicians rated more children who had received the vitamins/minerals as having shown improvement with respect to global functioning compared to children who had received the placebo. The children who received the placebo also showed improvements in emotion regulation and aggression. No significant side effects were noted.




These findings suggest that micronutrients do not have a direct impact on core ADHD symptoms but may improve some associated behavioral features.


Rucklidge, J.J. (2017). Vitamin-mineral treatment improves aggression and emotional regulation in children with ADHD: A fully blinded, randomized, placebo-controlled trial. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry*, epub ahead of print. 

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