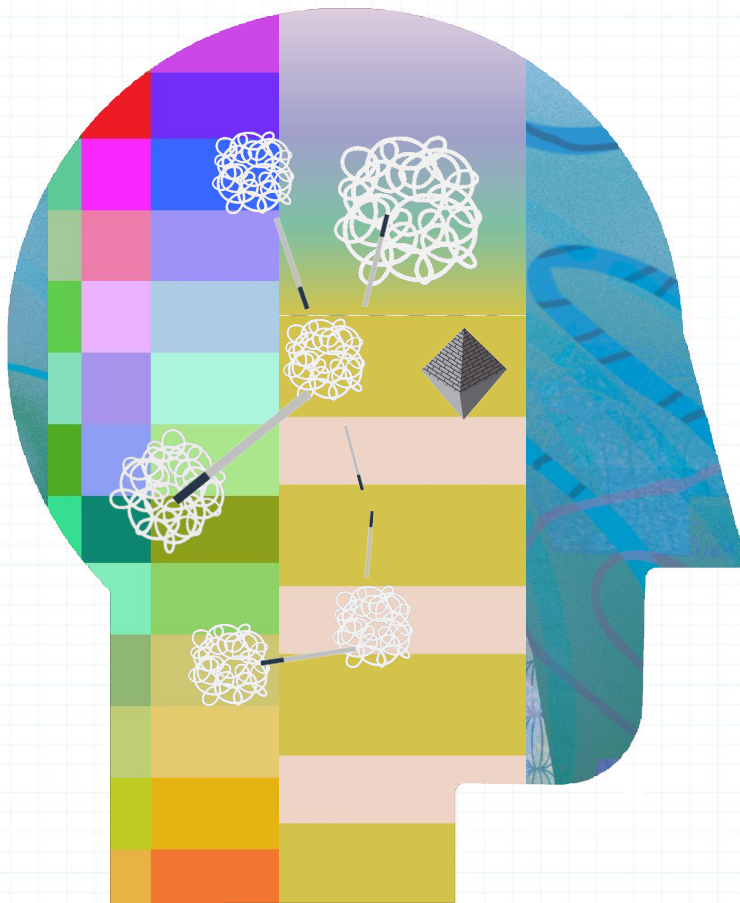


Did you know?

ADHD is a **cognitive structural difference** in how the brain operates.



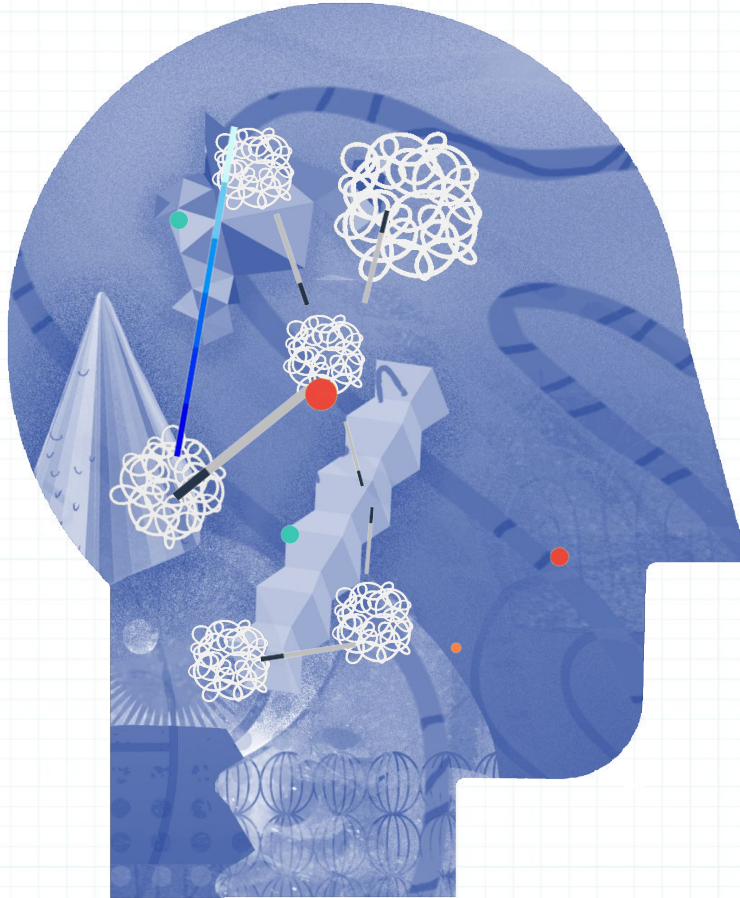
First, what is ADHD?

## Is ADHD Really Just an Attention Disorder?

Although ADHD is commonly referred to as an “attention disorder,” this label can be misleading. Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder involves more than just trouble paying attention, it reflects a deeper issue with executive functioning, emotional regulation, motivation, and task initiation (Singh, 2011; Surman et al., 2011). Rather than a deficit of attention, it often presents as a dysregulation of attention: individuals may struggle to sustain focus on mundane tasks while becoming hyperfocused on activities they find stimulating (Faraone & Biederman, 2005).

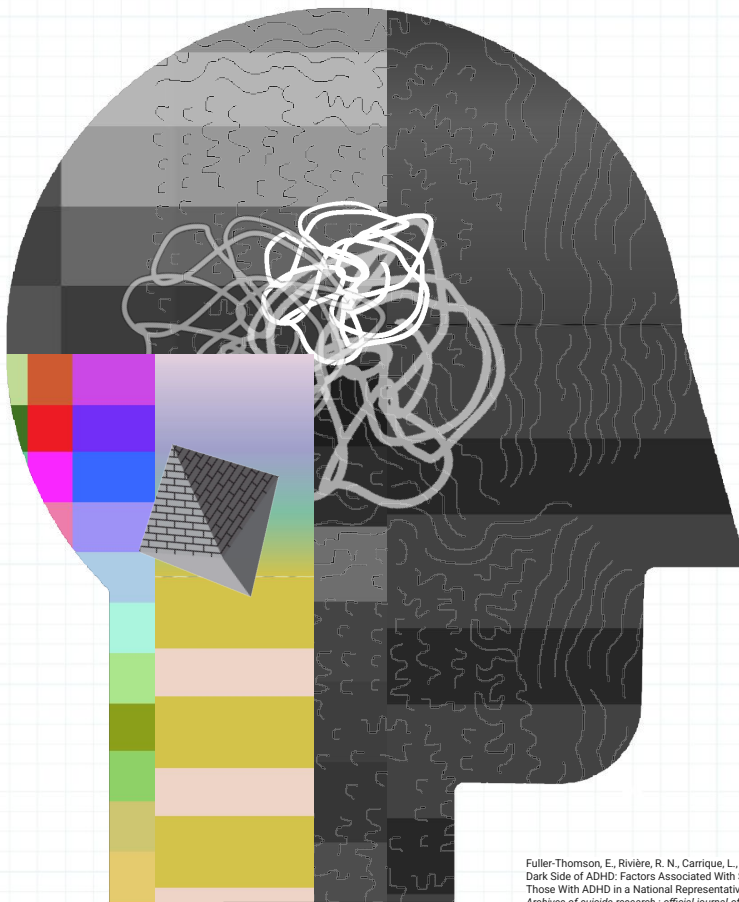
Many experts argue that the diagnostic criteria in the *DSM-5* do not fully capture the breadth of ADHD symptoms, particularly the challenges related to emotional regulation, time management, and internal restlessness (Shaw et al., 2014). As a result, there is growing advocacy for revisions to the *DSM* that would better reflect lived experiences and emerging research (Surman et al., 2011).

These inconsistencies contribute to varied interpretations and understanding among practitioners, making it difficult for some individuals with ADHD to find providers who truly recognize and validate their experiences (Singh, 2011).

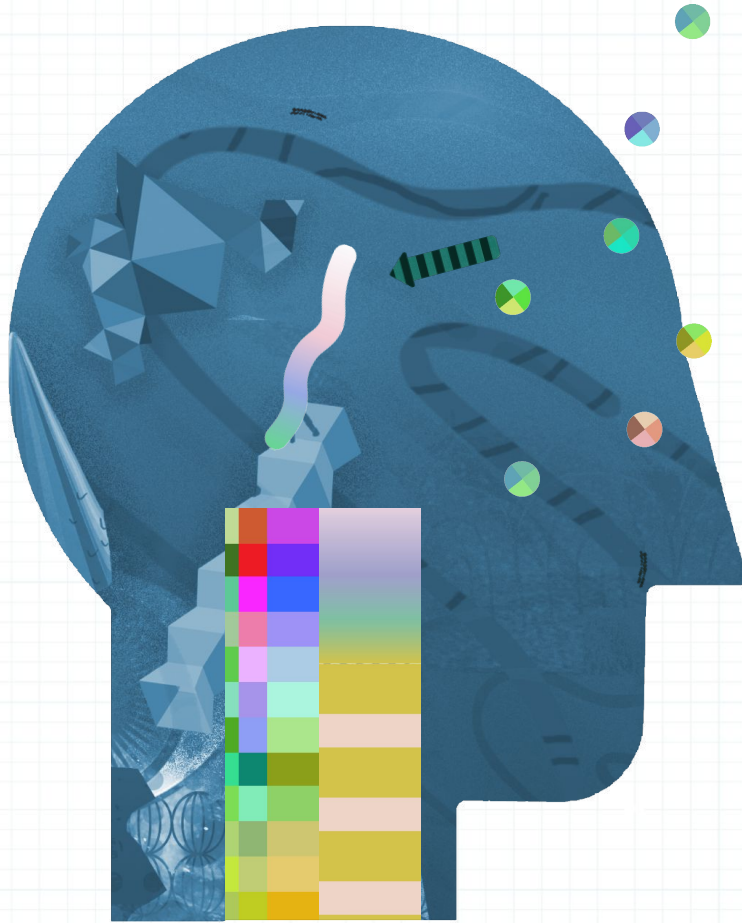


## **ADHD Common traits:**

- \_\_\_ Creativity & Ideation
- \_\_\_ Ability to think divergently & have endless ideas
- \_\_\_ Attraction to novelty
- \_\_\_ Intense Energy Bursts & Burnout
- \_\_\_ RSD & Rejection Sensitivity (Dodson, 2023)
- \_\_\_ Interest Based Nervous System, (Dodson, 2023)
- \_\_\_ Exposure to childhood adversity
- \_\_\_ Emotional Dysregulation
- \_\_\_ "Hyperfocus"



Fuller-Thomson, et al. (2022) found that, “Adults with ADHD were much more likely to have attempted suicide than those without (14.0% vs. 2.7%). One in four women with ADHD have attempted suicide. Sixty percent of the association between ADHD and attempted suicide was attenuated when lifetime history of depression and anxiety disorders were taken into account. Female gender, lower education attainment, substance abuse, lifetime history of depression, and childhood exposure to chronic parental domestic violence were found to be independent correlates of lifetime suicide attempts among those with ADHD.”



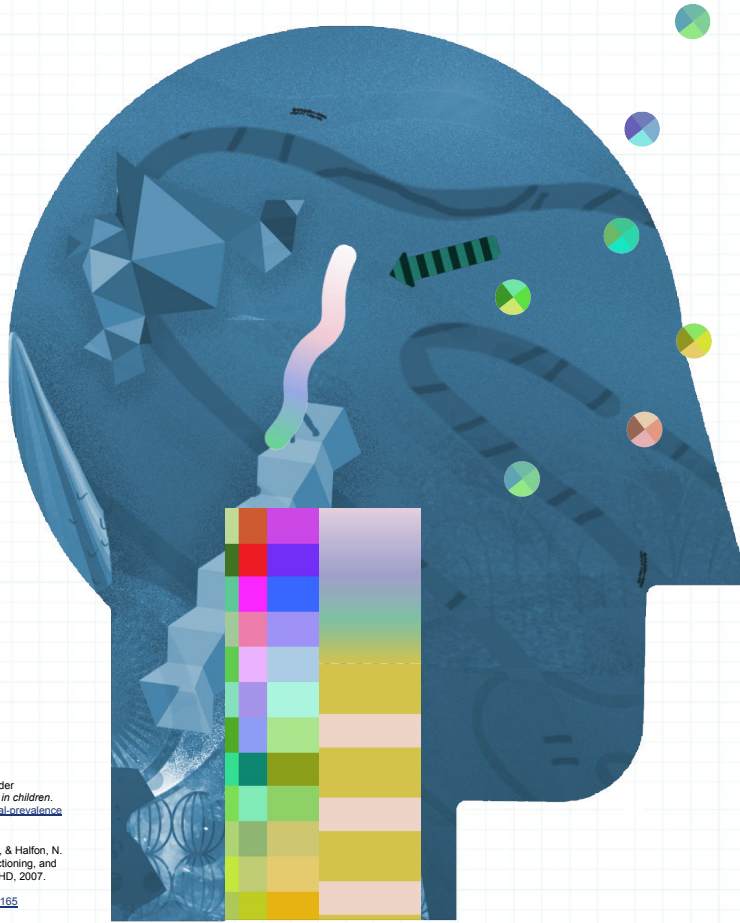
## Common ADHD Characteristics that lead to Crises:

- ... Suicidal Ideation, Planning, & Attempts
- ... Comorbidity
- ... Academic Failure & Job Loss
- ... Challenges with Legal & Financial
- ... Social and Communication Difficulties
- ... Increased Substance Use & Dependency
- ... Emotional Outbursts
- ... Impulsive Behaviors
- ... Difficulty Translating Social Cues
- ... Difficulty Following Social Norms
- ... Difficulty with Emotional Regulation
- ... Hyperactivity and Restlessness
- ... Inattention and Difficulty Focusing
- ... Executive Function Challenges
- ... Physical Manifestations
- ... Withdrawal and Isolation
- ... Increased Sensitivity and Anxiety
- ... Physical Safety Concerns
- ... Challenges with Relationships & Family



## 01. ADHD & Suicidal Behavior

Ziegler et al. 2024 investigate the factors contributing to suicidal behavior in adults with ADHD focusing attention on the role of comorbidity, psychosocial adversity, and personality traits.



Children and Adults with  
Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder  
(CHADD). (n.d.). ADHD prevalence in children.  
<https://chadd.org/about-adhd/general-prevalence-children/>

Larson, K., Russ, S. A., Kahn, R. S., & Halfon, N.  
(2011). Patterns of comorbidity, functioning, and  
service use for US children with ADHD, 2007.  
*Pediatrics*, 127(3), 462–470.  
<https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2010-0165>

## ADHD Comorbidity

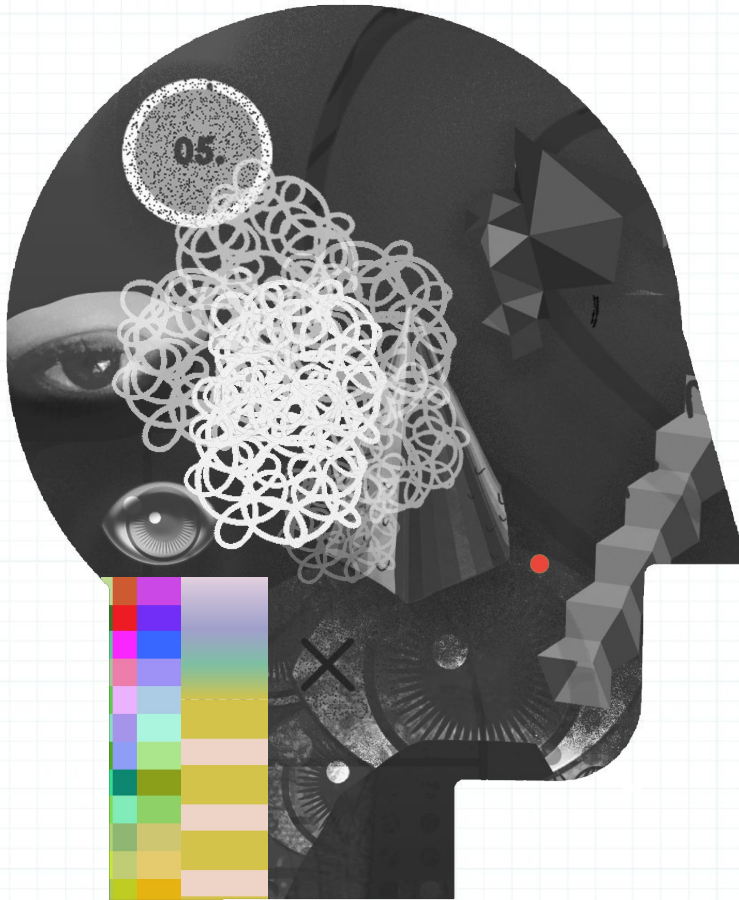
“The 2007 National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH) found that 33% of the children with ADHD had one coexisting condition, 16% had two, and 18% had three or more (Larson 2011):”

### CHILDREN:

- ... Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD): (41% of children) [ChADD](#)
- ... Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): (14.4% of children) [ChADD](#)
- ... **Depressive Disorders: (22% of children)**
- ... Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD): (15% of children)
- ... Learning Disability (31% to 45% of children)

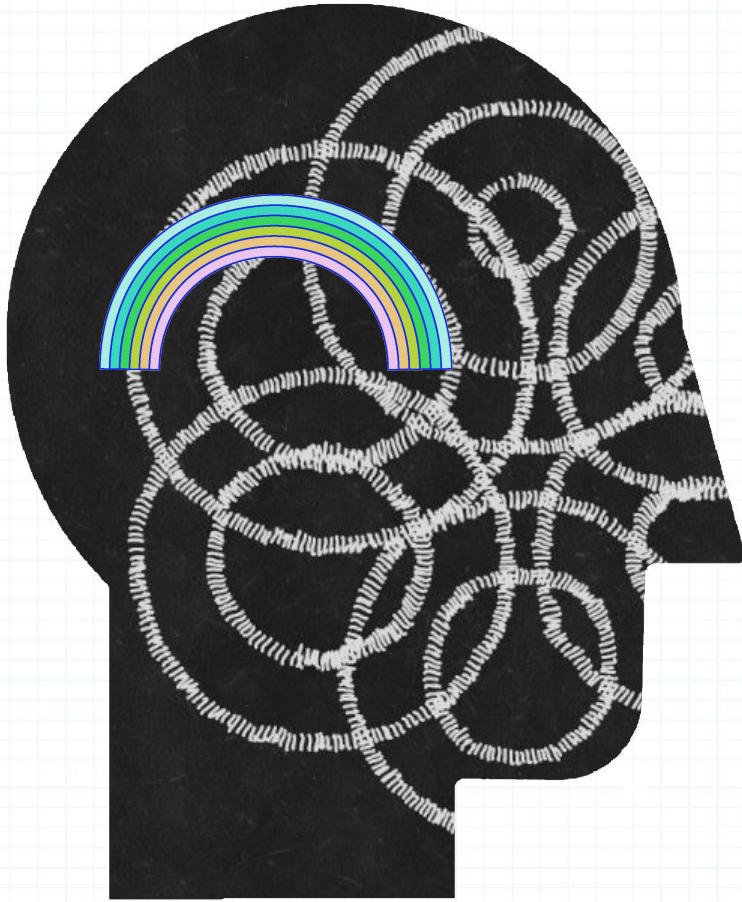
### ADULTS:

- ... **Any mood disorder (38%)**
- ... Major Depressive Disorder (18.6% of Adults)
- ... Bipolar Disorder (19.4%)
- ... **Any Anxiety Disorder (47.1%)**
- ... Generalized Anxiety Disorder (8% Adults)
- ... PTSD (11.9)
- ... Panic Disorder (8.9)
- ... Agoraphobia (4%)
- ... Specific Phobia (22.7%)
- ... **Social Phobia (29.3%)**
- ... Obsessive-compulsive Disorder (OCD) (2.7%)
- ... Any Substance Abuse Disorder (15.2%)
- ... Intermittent Explosive Disorder (19.6%)
- ... Overweight (33%)
- ... Obese (29.4%)



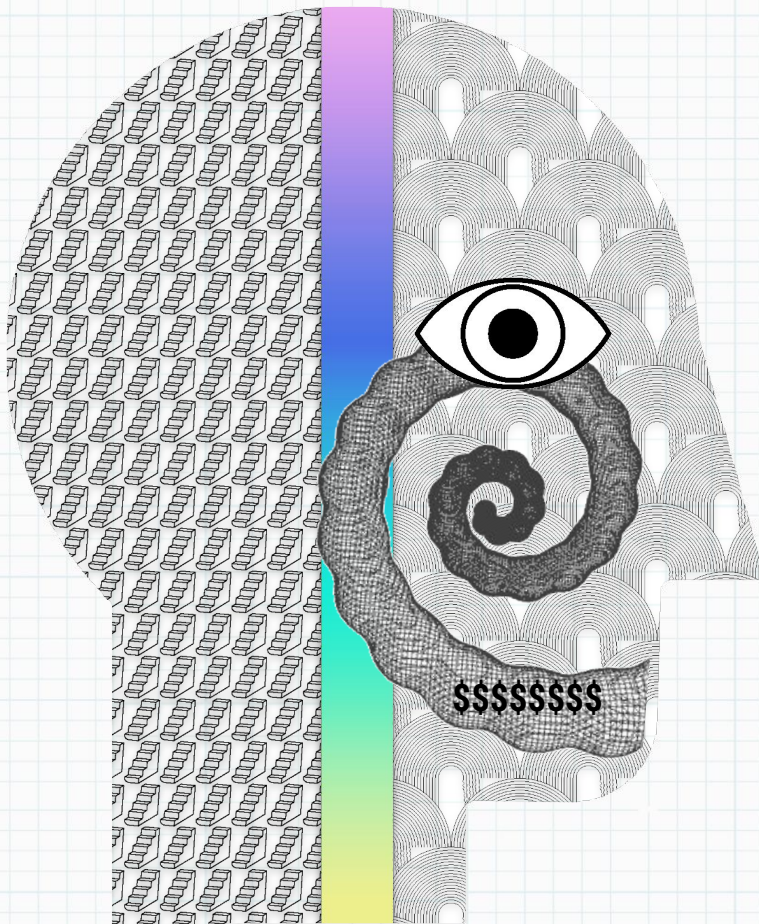
## Prevalence of Suicidal Ideation

Wang et al. (2021) examine the prevalence of **suicidal ideation, plans, and attempts** among **medical college students** with ADHD. It found that individuals with ADHD, particularly the **inattentive (ADHD-I)** and **combined (ADHD-C) subtypes**, have a **significantly higher** risk of suicidal behaviors, independent of other comorbidities. The findings underscore the importance of addressing ADHD symptoms in suicide prevention efforts. (Wang et al. 2021)



## **Psychosocial Adversity / Personality Traits / Comprehensive Assessments / Tailored Interventions /**

Ziegler et al., 2024 emphasize the increased risk of suicide attempts in this population and examines the roles of **comorbid** psychiatric disorders, **psychosocial adversity**, and **specific personality traits**. The findings suggest that **comprehensive assessments** and **tailored interventions** addressing these factors are essential in reducing suicide risk among individuals with ADHD (Ziegler et al., 2024).



## 02. ADHD & Financial Distress

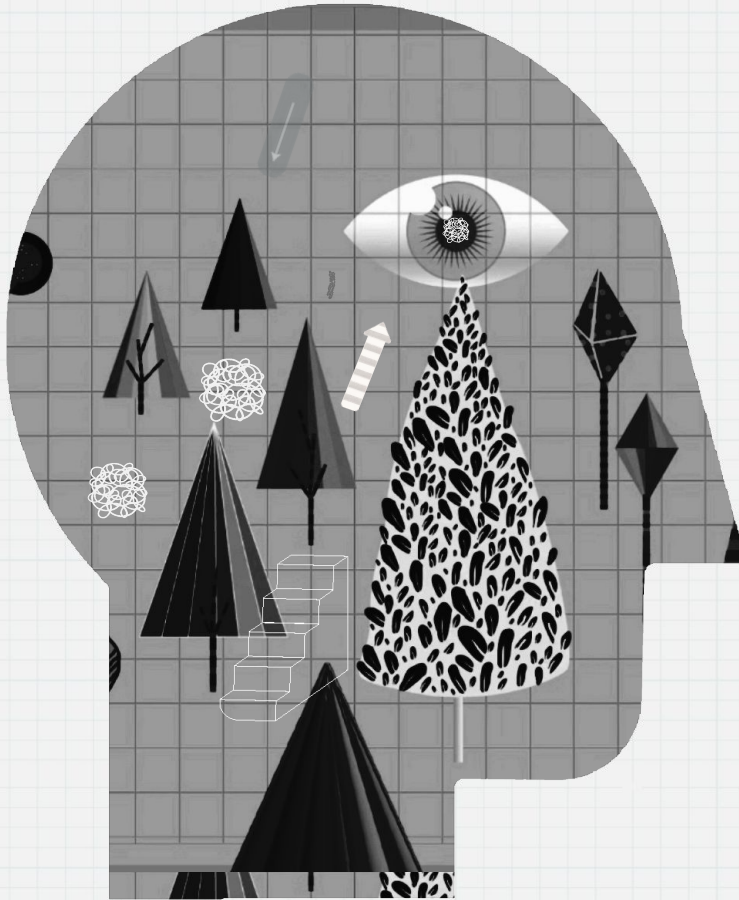
### Suicide in Adulthood

Di Salvo et al., 2024 conducted a population-based study exploring the association between ADHD, financial distress, and suicide risk in adults. It found that individuals diagnosed with ADHD who had higher credit default risks were 3 to 4 times more likely to die by suicide than those without ADHD. The study highlights the critical need for financial counseling and support as part of comprehensive ADHD management to mitigate suicide risk (Di Salvo et al., 2024).



### 03. ADHD + Social Acceptance / Systemic Rejection

Research by Fuller-Thomson et al. (2022) emphasizes the heightened suicide risk in adults with ADHD who experience systemic rejection and chronic social exclusion. This includes persistent feelings of being misunderstood, dismissed, or alienated in educational, occupational, and healthcare systems. The study suggests that long-term stigma and lack of belonging may compound emotional dysregulation, contributing to suicidality. Integrating affirming therapeutic spaces and advocacy for social inclusion is vital for buffering risk and supporting well-being (Fuller-Thomson et al., 2022).



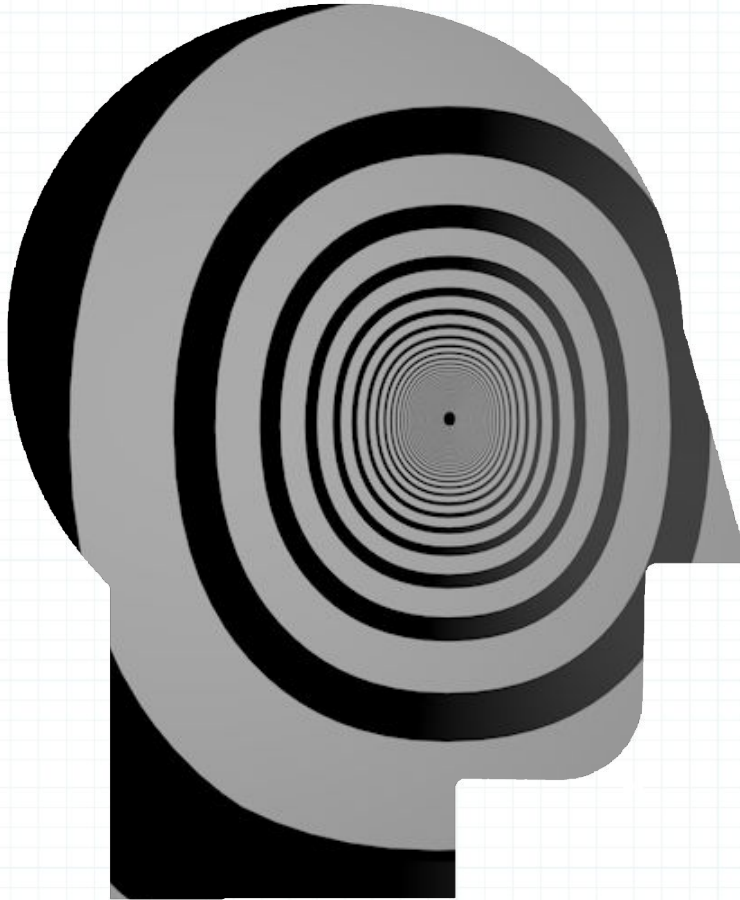
### 03. Academic Failure

Academic failure is a common and painful thread in the lives of many individuals with ADHD, often stemming from unrecognized executive functioning challenges, inattentiveness, and a mismatch between traditional learning environments and neurodiverse processing. Ziegler et al. (2024) found that repeated academic setbacks, particularly when internalized as personal inadequacy, can exacerbate low self-worth and elevate suicide risk. The study calls for early, strengths-based academic support and educational reform that embraces neurodivergent learners as a critical strategy for prevention and long-term resilience (Ziegler et al., 2024).



## Resources Needed :

- **Specialized 24/7 crisis support:** Need for specialized 24/7 crisis support or suicide prevention specifically created for ADHD neurotypes.
- **Access to ADHD-informed therapy** and coaching.
- **Access to ADHD-informed Communities**
- **Help with comorbid concerns** & substance use.
- **Referrals for housing, job support, or legal aid.**
- **Family and caregiver support.**



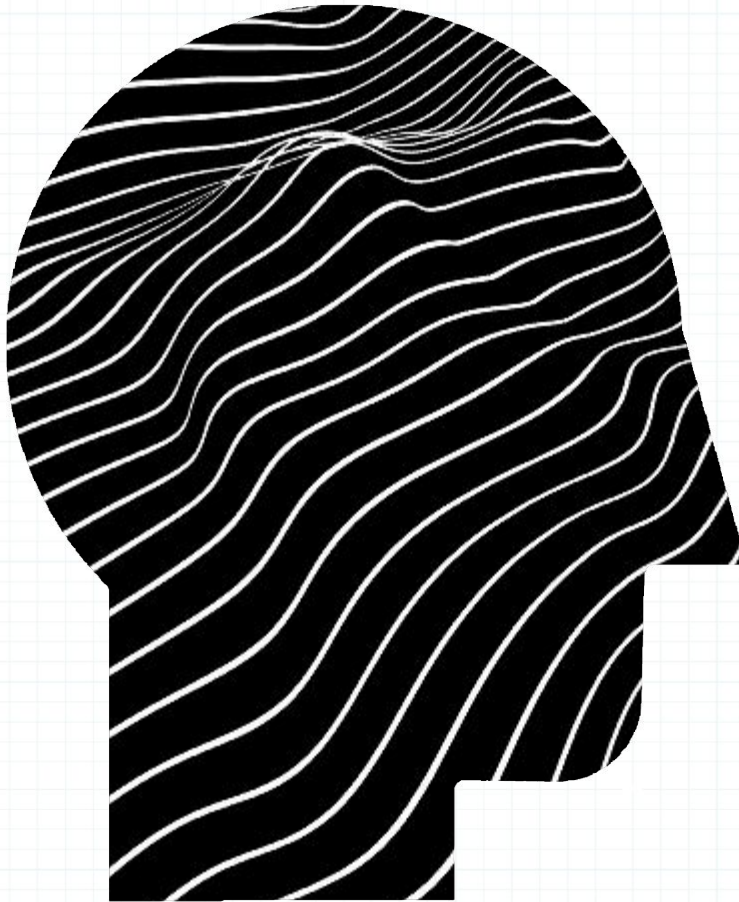
# Local Resources

**Attention Deficit Disorder Association local groups**  
**CHADD local groups**  
**AA local groups**  
**Meetup Groups local groups**

... These organizations offer **support groups, crisis referrals, peer-led initiatives.**

... Why it's helpful: **Peer support and non-clinical resources are essential** when navigating a crisis.

... How to incorporate: **Provide clients with contact info, refer them during intake, include in safety/crisis planning.**



### **LOCAL RESOURCES with Groups & Webinars:**

**ADDA:** The Attention Deficit Disorder Association offers a professional directory to help you find therapists and other professionals specializing in ADHD. [WebMD](#) also mentions the directory.

**CHADD:** This national organization has a directory of local chapters and professionals who can provide support and resources for ADHD, including finding local support groups, [Verywell Mind](#) says.

**Psychology Today:** Search for mental health professionals in High Point who specialize in ADHD. You can filter by type of professional (e.g., psychiatrist, therapist, counselor) and insurance accepted.



# National Resources

## **CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)**

— National org offering resources, webinars, advocacy, and referrals.

— Why it's helpful: ADHD-specific, well-researched, and inclusive of adult needs.

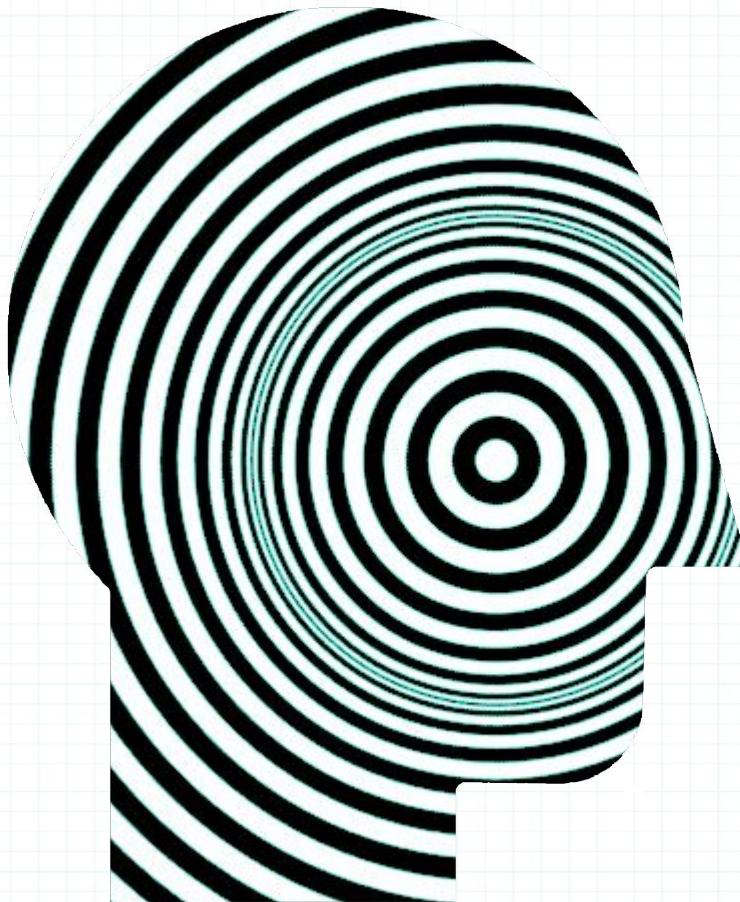
— How to incorporate: Include in intake packets, refer for online support, signpost for psychoeducation.

## **ADDitude Magazine**

— A leading national publication offering expert-backed articles, personal stories, and strategies for individuals with ADHD and their families.

— Why it's helpful: Accessible, up-to-date, and rich with practical tips on ADHD management, comorbid conditions, and neurodivergent living.

— How to incorporate: Refer clients for reading on specific concerns (e.g., emotional regulation, parenting, work challenges), subscribe to their newsletters, or suggest it as part of ongoing psychoeducation.

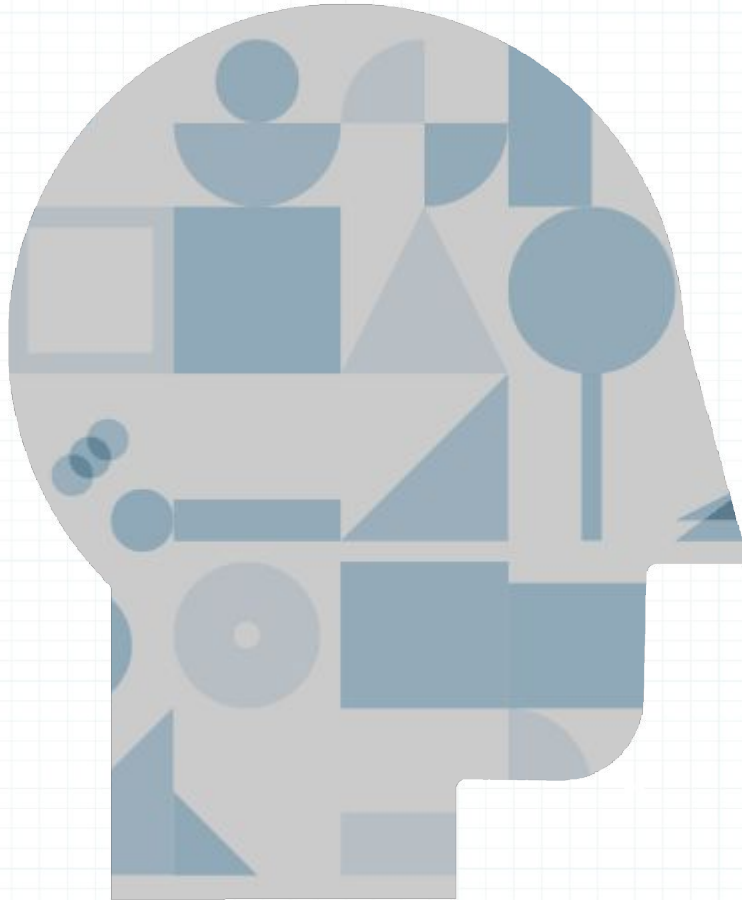


## **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline / 988**

- \_\_\_ Essential for clients in crisis or with suicidal ideation.
- \_\_\_ Trained responders can de-escalate and guide toward next steps.

## **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)**

- \_\_\_ A widely available, peer-led recovery fellowship offering support groups and a structured 12-step program for individuals seeking sobriety from alcohol.
- \_\_\_ Why it's helpful: Provides consistent, judgment-free community support rooted in shared experience; promotes accountability, healing, and long-term recovery through accessible, no-cost meetings.
- \_\_\_ How to incorporate: Refer clients exploring sobriety or struggling with alcohol use; provide meeting locators (in-person or online); suggest as an adjunct to clinical care for clients needing support beyond the counseling office.

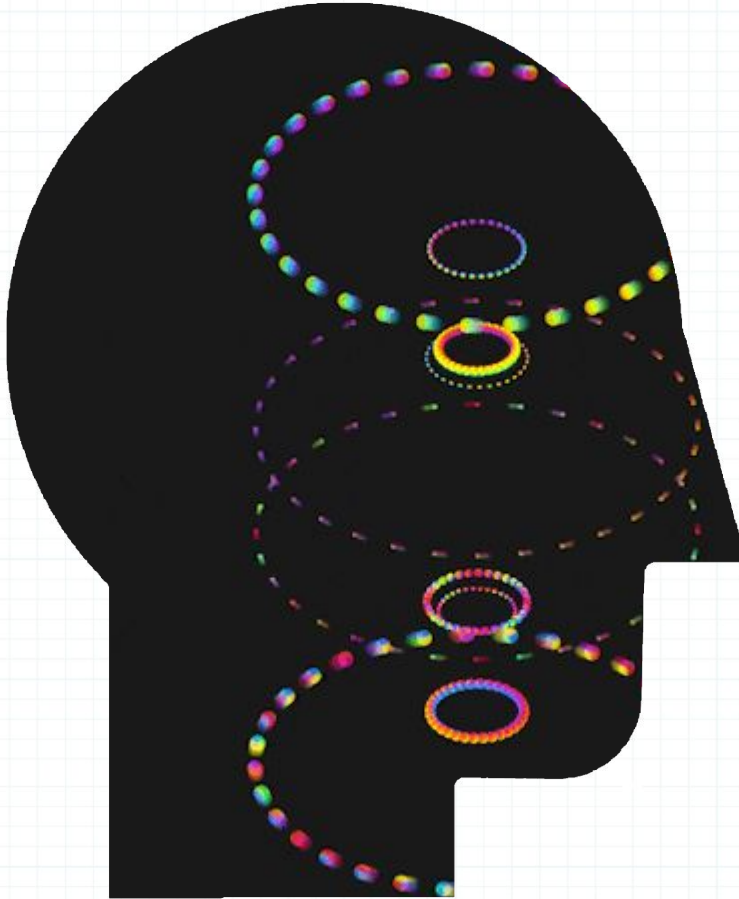


## **Divergent Conversations & Podcast**

\_\_\_ . An online resource and community hub centering the voices of neurodivergent individuals through articles, lived experience narratives, and educational content.

\_\_\_ . Why it's helpful: Offers insight into the diverse ways ADHD and other forms of neurodivergence manifest across the lifespan. Encourages self-understanding, reduces stigma, and builds community connection.

\_\_\_ . How to incorporate: Share articles with clients for psychoeducation, validation, and empowerment; use in group discussions or reflective journaling prompts; recommend as an affirming space for clients exploring identity and diagnosis.



## Examples of How I will use this information & Key Takeaways

\_\_\_ Importance of specialized crisis resources for neurodivergent populations.

\_\_\_ Ideally there should be more easily accessible resources. Could I help advocate for these resources?

\_\_\_ Realized the multi-layered risks for ADHD clients (e.g., impulsivity + stigma + lack of access).

\_\_\_ In practicum/future practice: Build design based artifacts that clients can take away and use

\_\_\_ network with local providers, and co-create safety plans with ADHD-informed approaches.

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