

# Mental Health Insider

## Attention Deficit Disorder in Adults

In the 1970's, experts began using the term "Attention Deficit Disorder" to describe the condition. While the condition is most often associated with children, symptoms such as inattention, impulsivity and over activity are now known to continue into adulthood for a significant percentage of children with ADD. Unfortunately, relatively few adults are diagnosed or treated for ADD.

### What Causes ADD?

The exact cause or causes of ADD are not conclusively known. Scientific evidence suggests that in many cases the disorder is genetically transmitted and is caused by an imbalance or deficiency in certain chemicals that regulate the efficiency with which the brain controls behavior. A 1990 study at the National Institute of Mental Health correlated ADD with a series of metabolic abnormalities in the brain, providing further evidence that ADD is a neurobiological disorder.

While heredity is often indicated, problems in prenatal development, birth complications, or later neurological damage can contribute to ADD.

There is little scientific evidence to suggest that environmental factors, dietary factors such as food dyes or sugar, inner-ear problems or "visual motor" difficulties are the underlying cause of ADD.

### The Prevalence Of ADD In Adults

The prevalence of ADD in adults is unknown; very few have been studied. About two-thirds of the children who are diagnosed in or before elementary school with ADD continue to have behavioral symptoms in adolescence. An estimated one-third to one-half of these adolescents continue to have symptoms of ADD during their adult years.

### Characteristics Of Adults With ADD

Adults who are living with the condition, and especially those who are undiagnosed and untreated, may be experiencing a number of problems, some of which stem directly from the disorder and others that are the result of associated problems.

Symptoms of an adult with ADD may include:

- Distractibility
- Disorganization
- Forgetfulness



- Procrastination
- Chronic lateness
- Chronic boredom
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Mood swing
- Employment problems
- Restlessness
- Substance abuse or addictions
- Relationship problems

The symptoms of ADD can be variable and situational, or constant. Some people with ADD can concentrate if they are interested or excited, while others have difficulty concentrating under any circumstances. Some avidly seek stimulation, while others avoid it. Some become oppositional, ill-behaved and, later, antisocial; others may become ardent people-pleasers.

*Continued on page 3*

## Mental Health America in Allen County

### Help is Available

Contact Mental Health America in Allen County at (260) 422-6441 for help with finding local mental health providers and other resources in your area.

Go to our website at [mentalhealthallencounty.org](http://mentalhealthallencounty.org)

**Since 1954, Mental Health America in Allen County has been providing education, advocacy, and support to help those individuals struggling with mental illness.**



See back panel to learn more.

### Inside this issue:

Stephanie's story	2
Suicide Survivor Ceremony	2
Welcome to the team	3
Annual Gala information	Back

## Page 2 Healing and hope at Cedars



Hello, my name is Stephanie. I was adopted at the age of three from Toshkent, Uzbekistan. I have lived in the United States for 22 years. I love my adopted family because they saved me from the orphanage.

From a very young age I knew that I was going to have mental and physical problems. I was born with Scoliosis of the spine. I had to learn how to do things slightly different than most kids. I was behind in my learning due to living in an orphanage for three years. I didn't know how to speak English, write, or pronounce my name.

Even though I was behind in school, I still tried my hardest to keep up. I would watch the Discovery Channel all the time so I could learn about

interesting subjects. I was so fascinated by how the human body worked. When I wasn't watching television you could find me in my room listening to music, drawing, or writing poetry.

"When Stephanie was younger she would be asked her name and she would say 'Emily'. At first I was upset by this, but then I realized that Stephanie was trying to create her own identity," said Stephanie's mother.

When I was in college I found out the name of my mental disorder. At first I was I upset by this because I knew it came

from early childhood trauma and abuse. I took several psychology classes, so I was aware of the challenges.

With the help from Cedars HOPE I have been able to live in security and peace. The staff have helped me to deal with my disorder and learn there is more out there for me, and for that I am grateful. I have gone down a hard road, but now I can see the light at the end of the tunnel.



## Suicide Survivor Candlelight Ceremony

On September 10, STOP Suicide Northeast Indiana Coalition and Mental Health America in Allen County held a remembrance ceremony for those who were lost to suicide, and to support those who have survived the suicide of a loved one.



Family and friends gathered for words of encouragement, music, poetry, and a walk across the bridge.

"Our family will never be the same. But together, and moving forward, and having as positive an outlook as we can is to say, 'It's okay to speak about mental illness.' We speak about a lot of other things, and have walks, but suicide and mental illness isn't something that we

talk about, and we need to," said Teresa Harmeyer, a suicide survivor.

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide — get help now! The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be reached at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK). Contact Mental Health America in Allen County at 260-422-6441 for information about prevention or go to [StopSuicideNow.org](http://StopSuicideNow.org).



Camping is good for your mental health! (Photo by Julie Kintz, staff member)



Suicide Survivor Candlelight Ceremony on September 10, 2015 on the Historic Wells Street Bridge

## There is no health without good mental health.

Adult ADD continued...

Why Identify ADD In Adults?

Identification of adults who have ADD and appropriate management of their personal, educational, and social function improves their chances of a productive life. Effective intervention can improve self-esteem, work performance and skills, and educational achievement. A proper diagnosis of ADD by a professional mental health professional can help an adult put his or her difficulties into perspective.

Treatment Methods

The methods of treatment supported by professionals may include a combination of education for the adult and his or her family and close friends, educational/employment accommodations, medication, and counseling. Appropriate treatment is determined according to the severity of an individual's disorder and the type and number

of associated problems.

Many people have benefited from a treatment plan that includes medication. Used in conjunction with education and counseling, it can provide a base from which adults can build new successes. The purpose of medication is to help the adult to help him or herself. It provides the biological support needed for self-control. As such, the individual is not "controlled" by medication; the efforts to succeed are his or her own.

Some tips that adults with ADD have found useful include:

- Use internal structure. This includes using date books, lists, notes to oneself, routines, reminders and files.
Choose "Good Addictions." Select exercise or other healthy, favorite activities for a regular structured "blow-out" time.
Set up a Rewarding Environment. Design

projects, tasks, etc., to minimize or eliminate frustration. Break large tasks into smaller ones; prioritize.

- Use Time-outs. Take time to calm down and regain perspective when upset, overwhelmed or angry. Walk away from a situation if needed.
Become Educated and an Educator. Read books. Talk to professionals. Talk to other adults who have ADD. Let people who matter know about personal strengths and weaknesses related to ADD. Be an advocate.

Resources:

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders (CHADD) Website: www.chadd.org

Source: Mental Health America, http://www.nmha.org/

Volume 4, Issue 4

Board of Directors

- James Dance, President
Victor Torres, Vice Pres.
Laura Ramsey, Treasurer
Dottie Davis, Secretary
Shelia Bertram
Sarah Bridgwater
Albert Brownlee
Kerrie Fineran
Kim Furhmann
Jane Holliday
Amy Lehrman
Jere Leib
Carlton Mable
Nancy McAfee
Amy Nitza
Marci Olinger
Rachel Steinhofner
James Stump
MHAAC Staff
Lisa Smith, Director
Shalynn Bailey
Joseph Blazier
Julie Cameron
Angela Helmsing
Jen Manske
Susan Street
Cedars HOPE Staff
Nancy Yoo, Supervisor
Lisa Adams
Julie Kintz
Amanda Lapham
Samantha Novy
Laurie Zigler



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID FORT WAYNE, IN PERMIT NO. 449



TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE! Tickets are \$85/person or \$150/couple. To purchase tickets, go to our website at www.MentalHealthAllenCounty.org to buy using credit card or PayPal or call our office at (260) 422-6441.

Be the one that helps children, adults and families in our community living with mental illness.



The honor of your presence is requested at the

Annual Gala

The evening of Saturday, October 17

Landmark Conference & Reception Centre 6222 Ellison Road Fort Wayne, Indiana

Cocktails @ 6:00 p.m. Dinner-Prime Rib Buffet @ 7:00 p.m.

The night includes a silent auction and a live performance by PrimeTime.

Join us for dinner, drinks, and entertainment while we raise support so we can reach more people in Northeast Indiana. Last year, Mental Health America in Allen County provided advocacy, housing, education and wellness programs to more than 3,200 individuals. With your support, we can do even more to improve mental health conditions in our community, giving those we serve a chance to thrive.

We are all affected by mental illness.

Welcome to our team!

My name is Shalynn Bailey, the new VASIA Program Coordinator. I am originally from Portland, Indiana and moved to Fort Wayne eight years ago to attend college. I am a graduate of the IPFW Human Services Program, and currently studying for my masters in social work through Indiana University School of Social Work. While attending IPFW, I was a Peer Health Educator, Certified Gatekeeper, senator for the Indiana Purdue Student Government Association, and a volunteer Ombudsman. I enjoy traveling, horseback riding, and music events.



Silent Auction List: Wine & Canvas party for 10 with local artist Terry Ratliff, SweetAviation helicopter ride, dinner at the Fire House (cooked by local fire fighters), a day with the FWPD SWAT Team, lunch and behind-the-scenes tour from the Children's Zoo, clothing by CABI, art items, jewelry, and many more treasures from local merchants.