

Newsletter

Summer 2022



LISTENING AND LEARNING SESSIONS

Center's first listening and learning session "powerful and informative"

Participants shared and connected during May's "Adult Women with ADHD" session

By all accounts, the Duke Center for Girls & Women with ADHD's inaugural listening and learning session was a success!

Listening and learning sessions are virtual forums in which individuals can discuss their related experiences. The information that the Center staff gather from these sessions guides the development of future education and outreach initiatives.

Ten adult women who identified themselves as having ADHD took part in this first session, which was held in May 2022 and facilitated by Jennifer Gierisch, PhD, the Center's associate director of engagement. The women ranged in age from 23 to 60 years old.

"Hearing directly from girls and women living with ADHD is critical to properly supporting them and meeting their needs," says Center co-director Julia Schechter, PhD.

The bad, the good and the common themes

Dr. Gierisch calls the session "profoundly powerful and informative."

"Women shared their stories about seeking accurate diagnoses; barriers they faced to being recognized – due to their gender – as people who could have ADHD; and their current struggles with managing their symptoms," she says.

"I was in awe of how kind, supportive and affirming the women were to each other; they felt instantly comfortable and connected. The conversation was fast paced and full of great responses to questions."

Dr. Gierisch says she found the emergence of shared themes among the varied participants noteworthy.

"One thing that really struck a chord with me is how each person's story was unique but also tied to a shared narrative on the gender-specific issues of women with ADHD."

Themes that arose as the women talked included masking ADHD symptoms; barriers to receiving ADHD evaluations and diagnoses; and strategies and interventions that help them thrive.

[Check out the summary of the May 2022 listening session to learn more about the themes that emerged, read participant quotes and more.](#)

Upcoming sessions will engage wide-ranging participants, including fathers

Future listening and learning sessions will engage different populations of females with ADHD – teenagers, for example – as well as people who have relationships with ADHD females, such as health care professionals, educators and family members. Our September 30 session will host fathers of girls diagnosed with ADHD. *(See below.)*

All sessions will stay small and likely offer participants ways to keep in touch afterward.

"Keeping the listening and learning sessions to about ten people fosters meaningful engagement and a safe space for sharing," says Dr. Gierisch. "And because many of the women wanted ways to stay connected after the first session, we'll have to look for ways that future participants can do that if they desire to."

[Subscribe to our newsletter](#) and/or follow us on social media to find out about upcoming sessions. To learn more about taking part in a listening and learning session, complete an [interest form](#).

Attention, fathers of daughters diagnosed with ADHD!

The Center's next virtual listening and learning session – scheduled for September 30 – is for you. To learn more about participating, complete an [interest form](#).



Videos examine ADHD gender differences in the workplace

Last year Dr. Gierisch and camp administrator Scott Hicok discussed – through the lens of gender – their professional experiences as people with ADHD. Among the many things they shared were strategies for managing ADHD challenges and maximizing ADHD strengths in the workplace.



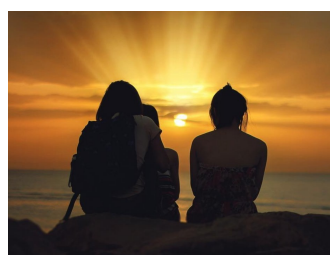
We encourage you to watch the [six short videos of this discussion](#) ("ADHD in the workplace as a woman and a man") on [the Center's YouTube channel](#) and share your thoughts and questions.

Center volunteer recalls growing up with a sister with ADHD

In "[Getting a good seat at life's table](#)" Duke undergraduate student and Center volunteer Annie Feibel shared what it was like to grow up with a sibling with ADHD – and what she continues to learn from watching her sister's journey.



Give this firsthand account a read or share it with someone who might be able to relate.



On the horizon

Our staff met in July to reflect on the Center's progress over the past 10 months and to plan for the future. Here are some of the things on the horizon that we're looking forward to:

- A listening and learning session for fathers of girls with ADHD
- Female-specific information to help parents of girls with ADHD navigate educational services, including a piece that explains the differences between individualized education plans (IEPs) and Section 504 plans
- Resources to help laypeople better understand ADHD research
- "Road to Diagnosis" video series, which will feature women sharing their stories of how they arrived at their ADHD diagnoses

**Help us create a community to better
serve girls and women with ADHD**



As we look toward the future, we want to hear from you. Whether you're the parent, caregiver or spouse of a female with ADHD, a woman with the condition, an educator, health care provider, researcher, employer or anyone else with an interest in ADHD in females, we hope you'll *help us build a network of education, research and outreach*.

Please let us know the type of content you'd like to see on the [Duke Center for Girls & Women with ADHD website](#). Feel free to ask questions of our ADHD experts. And be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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