



New research shows a gap exists in the treatment of many children with ADHD, especially girls, with parent-reported ADHD.

Mental health professionals agree that it is important for parents, educators and healthcare professionals to raise awareness and educate people about ADHD and its symptoms.

Signs of ADHD include difficulty focusing, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and trouble following directions.

A new study finds that most children with symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) aren't getting treatment for the condition.

The study looked at 11,723 children between the ages of 9 and 10. The researchers asked parents to identify whether or not their children had ADHD.

The researchers found few children, identified by their parents as having ADHD, were getting either medication or mental health treatment.

Most children not getting medical treatment for ADHD

Among the children with ADHD, only 26.2% had ever received outpatient mental health care.

Additionally, just 12.9% were presently taking ADHD medications, and only 34.8% had received either treatment, according to the study. Trusted Source, published in JAMA Network Open.

The research authors found that income wasn't correlated with getting medical treatment.

The results showed children with parents who had higher salaries and a higher educational degree were less likely to receive outpatient mental health care compared to those whose parents had lower salaries and a lower educational degree.

The team also found that ADHD medications were more prevalent among boys than girls.

The importance of raising awareness regarding child ADHD treatment

"There is a great need to increase awareness and understanding regarding ADHD in children," Dr. Harold Hong, a board-certified psychiatrist at New Waters Recovery, located in North Carolina, told Healthline. "This recent study has highlighted some major gaps,

especially when it comes to girls with ADHD receiving treatment."

One of the reasons children aren't getting the treatment they need is due to a lack of knowledge regarding symptoms.

"Unfortunately, I believe many parents are unaware of what symptoms to look out for or even how to recognize that their child may have a condition like ADHD," said Hong. "As a result, they don't seek out the proper help or diagnose their child at all. Furthermore, we must consider cultural and socioeconomic factors as well – some communities may not be as equipped to identify and treat children with conditions such as this, leading them to go untreated."

Experts say it's crucial that parents, educators and medical professionals do their part to raise awareness and close this gap in treatment.

"It's my belief that more research needs to be done on this topic, but also that more education and awareness is crucial in order to ensure that all children, regardless of gender, receive the proper care and treatment for ADHD," Hong explained. "We must work together as a community – parents, educators, medical professionals – to make sure our children have the resources they need."

Michelle Giordano, psychologist and community counselor for Live Another Day believes there are several reasons why kids may not be getting the treatment they need.

"As a psychologist, I am worried about the pervasive inequalities in the care of kids with ADHD, especially girls, that this study has brought to light," said Giordano. "The findings imply that many kids with ADHD are not receiving the necessary treatment, which may have an adverse effect on their ability to learn and interact with others in social and academic settings."

Some kids with ADHD might not be getting the care they require for a variety of reasons. One possibility is that parents and other caregivers are ignorant of ADHD symptoms or accessible treatments, Giordano stated.

In addition, there might be social or cultural obstacles that hinder families from getting the proper care.

### **What parents should know**

Experts say in order to help children with ADHD much more needs to be done to improve awareness and access to treatments.



Hong says we need to focus on raising awareness and providing more education around ADHD and its symptoms, especially in underserved communities, Secondly, we must strive to improve access to treatment for all children who show signs or have been diagnosed with ADHD. This can include offering better mental health services and increasing access to resources such as therapy, medication, behavior modification plans, lifestyle changes, and more, Hong stated.

Healthcare professionals must also ensure that these services are offered at a price point that is accessible to all families regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Hong also highlighted that it is important for the medical community to provide detailed information about the different treatments available so parents can make informed decisions about their child's care.

"This study emphasizes the need for greater understanding and accessibility to treatment for kids with ADHD, especially girls," Giordano explained. "By enhancing accessibility and education, we can guarantee that all kids with ADHD get the help they require to realize their complete potential."

### **Knowing the symptoms of ADHD**

"Parents should look for signs that suggest their child is having difficulty focusing and staying on task, as well as exhibiting behaviors such as hyperactivity or impulsivity," said Hong.

- Other key signs of ADHD can include the following:
- trouble following directions
- having difficulty being able to focus on tasks
- frequently interrupting conversations
- having difficulty sitting still
- interrupting people when they're talking
- appearing not to listen when spoken to directly
- excessive talking
- difficulty managing emotions and frustration levels
- inability to control behavior in certain situations
- being easily distracted by outside stimuli (such as noises or people)
- avoiding tasks that require sustained attention and focus, and forgetfulness

### **Treatment for kids with ADHD**

There are different treatments for ADHD including medication and therapy. An expert can help figure out

the best course of action for each individual child with ADHD.

"Generally speaking, medications are the most commonly used treatment methods, as they can help manage some of the core symptoms of ADHD," said Hong. "However, medication alone is not always enough to effectively treat ADHD – it should be used in combination with behavioral interventions such as lifestyle changes, therapy (including cognitive-behavioral therapy), behavior modification plans, and more."

ADHD symptoms can be managed with the aid of medications like stimulants and non-stimulants, while behavioral treatment teaches kids social skills and coping mechanisms, Giordano added.

"The most effective ADHD therapies vary depending on the child and the severity of their symptoms," said Giordano. "The most successful strategy, in general, combines medicine, behavioral therapy, and parent education."

Experts stress that parents are also key to helping children with the condition. They point out education of parents is essential since it might enable them to support their children at home and better understand their behavior.

### **The bottom line**

According to a new study, many kids with ADHD aren't getting the treatment they need, particularly girls, with parent-reported ADHD.

Mental health professionals explain that it is crucial for parents, educators and healthcare professionals to increase awareness and help educate others about ADHD and its symptoms.

Signs of ADHD include trouble focusing, hyperactive and impulsive behavior, and difficulty following directions.

Treatment is determined by several factors, but medication and cognitive behavioral therapy are common approaches.

[www.healthline.com/health-news/most-children-with-adhd-parent-being-treated](http://www.healthline.com/health-news/most-children-with-adhd-parent-being-treated)



HEALTH & WELLNESS MINISTRY UPDATES

