

Current Literature in ADHD

2008 CHADD Poster Session Abstracts

Compiled by Sam Goldstein

Perceptions of Closeness and Conflict in the Friendships of Children With ADHD

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Objective: The main purpose of the present study is to determine whether the naturally occurring friendships of children with ADHD differ from those of peers without ADHD in terms of intimacy, conflict, and aggressive behaviour. **Method:** Thirty-seven 7- to 13-year-old children (20 children with ADHD and 17 matched control children) were recruited through various clinical sites, including the ADHD/DB Clinic at Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and, for the control group, public schools. Individual perceptions of the friendship history and quality were assessed by Friendship Nominations and the Friendship Qualities Measure. **Results:** Friendship relations were rated by children with ADHD as being characterized by higher levels of overt aggression toward others and lower levels of mutual intimate exchange, validation, and caring than the friendships of control children. **Conclusion:** This study adds to the growing body of literature documenting the deleterious influences of ADHD on children's peer status and friendships.

ADHD and Cuban Elementary School Children

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Objective: This study examined the utility of the Conners' Rating Scales (CRS) in the identification of children with ADHD in Cuba, and described a sample of Cuban children with ADHD in terms of symptoms, correlates, and impairment. **Method:** Information from parents and teachers of 1,000 children (6 to 8 years old) from the community was obtained using the CRS and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). **Results:** The CRS and the SDQ successfully discriminated the clinical and the matched community samples. In terms of ADHD symptoms, there were far fewer Cuban scores in the clinical range in comparison with the North American norms. Children with ADHD were characterized by higher levels of externalizing and internalizing problems and more functional impairment with family and peers, than community matched children. **Conclusion:** The findings suggest that ADHD does exist in Cuba, but perhaps not as extensively as in the other countries for which data are available.

CUIDAR's Social Skills Groups for Preschoolers at Risk for ADHD

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Objective: CUIDAR for Attention and Learning offers prevention and early behavioral intervention services through parent training and a concurrent social skills program for families with preschool age children (3 to 5 years). Social Skills Training (SST), offered in English and Spanish, is designed to improve and strengthen interactions with peers and decrease the amount of problem behaviors. **Method:** To assess the group's impact, the Social Skills Situations Questionnaire was developed to help detect behavior problems. Data were collected at pre- and post-session intervals and analyzed using a

paired-samples *t* test. **Results:** A significant difference was observed, $t(330) = 6.23, p < .0001$, suggesting significant behavioral improvements following participation in SST. **Conclusion:** Problem behaviors are correlated with social deficits in preschoolers with ADHD, and thus intervening with SST that includes principles of behavior management may improve social competence. Our data suggest significant behavioral improvements after participating in SST for our group of at-risk preschoolers.

Comparing Attitudes Toward ADHD in the Workplace

Janelle Thixton

Objective: The purpose of this project was to determine if mental health professionals perceive ADHD in the workplace differently than the general population. It was hypothesized that the general population perceives ADHD in the workplace less realistically than mental health professionals and knowledgeable nonprofessionals. **Method:** A survey was created to test the hypothesis. This survey was distributed at the 2007 Children and Adults with ADHD (CHADD) conference and at a Wal-Mart. The groups compared were mental health professionals, non-mental health professionals from CHADD, and the general population. **Results:** Student's two-tailed *t* test showed a significant difference at the .025 level between the overall responses of the more knowledgeable groups and the general population; this difference showed that the general population perceives ADHD less realistically than the more knowledgeable groups. **Conclusions:** The hypothesis was partially supported because some statements on the survey deviated from this pattern.

Cognitive and Sedative Effects of Guanfacine Extended Release in Children and Adolescents Aged 6 to 17 Years With Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

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Objective: To assess impact of guanfacine extended release (GXR) on measures of cognition in children and

adolescents aged 6 to 17 years with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and evaluate potential sedative effects of GXR throughout the day. **Method:** This was a phase 2, randomized, double-blind, dose-optimization, noninferiority study of 178 subjects. Cognitive assessments included the Choice Reaction Time (CRT) and Spatial Working Memory (SWM) tests. The Pictorial Sleepiness Scale (PSS) and Pediatric Daytime Sleepiness Scale (PDSS) measured sleepiness. **Result:** Changes in CRT were not significantly different between GXR and placebo at endpoint ($p > .05$ for all). GXR did not impair any aspect of SWM ($p > .05$ for all). The PDSS showed that GXR decreased daytime sleepiness ($p = .02$). PSS assessments demonstrated greater evening sleepiness with GXR versus placebo at 10 and 12 hr postdose. **Conclusion:** GXR did not impair cognitive function or affect daytime sleepiness compared with placebo in children and adolescents with ADHD.

Long-Term Safety and Efficacy of Guanfacine Extended Release in Children and Adolescents Aged 6 to 17 Years With Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

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Objective: To assess the safety and efficacy of up to 24 months of guanfacine extended release (GXR) treatment in patients aged 6 to 17 years with ADHD. **Methods:** Dose-optimized (up to 4 mg/day) open-label extension of a placebo-controlled Phase 3 monotherapy trial and an open-label Phase 2 safety study of GXR and psychostimulant coadministration. Safety assessments included adverse events (AEs), laboratory tests, and electrocardiograms. The main efficacy measure was the ADHD Rating Scale IV (ADHD-RS-IV) total score change from baseline of the initial trials to endpoint of the present study. **Results:** AEs were generally mild to moderate, most commonly somnolence (30.5%), headache (24.3%), and upper respiratory tract infection (17.8%). Small changes in blood pressure and pulse were noted. ADHD-RS-IV total score mean changes were decreased significantly overall and for all three weight-adjusted dose groups ($p < .001$). **Conclusion:** In this long-term study, GXR was

generally safe and effective in children and adolescents with ADHD.

Guanfacine Extended Release: Duration of Effect in Children and Adolescents Aged 6 to 17 Years With Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

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Objective: To assess the duration of effect of guanfacine extended release (GXR) in children and adolescents with ADHD using pooled data from 2 pivotal trials. **Method:** Subjects were randomized to 1 (study 2 only), 2, 3, or 4 mg/d GXR in the 2 studies. Duration of effect, a secondary measure, was evaluated with the Conners' Parent Rating Scale (CPRS) at 12, 14, and 24 hours postdose. **Result:** Changes from baseline to endpoint in CPRS were significantly greater in each GXR weight-adjusted actual dose group (0.01-0.04, 0.05-0.08, 0.09-0.12, 0.13-0.17 mg/kg) versus placebo at 12, 14, and 24 hours postdose ($P \leq .003$ for all active groups vs placebo). **Conclusion:** When analyzed by weight-adjusted actual dose, GXR was efficacious in reducing ADHD symptoms at all time points measured throughout 24 hours in subjects aged 6 to 17 years, as rated by parents using the CPRS.

Impairments in Major Life Activities in a Sample of Clinic-Referred Adults Diagnosed With Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

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Objective: Adults with ADHD are believed to be at greater risk for impairments in major life activities characteristic of adult adaptive functioning. We report on specific impairments in a large sample of clinic-referred

adults with ADHD (ADHD; $n = 146$) compared with a large control group of adults having other disorders seen at the same clinic (Clinical; $n = 97$) and a large community control group (Community; $n = 109$). **Methods:** Information pertaining to impairments in occupational history, driving history, and dating and marital history was collected from structured clinical interviews. Data were analyzed by two-way analysis of variance or Pearson chi-square, followed by pairwise comparisons. **Results:** The three groups showed significant differences with regard to occupational, driving, and marital impairments. **Conclusions:** These results further support the considerable body of evidence that ADHD in adults is associated with a number of consequences and impairments in occupational, driving, and marital functioning.

Assessing the Impact of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder on Adult Patients and Their Families

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Objective: Adults with ADHD are believed to be at greater risk for impairments involving home, work, and social domains; however, many aspects of the impact of ADHD on adult patients and their families have not been widely studied. **Methods:** Surveys designed to elicit demographic information and the impact of ADHD were administered to adults online within the United States by Harris Interactive from June 9 to 20, 2008. **Results:** ADHD was associated with a negative impact on several aspects of the lives of patients and partner/spouse respondents including the relationship between patients and partner/spouses, the ability of patients to be good parents, and the ability of patients to manage family finances. **Conclusions:** Most adult patient respondents indicated that their ADHD had a negative impact on various aspects of their life. Overall, partner/spouse respondents indicated that they were negatively affected by their spouse's/partner's ADHD as well.