

## **Announcement of RFP to Study Online Learning Interventions for Children with ADHD**

For children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), maintaining concentration in school is a challenge. Their world is busy, loud, and distracting. These students benefit from the structure the classroom provides, the redirection support of teachers, and the ability to use peers as models. Supportive scaffolds are not easily accessible while participating in online learning.

As in-person classes move online, students with ADHD, from kindergarten to college, are required to quickly master a set of learning skills that many students take for granted and perform as a matter of course. They must maintain their attention to follow multi-step directions, create and consistently use a file organization on their computers so they don't lose work, locate resources scattered over multiple online platforms, study effectively, and keep track of assignments and due dates. So how does a student with ADHD find success in online learning?

Little research has been conducted in this area. While teachers and counselors give tips on how to complete online educational programming, these tips are based on research in other areas that provide assistance to those with ADHD. The use of daily schedules, distraction-free workspaces, timers to create work and break times, short- and long-term goals, exercise (or recess,) and limiting screen time are all techniques recommended for those with ADHD. But what works best with online education may be a different question.

Recognizing that children with ADHD require assistance with online education, especially during this COVID-19 pandemic period, the Stroud Foundation has partnered with CHADD – the national nonprofit for Children and Adults with ADHD. Together, these two organizations will support research to investigate the types of educational interventions that best support children with ADHD in the online learning environment.

### **Background**

The Stroud Foundation is a tax-exempt public charity, established in 2008, dedicated to improving the lives of children with learning differences and their families in the DC area, with a particular focus on children with ADHD.

The Stroud Foundation's project areas include:

- Supporting existing organizations and schools who identify and treat children with learning differences, or who have special programs for children with learning disabilities
- Creating awareness of learning differences for families, teachers and professionals
- Building dialogue between existing organizations, government, professionals and schools to share best practice

CHADD – Children and Adults with ADHD – (founded in 1987) is the national organization that serves children and adults with ADHD, their parents, educators and professionals. With the help of more than 5,000 members and 120 support groups and affiliates across the country, as well as more than 1,000 volunteers, CHADD reaches out to individuals affected by ADHD, providing support right in their own community.

CHADD's mission is defined by three overarching goals:

- 1) to provide evidence-based information on ADHD to the public;
- 2) to provide support, information, programs, and services to people affected by ADHD; and

3) to advocate for ADHD-supportive policies in federal and state law.

CHADD accomplishes its work with the input of a Professional Advisory Board, a Public Policy Committee, an Editorial Advisory Board, and a Marketing Committee. The professional advisors on these committees includes physicians, psychologists, counselors, teachers, and researchers. CHADD is in a unique position in this environment. As the home of the CDC-funded National Resource Center on ADHD, CHADD is a trusted source of evidence-based information.

### **Project Overview**

The Stroud Foundation and CHADD will provide funding for research projects that identify educational interventions that support online learning for children with ADHD. Specific areas of interest include:

How does the use of visual aids help kids with ADHD while learning online?

- Analog clocks
- Posted schedules
- Timers
- Star charts
- Posted words of encouragement

How does maintaining routines - (ideally, sleep, regular meals, exercise) support online learning?

- AAP-recommended amounts of sleep per age group
- Three meals/day
- A minimum of 20 minutes of cardio per day

How does a work/rest/play schedule best work for kids learning online?

- 25 work/5 play?
- 30 work/10 play?
- 20/5? 20/10?

What study architecture is best for kids with ADHD who are learning online?

- Open space?
- Boundaried space? In a corner? On a designated area (blanket? Kitchen table?)
- Alone or Supervised?
- Does age matter?

How does parent training affect outcomes for children learning online?

- Are students whose parents have received training doing better relative to those whose parents have not?

How can teachers fairly report on IEPs, 504s and children's performance during online learning?

- Are there new metrics to consider?
- Does the level of provisions in the IEP/504 predict academic outcomes?
- In the absence of IEP/504 does the gap or delay in development not grow?

- Are parents implementing aspects of the IEP/504 plans for their child and, if so, are outcomes better?

What are optimal conditions for online learning for kids with ADHD?

- timing, zoom, classroom cameras, pods - instructional time and independent work time - use of timers, visuals incorporated - shared screen - classroom cameras or zoom - recorded sessions that can be accessed or set times for work online
- Changes in instruction, content, student engagement and assessment - recording presentations/instruction and demonstrations so that students can address the need for a repetition, slower presentation.
- How much choice do they have and need - between watching a video, a PowerPoint, listening to a lecture, looking at still pictures, reading text
- Are some kids finding it easier? Why? More time to run and play. Flex schedules?

How to monitor and address Language and Social pragmatics during online learning for kids with ADHD?

- Impossible to develop and maintain social skills without social interaction. Incorporating SEL into online instruction
- Higher percentage of kids with learning differences esp. ADHD have anxiety struggles
- Lack of student training, in particular for kids with ADHD - who struggle to learn how to operate within the constricts of a regular classroom - now there is a whole new set of unspoken rules of operation - they need to be independent learners, need to be flexible, patient. They also need consistency to function, to rely on the safety of a school routine.
- The simple act of accessing instruction - Zoom or Google classroom or whatever system schools are using - links get lost - unseen, missed.

### **Project Budget and Timeline**

The Stroud Foundation and CHADD will support up to three research projects with a maximum budget of \$5,000 each. No indirect costs will be included in this funding.

Applications are due by November 1, 2020. Applications should be submitted as a PDF to:

Robert Cattoi  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 CHADD  
 rcattoi@chadd.org

## **Project Application Guidelines**

The entire application should be no longer than 20 pages. The application should include:

### **Cover Letter**

The brief cover letter should contain a summary of your proposal, introduce your organization and summarize any recent research you've conducted in this area. Include the amount of funding that you are requesting, the population it will serve, and the need it will help solve.

### **Project Abstract**

The project abstract should present a concise summary of the project. It should be no longer than a page and include the need for the project and the population it will serve, a brief description of the project and its goals and objectives, as well as the applicant's background and qualifications. Make sure you include the amount of funding that is being sought. Finally, mention how the program will be evaluated to measure the success of the programs.

### **Statement of Need**

The statement of need should describe the problem that the project will attempt to address. Also, describe the population that will be served.

### **Program Description**

Describe the project or program and provide information on how it will be implemented. Include information on what will be accomplished and the desired outcome.

### **Goals & Objectives**

Describe the project objectives in measurable terms.

### **Timeline**

Expectation is that the study will be complete no later than May 1, 2021.

### **Budget**

Include in the budget all expenses for your project, including necessary training costs. Mention any co-funding that you are using from other sources.

### **Evaluation**

Provide information on the metrics that will be used to determine the effectiveness of the project or program.

### **Staff and Organizational Information**

Include the staff qualifications, certifications, and skills. Describe the organization and include information.

## **Project Evaluation**

An evaluation team comprised of representatives of the Stroud Foundation and CHADD Advisory Board Members will evaluate the proposals. Funding decisions will be announced on December 1, 2020. The evaluation team will determine which project(s) provide the best information for teachers and parents as online learning continues.