

# ADHDnews

ADD Information Services (ADDISS) Registered Charity No 1070827

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## Our battle with the system: How ADDISS helped us

By Sheila Marquand

Sheila Marquand had a two year battle with a popular primary school and her Local Authority to get the right educational provision for her youngest son. Here is her story.



Zak began Reception in September 2007. During Year 1, he began displaying significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. He has poor working memory skills, very slow processing skills, considerable difficulties with language, literacy and numeracy and was placed on School Action Plus by his school. The school employed a play therapist but Zak did not have a good relationship with her, and her presence made us feel that our abilities as parents were in question.

Between Autumn 2008 and the Spring of 2009, Zak was sent home by the school on at least 9 occasions because of his behaviour. We found this to be very distressing but accepted it, and it would not be until later in 2009 that we realised that these actions were in fact unlawful. During this time we had Zak referred to the local community paediatrician as we had a strong suspicion that he had ADHD. The school was asked to fill in the Conners' Rating Scale, which is

used to diagnose ADHD, and in January 2009 he received a diagnosis of ADHD and EBSD (Emotional, Behavioural and Social Difficulties).

Zak was permanently excluded from the school in June 2009 – the decision was upheld by the Board of Governors on 29th June 2009. We appealed to the Independent Appeal Panel (IAP), which was adjourned until December 2009. A managed move to a local Inclusion Resource Base (IRB) was initiated in April 2009. We opposed the placement of our son at that school as we felt it was unable to meet his special educational needs. We felt that we had been put in a difficult position; as Zak had been excluded from his school, the only place available was at the IRB – and we were told that we could be taken to court for non-attendance if we had refused to take him to school. This information later proved to be incorrect and was retracted. Zak began attending the IRB in September 2009, notwithstanding our objections as to its suitability for him.

After discovering that the school had not applied for a statutory assessment of Zak's needs, we formally applied in May 2009 – and this was granted by the LA in June 2009.

Due to the nature of Zak's disability, he had destroyed classrooms and attacked school

staff. However, we decided to appeal to SENDIST as we firmly believed that the school and LA had failed to explore other options for him before resorting to a permanent exclusion – and had also failed to apply for an assessment of Zak's needs. We felt that the school was guilty of disability discrimination in the way that they had dealt with Zak's case. The school claimed to be unaware of his disability despite clear guidance from Zak's paediatrician. We generally felt misled by the school, and representatives of the Local Authority, throughout the whole ordeal.

**Parents whose children have special educational needs can appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) against decisions made by Local Education Authorities in England about their children's education. Appeals are heard by a panel of three tribunal members. There will be a legally qualified tribunal judge, who will be the chair, and two specialist members who have been appointed because of their knowledge and experience of children with special educational needs and disabilities. Appeals against the panel's decisions go to the Upper Tribunal instead of to the High Court.**

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# ADHDnews

My Husband and I were over the moon when SENDIST found both the Local Authority and school guilty of disability discrimination, for failing to explore alternative provision (i.e. schools) and failing to apply for the statutory assessment, respectively. It was an overwhelmingly stressful two day hearing, where the school and LA called several witnesses and hired a specialist barrister.

*Throughout the appeals process we had a great deal of support from ADDISS. Andrea Bilbow, the Founder and Chief Executive of ADDISS, took time out of her busy schedule to attend the tribunal. Andrea made the SENDIST panel aware that there was enough information in my doctor's diagnosis letter, from January 2009, to fully alert the school to the fact that Zak had ADHD. This information coming from someone who was highly experienced on ADHD was crucial to my case. Thank you so much Andrea.*

We were equally delighted when Zak's permanent exclusion was overturned. At the same time we had very little choice but to make a further appeal to SENDIST as the Local Authority, despite all that had happened, insisted that Zak should attend a mainstream provision with a specialist resource base. However, close to the date of the hearing, fortunately they conceded and gave Zak a place at our chosen special school. Readers may be wondering how long all of this took. Zak was first sent home in around August 2008 and he was not awarded a place at a special school until June 2010.

Zak is doing very well in his new school. He has always been a very bright child, but his condition was holding him back. He is now in a school that can understand him and help him. He is finally reading and writing, something the mainstream school was unable to help him do. Obviously it must have been very frustrating for Zak in the mainstream school, as they

could not teach him and they told me that his academic ability was low; he was always put in the bottom groups for his subjects. Zak was very aware of this, and this in itself had a big impact on his self-esteem and behaviour. This was a vicious circle for Zak, if the school had applied for a Statement of SEN and also had some staff trained in ADHD, Zak could have been helped sooner. I also believe that if this had happened, Zak's emotional, social and behavioural disorder (which often comes hand in hand with ADHD) could have been avoided.

Andrea Bilbow says, "The stress on families when schools do not face up to their responsibilities can be huge. In this case there were multiple problems – the school made assumptions and through lack of training and awareness did not recognise Zak's ADHD. ADDISS were able to interpret a key letter from his paediatrician so that Zak's diagnosis was clear and he could be given the educational provision that he needed."

ADDISS works with schools to help them to identify cases of ADHD and to put appropriate strategies and support in place. ADDISS also works with parents to help them understand the disability aspects of ADHD. It is very common to find that a child's aggression, for example, is treated separately from their ADHD. Emotional over-arousal is a symptom of ADHD that can lead to a loss of control of emotions and a loss of inhibitions.

The emotional and financial costs for a family battling for appropriate education should not be underestimated. Family breakdown is common as stress builds, with about 50% of marriages ending under the pressure. Parents can incur great financial costs, though it is possible to go to SENDIST without paying for legal support.

If you need help to get the right support for your ADHD child and would like some advice, then please do contact us.

## ADDISS in Romania

ADDISS were commissioned by children's charity Fundatia de Abilitare "Speranta", funded by the Rotary Club of Timisoara, to deliver a course on ADHD for psychologists and counsellors in Romania. The charity's aim was for psychologists and counsellors to be trained to understand every aspect of living with ADHD, so that they would be skilled up to go into schools to work with teachers and parents. Andrea Bilbow, Holly Evans and Colin McGee were delighted to work with thirty professionals from three counties across the west of Romania, the Banat region. Participants were primarily attached to schools, but also included the School Inspector for SEN, who is an elected government official.

The Romanian government is instigating an ADHD awareness campaign that will have a great impact on the delivery of education and support services. ADDISS delivered 8 days of training and also held an evening talk for parents. We found that the problems parents faced were not much different from our own. Their children were also struggling in school but they faced far more exclusions. Children were excluded on a regular basis and moved from school to school each year. This disrupted the children's education and they became disheartened and school refusing. There is no equivalent of the Disability Discrimination Act or Equality Act in Romania, and limited

legislative back up for families to pursue.

There were no whole school policies on the management of children with special educational needs, and this led to parent/teacher/pupil relationship breakdown.

We were able to empower the delegates with enough knowledge and expertise to think about creating ADHD friendly schools, and to develop policies to support this approach.

We trained them to use the 1-2-3 Magic programme, both in school and with parents, and we also trained them to use the WhyTry programme with the students. On our second visit in July the delegates reported back

positively about the strategies we had taught them, and their feedback has been published on their website.

Andrea Bilbow was interviewed for a news item on the local television channel to talk about the continuing misunderstanding of ADHD, and the great difficulties schools are facing in Romania.

Andrea said:

*"This experience really brought it home to us that ADHD is a universal problem. Families all over the world are struggling, and there is such a thirst for knowledge and information. We are looking forward to returning to Romania in April 2012 as part of a national conference. The Fundatia de*



*Abilitare "Speranta" are really dedicated and passionate about improving life for families impacted by ADHD. We are exploring funding possibilities so that we can continue to work together in the future to establish an exchange programme across different countries, to develop and share best practice."*

ADDISS has since been approached to offer ADHD training and parenting programmes in several countries, including Kuwait and Gibraltar.

For more information on Fundatia de Abilitare "Speranta" check their website [www.adhd-speranta.ro](http://www.adhd-speranta.ro)



# Sugar and spice and all things **ADHD**...

By Louise O'Reagain -  
Age twenty, ADHDer

**Hi! My name is Louise, I'm twenty and I have ADHD. This year I am looking to apply for university to study medicine. This is my story, general ADHD musings and the beginning of my blow-by-blow account as I go through the UCAS application system.**

Three years ago at age seventeen, the first time I applied for university, I was listed in my school year book as 'most likely to organise a plot to blow up the school' - not good. At that time, unbeknown to myself or my parents, I had ADHD; the undiagnosed and therefore rather hellish type; the one where the before mentioned quote was not entirely meant as a joke; the one where my whole life was rapidly becoming an unsuccessful episode of 'brat camp'. Basically, I was in hell on earth and I hated every minute of it (I don't think my psychiatrist at the time enjoyed it that much either).

Turn the clock back ten years or so, and I am going to try and explain how I got myself into this situation. I know anyone with some experience of ADHD is pretty much fearless in most people's books, but sixteen-year-old Louise was rather terrifying and I'm fearful that if I don't ease into this thorny issue with some grace I'm going to scare off some of the less ADHD-experienced readers - perhaps even give them nightmares...

I was an active child. I liked climbing and running and jumping. In fact, as a baby I liked to climb so much that not even socks on my hands and feet could stop me from getting out of my cot - talk about desperate. I was also opinionated and maybe I liked the sound of my own voice a little too much because I was always talking. Add my occasional outbursts and destructive acts, which I mostly managed to hide from my parents, to the equation and you get bog standard ADHD. This, however, is obvious only to the trained eye and, perhaps fortunately, my parents were blissfully unaware of what was going on with their first child. Somehow, I managed to get through primary school and most of my secondary education (if you exclude acquiring a psychiatrist at age twelve) until I hit sixteen. This was when the fun really began.

You see, sixth form wasn't an easy time for me, I can honestly say I didn't intend to cause trouble, I just

sort of...did. I'll be honest, I wasn't exactly the perfect student. I didn't do my homework - I wanted to but, for some unknown reason, I couldn't and this was impossible to explain to my teachers. If they were fortunate enough to be 'graced with my presence' (as one teacher liked to put it) then it would never be on time. I just couldn't get there no matter how hard I tried. I also didn't listen to what was being said and could never quite explain to my teachers why I 'needed the toilet' for the fourth time that lesson, was just staring into space, or was messing about (examples of this include starting bonfires in science, making a certain English teacher cry and breaking on to the roof of the school). I wasn't a good student and I knew it, so did the headmistress. My sense of timing has never been wonderful but I think in this instance it was pretty good, and I somehow made the decision to get out of school before I was asked to. At least it kept my academic record (fairly) clean.

As far as some of my teachers were concerned, I was stuck in a permanent rut. My parents knew the nice Louise was in there somewhere but were (understandably) too scared to go in to the dragon's cave to get her out. And me, well, all I knew was that there was definitely something wrong with me, and behaving as I did was the only way to prove it. I haven't painted a very pretty picture, and cringe when I think about these words going to print - this is not a little girl's 'sugar and spice' story. I do also realise that I am somewhat of an interesting specimen, if you take into account my ADHD story and diagnosis in relation to my age and gender. The sad fact is that my story is not as rare as you might think, in fact it is one of many of the same kind. I'm not the only one with ADHD, I'm not the only girl who has it and I'm not the only one who needs help.

Sometimes if you want something done, or have exhausted everyone around you as it was in my case, you have to do it yourself. I realised that after years of my parents paying lots

into the mental health system, and little improvement in my now dire circumstances, it was time to get to the bottom of things. After much deliberation, my GP and I decided that he should refer me to a London psychiatrist - this is quite a big thing when you live in Jersey, in the Channel Islands. In February 2008 I met Dr David Veale and to be honest I couldn't believe he was a psychiatrist - he was, dare I say it, cool. Okay, so he wouldn't have fitted in with the Radio One crew very well but needless to say he was a nice guy, was genuinely interested in my story and wanted to help me out - score! Dr Veale suggested that an inpatient stay in the psychiatric unit of the hospital he worked at was the best way to find out what was going on. This was somewhere where there was no hiding any of my now more regular outbursts, inappropriate comments and impulsiveness. This was somewhere where things were going to change for the better. After a

**'Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.'**

**Albert Einstein**  
(famous Physicist with ADHD)

couple of weeks I received the diagnosis of ADHD and to be honest I have never felt so relieved - I wasn't a bad person, I just needed help. Dr Veale prescribed me some Ritalin, which had just the most amazing effect on me: calmness, something I never thought I'd be able to feel!

A year out, a new school, and an official ADHD diagnosis later and I am looking to apply for university for the second time. My school have been brilliant and really deserve some credit. They have supported me and my ADHD baggage in so many ways since January, when I began my eighteen-month A-Level course. It's the little things that really do help: allowing me to take a walk if I feel like my head is buzzing or I really can't take in what's being said, not asking me to do more than one thing at a time, and giving me a poke when I'm staring out of the window. Each week one teacher fills out a short questionnaire so that I can monitor my progress in my weekly sessions with my therapist, Matt, who has been fantastic. All of these things help me to stay on track. All this being said, I know I am slightly more nervous about the whole application procedure than others in my academic year. Considering my

track record, I don't think this is unreasonable - after all, my first application at age seventeen was a total disaster in every possible way. Yes I'm sad that school is nearly over, albeit for the second time, and I am pretty excited that I am on the brink of the very first pages of a whole new chapter in my life, but I can't help worrying about what the next year has in store for me. There is always hope though, and optimism is something of an inbuilt survival instinct in people with ADHD. University and ADHD are an interesting combination you see - but this time I intend to be successful, to leave my school with dignity and student-teacher relationships intact, and most of all to enjoy myself while I'm doing it. As far as I am concerned this is my year and nothing can change that.

In typical ADHD fashion, I know that my mixed attitude towards university seems odd for someone who has

been through A-Levels before and failed miserably. I am also aware that possibly I appear a little unrealistic in my expectations of the

following year, considering I want to study medicine, but I really think I can do it. It is a hard course, agreed, but I know I've got what it takes - and knowing that you have what it takes to do what you want to do is half the battle when you have the poor self-confidence of someone with ADHD. I believe that hope is the key here, and when hope hits it off with a bit of inspiration the pathway to success is made, all you have to do is walk along it... or run if you have ADHD. With a custom-made support team and the right medication (if that's what works for you) then a person with ADHD can go far, very far indeed! Unfortunately, after a recent diagnosis of epilepsy, I have had to come off my Ritalin because of the drug's interaction with the anti-epileptic drug that has been prescribed for my condition, but I am still positive. Just look at what Albert Einstein gave to physics with that ADHD brain of his, he never had the help of Ritalin and he still did amazing things. I'm sure he even contributed to the hairdressing profession too with that haircut of his! Good luck to everybody out there who is applying to university this year, especially the ADHD bunch.



# ADHD news

## ADHD in the work environment

**Jo Todd, Chief Executive, Key 4 Learning Ltd, Chedworth, UK** - (This article has previously been featured in ADHD in Practice – many thanks for allowing us to reproduce it for our readership)

**Although ADHD is often thought of as a disability, many people with ADHD run successful businesses. Being self-employed, and having received the right help to develop an infrastructure for managing routine day-to-day tasks, they can focus their energy, innovativeness and creativity on developing a business.**

By contrast, managing an employee with ADHD can be a nightmare: high levels of inattention, hyperactivity and impulsiveness are not the core attributes of most competency frameworks, and the ADHD employee often finds these mentioned only as negative aspects of an appraisal. Line managers and colleagues can find some of the behaviours that those with ADHD display in everyday life frustrating.

I have worked with clients with ADHD for the last 15 years and this has taught me that the best approach for managing ADHD in the workplace is a structured one. On the one hand, providing an infrastructure supports the learning of routine and focus while, on the other hand, looking for opportunities for creativity and innovation keeps the person engaged. This approach takes time and patience: one must consistently refocus the person and remind them of the benefits of self-management.

In this article, I outline my approach with clients, helping them to contribute effectively at work while developing their own career.

### **Application and Interview**

Many people with ADHD thrive on challenges, but the process of applying for a job is usually competitive and complicated. The plethora of forms and instructions can be overwhelming and may cause the person to fall at the first hurdle, unless they are focussed on exactly what is required at this initial stage. Many forms demand a very specific response that can be a challenge in itself, while online applications, which are increasingly used, carry the risk of inputting the wrong information, which will render a form invalid and leave no opportunity to apply again.

My recommendation to people with ADHD when they apply for any job is to ask for a hard copy of the application form. This allows them to proceed in a more considered fashion and gives them the time to ask someone they know to proof read their responses, to ensure they are appropriate.

Companies may be reluctant to agree to this request, but they are obliged by law to provide alternative formats to ensure accessibility for disabled applicants. If the employer offers the alternative of completing the form over the telephone, the applicant should only agree if they feel they can do themselves justice.

Also, it should be remembered that, under the 'Two Ticks' scheme, the applicant will be guaranteed an interview as long as they meet the basic qualifications for the role. The "Two Ticks" is a disability symbol displayed on job adverts and application forms issued by employers who have made commitments to employ, maintain and develop the abilities of disabled staff.

The next hurdle is the interview. Many companies now hold interviews over the telephone or online. Preparation is crucial, whether for a face-to-face interview or for one of the newer formats. A crib sheet, prepared either in bullet points or as a mind map, helps to avoid digression. However it should not be longer than a sheet of A4 paper, otherwise it can become a distraction in itself. In some cases, it may be appropriate to ask for an outline of possible questions or themes that will be covered in the interview.

### **To Disclose or not to Disclose?**

Although a recognised disability, ADHD is not well understood by many employers and because of this, some clients prefer not to

disclose their disability until they have been offered a job. However, my experience is that clients may be unintentionally discriminated against, even during the application or selection process, so I recommend giving an open and honest account of one's strengths and challenges from the outset. This gives the employer a realistic opportunity to understand the individual's work style, which can be particularly important if that individual is a 'job hopper' (a person who only spends a short period of time in the same job). Research has shown that people with ADHD move job more frequently than others, sometimes due to a low boredom threshold, or most likely because they do not feel they have a good role match.

When starting a job, a letter or disclosure document explaining how ADHD affects the individual, clearly describing their strengths and challenges, as well as solutions that they may have already devised to mitigate problems, is recommended. It is important to redress balance by highlighting the person's assets and skills; outlining what they can achieve, and how future line managers and colleagues can help them to do so, often has a positive effect.

### **Job Description and appropriate Adjustments**

When an individual with ADHD has been accepted for a job it is important to discuss the role, requisite training and probationary period, and the appropriate 'reasonable adjustments' needed to help them gain proficiency in their new role. The initial training period will vary with different types of work, but it is recommended that written training material is given to the individual before it commences - to allow them to read about, and contextualise, their role before they start the job. It is also recommended that employers designate a 'buddy' who understands the job and can act as a mentor.

Systematic learning is generally the best approach: an overview of the job should be given, before breaking its components down into manageable chunks. A new task should not be added until the previous one is fully ingrained.

It is a good idea for the individual to create their own "work guide" to be used as a personal reference document. The work guide should be straightforward and unambiguous (using simple language such as, "First I do this, then I do that"). Flow charts are useful for capturing decision-making processes. A brightly coloured hardbound A4 book with a new page for each new instruction or task is ideal. The work guide should include an overview of all the tasks in sequence. This will help the person to consolidate memory and learning, and to focus – three key issues for people with ADHD.

Prompts from colleagues and managers during the probationary period will help to establish routines. Other helpful tactics include using job reminders, the "daybook" (to recall and prioritise tasks), Outlook calendars, mobile phone reminders, post-it notes, message boards and templates. Any strategy or technological facility that helps to reinforce initial learning should be regarded as useful investment.

Regular meetings between the employee and their line manager, initially every week (and then less frequently) and always held at the same time of day, are vital for prioritisation, organisation and concentration. To avoid lapses in concentration, the working day should be structured to allow for breaks and task changes. As time management is a critical issue, employees with ADHD should be encouraged to make use of the office or computer clock. I also provide clients with exercises to do at their desk, such as breathing exercises and visualisation strategies.

### **Support from the employer and self-management**

To be successful in work, a member of staff with ADHD must be supported by an employer who understands and makes adjustments for their different working style. Harnessing the innovation and creativity of an ADHD employee requires a more flexible approach to line management; a degree of micro-management is needed while, at other times, the employee needs more scope to do things 'their way'. In addition, employers should allow for breaks and set checkpoints for





review, as a task progresses, to ensure its prompt delivery.

A work-based assessment can help identify whether technology would make tasks easier. Programs such as Mind Manager or 'C' maps can help with planning and drafting. Texthelp Read and Write is useful for proofreading documents and Dragon Naturally Speaking - a voice activated program - may improve focus when writing e-mails or doing other tasks. A BlackBerry or iPhone can help improve organisation.

More basic equipment that ADHD clients find useful includes noise cancelling headphones, or partitions around the work area to prevent visual and auditory distraction. Coloured spectacles can help if bright light is distracting.

Providing these kinds of resources from the start can help to establish a methodology in the employee's way of working. The employer could also organise training for the human resources staff team, line manager and colleagues, to help them develop

a better understanding of ADHD and ADHD associated behaviours.

Individuals with ADHD can help themselves by taking ownership of ways of working that help them; for example taking a brisk walk at lunchtime, a cigarette break or a coffee break. They need to understand that breaks are an important part of self-management, and learn to be proactive by taking one, before becoming too distracted themselves or too distracting to colleagues.

People with ADHD sometimes display a lack of awareness of other people's needs. This may manifest itself in a number of ways: talking too much or too loudly (both in the office and on the phone), asking inappropriate questions, being too blunt, or calling out across the office.

They may also use diversionary strategies for themselves, such as making endless cups of coffee. They may also stay late, or adopt other unusual working patterns. If this is disruptive to the team, timekeeping needs to be addressed. The line

manager needs to understand the condition and be supported by the management to tackle this.

The line manager is on the frontline of implementing the Equalities Act (which replaced most of the DDA on 1st October 2010). To be successful they need to understand ADHD and the individual profile of their ADHD employee. This is best achieved through discussion to identify preferred ways of working that still enable business outcomes.

Help with prioritisation and organisation are often key issues to be addressed, and can't be over emphasised. Verbal statements should be backed up by e-mail, and any issues should be addressed as soon as they arise. Good management tools in the form of regular feedback (constructive criticism or relevant praise) is especially important to the ADHD group.

#### **Life Milestones**

Major life events (for example, moving house, divorce, having a new baby in the home, or problems

with children or money) can have a bigger impact on people with ADHD than on others. Even minor changes to day-to-day living can have a disruptive impact and throw them off-balance. It is important for the employer and line manager to understand that everyday living can be especially difficult for employees with ADHD. Having a structure within the organisation to help with blips, or with bigger crises, is important.

A smaller organisation may use a buddy or outside agencies; in larger organisations, the welfare department or occupational health department may provide support. It is important that the line manager feels supported and is not expected to go out of their area of specialism. Flexible management may be helpful; for example, granting time off to deal with immediate issues. The important thing is to provide a structure within which flexible management can operate.

Discussion and agreement on how to manage a crisis is vital, as life events often overflow into the workplace, but the employer should not feel obliged to exceed their responsibilities. Rather, they should signpost the employee towards other organisations; for example, the Citizens Advice Bureau, which can be especially helpful in managing difficult legal or financial situations.

#### **Conclusion**

My client group is varied: I may be working with a highflying manager one day and an administrative assistant the next. The common factor they share is their ADHD.

Key issues for many highflying people with ADHD are not knowing when to stop going round in circles, and being unable to see the wood for the trees. Kernels of brilliance that would help them and their organisations get lost in the mix. However, whoever the client is, the approach remains the same. Stopping, thinking and analysing before proceeding is the best way of working, whatever the task. This basic structure, implemented and accepted on a good day, can become the framework that helps people with ADHD stay on track on a bad day.

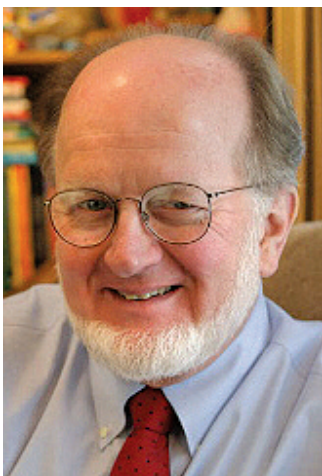
My focus is the workplace; its daily routine, structure and sense of community give people with ADHD stability and the opportunity of a route to professional success. I do not counsel or offer therapy, that is left to other professionals. My ethos is to encourage success in one area, in the belief that this can result in a positive domino effect on people's lives as a whole.

# ADHDnews

## High IQ is no defence against ADHD

By Dr Thomas E Brown, Yale Clinic for Attention and Related Disorders, Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine

**A new study from Yale University has found that bright students are not immune from the cognitive difficulties that plague other children and adolescents with attention deficit disorder.**



Youth with high IQs and ADHD suffered difficulty with working memory, processing speed, organisation and focus, according to the study published online July 26 2011 in the Open Journal of Psychiatry.

"When children and adolescents with high IQ and ADD are struggling with their studies, parents, teachers and physicians tend to blame their difficulties with focus and output on laziness or lack of motivation" said Dr Thomas E. Brown, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry, associate director of the Yale Clinic for Attention and Related Disorders, and senior author of the study. "They assume that a high IQ student cannot suffer from ADD."

Researchers identified 117 students aged 6 to 17 years old with IQ scores within the top

9% of the population. All these students fully met diagnostic criteria for ADD. The study measured IQ, narrative recall and ability to organise and initiate tasks while managing frustration.

Dr Brown found patterns of impairment in all of these measures in this sample of young people with ADD. For instance, a high IQ child without ADD is likely to have high scores on all four sections of the IQ test, but 75-80% of those with ADD scored high on two sections but significantly lower on working memory and processing speed. In the narrative recall test, most children who do well on the verbal portion of the IQ test do well on recall, high IQ children with ADD did considerably worse.

High IQ children with ADD are rarely diagnosed with ADD until late in their schooling, after the disorder has caused lasting damage to their academic progress and self-esteem, Brown said.

Brown hopes that this study increases awareness amongst parents, educators and physicians that ADD can occur in smart children - and that it can be diagnosed and treated.

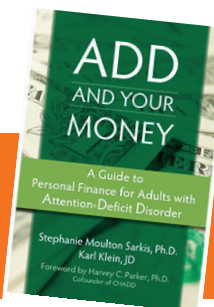
This study extends findings these same researchers obtained in an earlier published study of 157 high IQ adults with ADD. Similar results were obtained in both age groups.

For more information on this study, contact Dr Brown at [thomas.e.brown@yale.edu](mailto:thomas.e.brown@yale.edu)

## The ADDISS Book shop

**ADD and your money:**  
a guide to personal finance for adults with attention deficit disorder

By Stephanie Moulton Sarkis, PhD, & Karl Klein, JD  
Published by New Harbinger Publications, paperback 156 pages  
ISBN 978 1 5722 4707 9 £17.99



People with ADD often have difficulties with money because of their problems with impulsivity, memory and organisation.

Stephanie is an ADD and ADHD counsellor and coach. She has written a very ADD-friendly book with accessible help on building a stable relationship with money.

She offers practical advice on a range of important issues, such as creating a budget, keeping track of bills, controlling debt and using - and losing - your credit card. Her advice on planning weddings, childcare and even divorce comes with easy-to-use lists. Fortunately

the advice on medical insurance is not applicable to UK readers, who enjoy the benefits of the free NHS!

This book is aimed primarily at a US audience, but much of her sensible advice will be helpful to a UK reader as well.

This book, and many others, is available online through the ADDISS shop. Do take a look at our website. We are always adding new titles and offering special discounts to members.

Contact us for the weblink details to obtain your special offers.

**Book Review by Cathy Mercer**

Have you read any interesting or helpful books on the topic of ADHD? We are very keen to include reviews in our newsletters. Please contact ADDISS for details of the print deadlines.

These and many more titles are available from the ADDISS book shop: [www.addiss-shop.com](http://www.addiss-shop.com)

## Tangle toys



The Tangle Toy is a series of eighteen 90-degree curves, connected in a loop and able to pivot at each joint. It has no beginning and no end, just continuous motion. ADHD children and young people are able to use the toy to improve their attention span, and to control fidgeting hands. Tangle toys can be used to problem solve as they are manipulated into different shapes. Fine motor skills are developed as the muscles in the hands and fingers are gently exercised

through the twisting and turning motion of the toy.

Tangle Toys are available in a variety of colours from the ADDISS online shop from £5 each, or £9 for two toys (including postage and packing for UK addresses). Multi-coloured and textured versions are also available on a limited basis.



## Concerta XL has licence extended into adulthood

Following a decision by the relevant European regulatory authorities, the MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency) has approved changes to the CONCERTA XL SmPC to include guidance on the continuation of use into adulthood. This means that clinicians in the UK can now continue the

treatment of their ADHD patients with CONCERTA XL into adulthood (beyond 18 years of age). Good news for those that have shown clear benefit from treatment in adolescence, and whose symptoms persist into adulthood.

**There is still no licence for the use of Concerta XL for treatment initiated in adulthood.**



## Local Group News

# Liverpool Adult ADHD - Ladders of Life Ltd and ADHD Works!®

By LOL's chair – Andrew Williams

**Liverpool Adult ADHD – Ladders of Life Ltd (LOL) continues to go from strength-to-strength. We support ADHD sufferers and their families, raise awareness and campaign for improved provision and recognition. Most importantly, we provide much-needed bespoke services to increase the knowledge and understanding of ADHD amongst health, education and social care practitioners. We also devise and deliver an innovative suite of services to enable adults with ADHD to lead productive and fulfilling lives, to achieve their personal, educational and employment goals in a supportive and empathetic environment.**

The delivery of ADHD Works!® is a continuing success. This bespoke course has been developed and specifically designed to give adults with ADHD confidence and understanding of their condition, as well as personal and employment skills to enable them to seek and secure employment. ADHD adults can then take control of their lives and make a positive contribution to their families.

ADHD Works!® is the only course in the world that combines an understanding of adult ADHD, in all its forms and attendant co-morbidity factors, with an emphasis on personal development (including gaining formal qualifications) and employment. This is fostered in a knowledgeable and empathetic environment.

It is a uniquely integrated, inclusive and specifically targeted practical response to the needs of Adults with ADHD and related conditions. The course combines the cross-cutting themes of personalisation, health and well-being, as well as social and employment skills in a way that has produced remarkable results in terms of skills and qualifications achieved, understanding fostered and, crucially, employment gained by adults with ADHD - most of whom had been long-term unemployed and had not benefited from previous mainstream interventions that were intrinsically unsuitable.

The impact and positive results from the course have attracted significant political interest and support. Recently we had a request to host a visit from Sir Robert Devereux, Permanent Secretary for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Sir Robert had heard so much about ADHD Works!® from senior DWP and Jobcentre Plus staff, that he wanted to personally meet beneficiaries and

participants to discuss their experiences. LOL also presented at the national Welfare to Work convention in Manchester to much acclaim, and generated interest from Work Programme prime contractors across the country.



Sir Robert Devereux with Teresa Fitzgerald and Shirley Hand - Founders and Directors of LOL

Sir Robert heard details of success stories and life changes that have taken place, and said "The energy of the participants and their enthusiasm for the course was inspiring. The confidence and clarity with which they were able to express their experiences and how they had benefited was a great endorsement of the programme and the support you provide. It also underlined for me the potential that schemes like yours can unlock in the adults you support, and how it can benefit their families."

Sir Robert also commented that he was keen to support this initiative, and requested that detailed written information should be sent to him personally.

All of this seemed barely possible in 2001 when Teresa walked into her

local community centre and asked if it was okay to start an ADHD Family Support Group there. Her son, Daniel, had been diagnosed with ADHD and Asperger Syndrome, and when she attempted to access support services she soon realised that no such services, or purposeful help, existed. Teresa thought that a support group with an emphasis on practical, empathetic and shared experiences might assist other parents, and families, struggling to understand and positively deal with their child's diagnosis and future needs.

As the membership grew, Teresa and Shirley's knowledge and experience of ADHD increased. In the first five years, literally hundreds of families were supported and helped. Teresa and Shirley soon began to realise that the parents of the children also seemed to be exhibiting the characteristics of ADHD. This was of crucial importance. If parents had ADHD as well as their children, then the functioning of the whole family was massively impacted.

Armed with this insight, Teresa and Shirley decided in 2006 to re-direct the emphasis of the group towards support and assistance for adults with ADHD. They reasoned that they could have a more positive impact on the family if they could help parents to understand and manage their own condition.

The lack of any dedicated statutory services for ADHD adults remained a huge barrier. There were no doctors willing to diagnose adults with ADHD in the Merseyside and Wirral area. Even now, the adult services paradigm is virtually non-existent. So, an awareness raising

and service provision campaign was launched. This included lobbying elected Councillors and MPs, trips to Parliament to meet Ministers and canvassing celebrity support from football stars, such as Steven Gerrard. Singers and Hollywood movie stars, including Tom Cruise, lent their support and encouragement. The group membership were also involved in promoting the issues, and demonstrating their relevance to wider society.

Finally, in 2009, all that work bore fruit. Liverpool and Wirral Primary Care Trusts agreed to fund a doctor to diagnose and treat adults with ADHD. However, what may have seemed like the end, was really only the beginning. That same year, Teresa and Shirley decided to form LOL as a social enterprise, as there was an overwhelming need for services that could supplement and complement any medical treatment that was on offer. Indeed, this was the missing part of the equation; services targeted at education and employment, in congruence with the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines, would help adults with ADHD go on to lead fulfilling and productive lives, adding value to society and benefitting their families and communities. This is, and will always remain, the vision and ethos of LOL.

Teresa and Shirley appreciate the support they have received from ADDISS. "Without the encouragement of Andrea Bilbow, and the team at ADDISS, we wouldn't be where we are now. Andrea has been a constant source of good advice and support, well-informed and passionate, and we're looking forward to working with her, and everyone at ADDISS, to maximise the potential and positive impact of ADHD Works!®."

For more information on service delivery training and licensing arrangements for ADHD Works!® please contact Andrew Williams - **07961 241 325 or [andrew.williams@edt.org.uk](mailto:andrew.williams@edt.org.uk)**

### Do you have a story about your local ADHD support group?

We are keen to feature the work that local groups do to improve the lives of ADHD children, young people, adults and their carers. If you have any projects or innovative ideas then please let us know and we can feature your group on the Local Group News page in future editions of the newsletter.

# ADHD news

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## Advertising Rates

The ADDISS newsletter is sent out to families and professional practitioners with an interest in ADHD issues four times a year. It is also distributed at events and training workshops, and after six months the newsletter is available on the ADDISS website, where it can be viewed by an international audience.

Advertising space is available as a quarter, half or whole page.

**Contact us for rates, and details of editorial deadlines.**

## Subscribe to ADDISS

When you become a member of ADDISS you will receive this newsletter four times a year, along with discounted entrance to conferences and training events. You will also receive our online newsletter, with news updates related to ADHD. A year's subscription costs £35 for professionals and £25 for parents, or adults, with ADHD. You can subscribe online, or telephone our office for an application form.

<http://www.addiss.co.uk/subscribe.htm>

## Volunteering opportunities at ADDISS

### Helpline assistant and general office administration

ADDISS has opportunities for well-motivated people who wish to volunteer on our national telephone helpline. This is a great opportunity for someone who is between jobs and wishes to learn first hand, from parents, what it's like living day-to-day with a child with ADHD – or being an adult who may, or may not, have a diagnosis, and the barriers they face in getting the help they need. Training will be provided, and these opportunities may lead to paid employment.

Full travel and parking expenses will be reimbursed. This is a part-time post working on a rota.

**If you would like further information please email:**  
[trustees@addiss.co.uk](mailto:trustees@addiss.co.uk) or  
telephone 020 8952 1515

### Trustees

New trustees play a huge role in bringing in fresh ideas and new skills, and we always welcome applications from members of the public to join our board. If you feel you have skills that would help build and support the charity, please contact our Chair of Trustees for an information pack. Please email [trustees@addiss.co.uk](mailto:trustees@addiss.co.uk)

### On the website

As well as a wide range of useful resources and items of information, we also link to articles of interest.

### Conference Papers

We are preparing for the ADDISS 10th International Conference in March 2012. If you would like to present a paper then please submit a 50-word synopsis to [andrea@addiss.co.uk](mailto:andrea@addiss.co.uk) by 30th November 2011.

## Important Dates for your diary

### September

#### 22nd and 23rd September 2011

ADHD a Lifespan Condition  
a two day Adult ADHD Network  
Conference in London (UKAAN)

#### 24th September 2011

A one day event looking at the  
psychological treatment for ADHD  
adolescents and adults (UKAAN)

#### 29th and 30th September 2011

Two day licensed course in London  
for parenting practitioners on  
1-2-3 Magic (ADDISS)

### October

#### 6th and 7th October 2011

WhyTry training in Ireland  
(ADDISS)

#### 10th and 11th October 2011

WhyTry training in London  
(ADDISS)

#### 15th October 2011

##### Practical Responses to ADHD

A one day conference in London for  
adults with ADHD and the people  
who care for them (ADDISS)

#### 20th and 21st October 2011

1-2-3 Magic course in Manchester  
for parenting practitioners  
(ADDISS)

### November

#### 3rd November 2011

##### The many faces of ADHD.

A one day conference in London  
for teachers, and parents, of  
children with ADHD and related  
difficulties. The conference will  
be chaired by Dr Nikos Myttas.  
Special guest speakers include  
Professor Loretta Giorcelli and  
Dr Paramala Santosh. (ADDISS)

### For 2012

#### March 2012

ADDISS 10th International  
Conference – three days in London  
(ADDISS)

We also have 1-2-3 Magic  
Practitioner Training in a variety  
of UK venues across the next  
six months. Coming soon – look  
out for a one day 1-2-3 Magic  
course for parents, running in  
London on a weekend. Please  
check our website for details.  
(ADDISS)

For more details, or to book a place  
at any of these events, contact us  
at the ADDISS office or visit  
[www.addiss.co.uk](http://www.addiss.co.uk)

Details of UKAAN events can be  
found on [www.ukaan.org.uk](http://www.ukaan.org.uk)

## My time at ADDISS

By Holly Evans

Since I joined ADDISS in April 2011, life has been non-stop. I have been a friend of ADDISS for over 5 years now and have worked with ADHD families for over 8 years, but nothing prepared me for the total immersion my training has been!

Not only have I been travelling around the country to conferences and delivering training, we have been organising our own conferences in October and November this year, and helping out on the helpline since Elaine left. I have responded to the SEN Green paper and successfully represented families at disability discrimination tribunals.

The helpline has been a baptism of fire. I have so much admiration for Elaine, who manned the helpline for many years. I have spoken to some amazingly resilient parents and an increasing number of adults themselves with ADHD. It is such a privilege to be able to talk to and help people. I am still shocked by the treatment some people receive, but am very heartened that for many service provision and understanding is much better than it was years ago. I am really looking forward to the next few years, as ADDISS goes from strength to strength and we continue to support families and adults with ADHD.

Have you read a book or seen a DVD that you would like to share with other parents and professionals? Please send your reviews to ADHD News.