

# So... Just *What* Is a Virtual Conference?



**G**OOD QUESTION—we are all about to find out! Not all the details are fixed yet, but at press time, here is what we know about the 2020 Virtual Annual International Conference on ADHD.

Instead of flying to Dallas and staying in a hotel, you can attend this year's conference from the comfort of your home using your computer, tablet, smartphone, or—better still—streamed from your TV. You can invite your friends, or not, and share the experience with others over social media. And the cost of attendance will be lower.

## Schedule

There will be a conference schedule as usual, though we will be starting at 10 AM EST in order to accommodate those in different time zones. You will be able to watch keynotes and lectures in real time, or catch up with them later on your time. Each educational session will have been pre-recorded to make sure there are no glitches, but there will be a live Q & A with the presenter following each presentation. (Although, obviously, if you choose to watch later you will not be able to take part in the live Q&A.) This does mean that you can potentially attend all of the education sessions—now that is value for your money!

## Continuing Education Credits

These will be available as before, for those professions that offer credits for certain sessions. Details will be available closer to the event. There will be a time limit for obtaining continuing education credits—one week following the conference. Sessions may be available to watch after this time, but credits will not be available. It will be the individual attendee's responsibility to check which sessions

offer credit for their professional organization. There will be a fee for CE credits.

## Keynotes

We will have, as before, three exciting keynote presentations. John Ratey, MD, and Kathleen Nadeau, PhD, will speak on this year's conference theme: "Strong Minds, Healthy Lives." Watch out for confirmation of the third exciting speaker, who will address the theme from a personal perspective. As always, these will be inspirational, educational, and entertaining sessions.

## General Sessions

We will have 64 pre-recorded, one-hour sessions with live question-and-answer periods covering a range of topics related to ADHD for children, teens, parents, teachers, clinicians, and researchers. You will come away with a vast knowledge of up-to-date information, brimming with ideas as to how to build new strategies into your own life. And this year as you will not be bound by time and space—you can watch them all if you want.

## ADHD Professional Institutes (API)

There will be a day of in-depth sessions for professionals, some lasting one hour, some three hours, that will offer continuing education credits where applicable. These are designed for healthcare professionals, educators, coaches, physicians, psychologists, social workers, parents of children with ADHD, and adults with ADHD. Although primarily for providers, these are open to all. There is an additional fee to attend.

## Non-Session Activities

Start your day off right by getting grounded through a daily guided mindful meditation. Join us for learning opportunities, such as Games that Practice Executive Functions, Emotional Drivers for Financial Decisions, or Improvisation for Learning Social Skills, to mention just a few. Meet up and connect with peers over lunch. Get the support and understanding only people living your reality can convey. Groups include African Americans with ADHD, Young Adults with ADHD, LGBTQ with ADHD, High IQ and ADHD, Couples with ADHD, and Non-ADHD Partners. Crowd favorites like the Talent Show, the Women's Unity Luncheon, and Coach Speed Dating


are being adapted so that they are accessible virtually. Activities include other ways to learn, such as facilitated discussion groups, a film screening, and more.

### Exhibition Hall

Believe it or not, we are going to have a Virtual Exhibition Hall, too. Watch for more information coming soon.

All in all, this will be a new experience, exciting and different in many positive ways. We will all miss the opportunity to be physically together, but it does mean that many more people will be able to participate free from the need to take time off, to travel—and at a lower cost. So, tell your family and friends and come and join us in November for a truly enlightening ADHD event. 🎧

*With over thirty years of experience as a pediatric occupational therapist, **Zara Harris, MS, OT**, is licensed in both the United States and the United Kingdom. Specializing in helping students who are struggling with handwriting, homework, attention, time management, and organization, Harris has worked with international schools on three different continents. She is deputy co-chair of Attention's editorial advisory board and a member of CHADD's conference committee.*



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