



Ask the Expert



**National
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Center
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A Program of CHADD

Webcast Series

**Presented by the
National Resource Center on ADHD**



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www.Help4ADHD.org
(800) 233-4050
Help4ADHD@CHADD.org

Ask the Expert

Understanding Girls with ADHD



Ellen B. Littman, PhD

**A recording of today's webinar will be
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If you are having difficulties with asking questions or would like to talk with a Health Information Specialist

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Ellen B. Littman, PhD
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To Ask A Question:



The image shows a mobile interface for GoToWebcast. At the top, the text 'GoToWebcast' is displayed in a white font on a black background. Below this, a large black area contains the white text 'Please stand by for this program' with a dashed line underneath. A control bar below the black area includes a play button, a square button, a refresh button, a back button, a volume icon, and the word 'Playing'. Below the control bar is a section titled 'Ask a Question' with a downward-pointing triangle icon. This section contains a white text input field and a grey 'Send' button. Below the 'Send' button is a section titled 'Answered Questions' with a rightward-pointing triangle icon. An orange circle highlights the 'Ask a Question' section, and a red arrow points to it from the left.



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WHY GIRLS ARE UNDER-DIAGNOSED

- ◆ Research only recently included girls
- ◆ Less aggressive and disruptive behaviors
- ◆ More subtle symptoms can be overlooked
- ◆ Lack of awareness of hormone involvement
- ◆ Later age of apparent onset
- ◆ Misdiagnosed based on observable symptoms
- ◆ Gender referral bias
- ◆ Rating scales still skewed



UNIQUE DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS

- ◆ Hormonal mediation of symptoms
- ◆ Greater likelihood of inattentive type
- ◆ Gender role expectations
- ◆ Centrality of peer relationships
- ◆ Greater likelihood of internalized symptoms
- ◆ Greater severity of negative outcomes

GIRLS' UNIQUE PATTERN OF FUNCTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS

- ◆ Fluctuations in emotional reactivity
- ◆ More internalized anxiety and depression
- ◆ Poorer self-perceptions
- ◆ More problems with peer relations
- ◆ More somatic complaints
- ◆ More external locus of control



PREDOMINANTLY INATTENTIVE GIRLS

- ◆ Daydreamers, lethargic
- ◆ Compliant, passive academically
- ◆ Socially awkward, shy
- ◆ Easily overwhelmed & discouraged
- ◆ Tuned out, withdrawn
- ◆ Difficult to wake up and initiate activity
- ◆ Low self-esteem, rejection-sensitive

COMBINED TYPE GIRLS

- ◆ Hyper-talkative, poor listeners
- ◆ Hyper-social, charismatic
- ◆ Hyper-reactive, excitable
- ◆ ‘Drama queens’, demanding
- ◆ Fidgety, restless
- ◆ Trouble falling asleep
- ◆ Blames others, critical
- ◆ Controlling, stubborn



COMMON EXPERIENCES FOR GIRLS

- ◆ Feel unfairly criticized
- ◆ Fear peer rejection
- ◆ Second-guess and censor themselves
- ◆ Feel demoralized by underachievement
- ◆ Feel ashamed of perceived inadequacies
- ◆ Distorted body image
- ◆ Willing to accept invalidation

THE RISKS OF IMPULSIVITY

- ◆ More likely to pursue risky behavior
- ◆ More prone to addictive behavior
- ◆ More likely to develop eating disorders
- ◆ More verbal and relational aggression
- ◆ More likely to have friends of convenience
- ◆ More likely to act on feelings of desperation

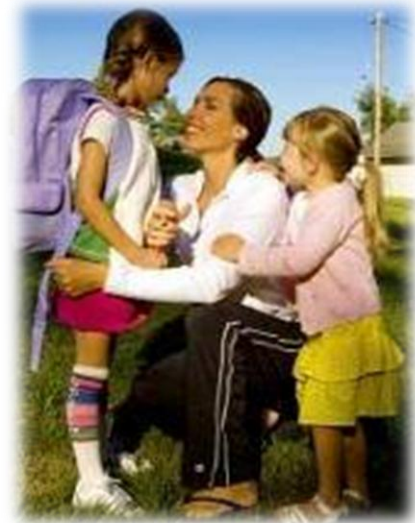


HIGH IQ INATTENTIVE GIRLS

- ◆ Huge disparity between intellectual and social/emotional functioning
- ◆ Successful academic performance
- ◆ Strive to conform/mask differences
- ◆ Compensate by obsessive hypervigilance
- ◆ Tend to feel guilty and ashamed
- ◆ Socially avoidant
- ◆ Reluctant to ask for help
- ◆ Least likely to be diagnosed

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

- ◆ Family psychoeducation/parent counseling
- ◆ Instill confidence in potential for academic success
- ◆ Gradually teach/transfer responsibilities
- ◆ Make home more ADHD-friendly
- ◆ Encourage downtime as a tool
- ◆ Help identify ‘islands of competence’
- ◆ Find a professional who gets it





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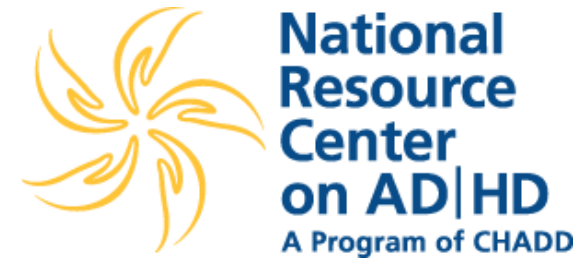
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Ask the Expert Grandparenting when a Child has ADHD

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