

COPACS



The Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich

June 18, 2023

Dear PACs, SD 63 education partners, and respected leaders,

COPACS is writing to request your support of the recent private member's bill tabled by Member of Parliament Heather McPherson regarding equitable access and resource creation for families affected by ADHD ([link](#)):

'If passed, the federal framework would be prepared within two years in consultation with provinces and territories and set out measures including:

- awareness training for medical staff and educators on ADHD and how to screen for it;
- equitable access for individuals with ADHD and their families to medical and mental health professionals; and
- support resource creation for ways to manage, recognize and understand the disorder.'

In the absence of adequate early intervention, screening, and ongoing support:

- students with ADHD can experience negative impacts on their self-esteem, mental health, academic achievement, and peer / social relationships as a result of their behaviour and self-regulation / dysregulation challenges (defiance, shutting down, disobedience, unwillingness, fatigue, disinterest, etc);
- the classroom environment and education experience of both teachers and classmates can be directly impacted by having under-supporting children in their classrooms; and
- families supporting these students often pay for private assessments, adequate supports for these children (tutoring, counseling, ADHD coaching, etc), and work to advocate for these students within the education and medical systems which lack funding and resources to support them and their children.

Please share this request with your school communities and encourage letters of support for this bill.

The following [link](#) provided by the Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada (CADDAC) can be used to **help you contact your local elected official to support this important bill. Alternatively, you can send letters of support** to MP Heather McPherson, your federal and your provincial representatives and CADDAC as follows:

MP Heather McPherson, Edmonton Strathcona, (Heather.McPherson@parl.gc.ca)

MP Elizabeth May, Saanich / Gulf Islands (elizabeth.may.c1a@parl.gc.ca)

MLA Adam Olsen, Saanich North and the Islands (adam.olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

MLA Lana Popham, Saanich South (lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

MLA Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care (ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

MLA Adrian Dix, Minister of Health (HLTH.Health@gov.bc.ca)

CADDAC, Centre for ADHD Awareness, Canada (communications@caddac.ca)

Sincerely,

COPACS, Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich (COPACS) (SD63)

Further Information:

BCCPAC Past Resolution 2010.10, Status = Active:

- “That BCCPAC urge the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Government to review and re-classify the level of designations so that additional learning differences including but not limited to ADD/ADHD, developmental delay, sensory disorders be recognized, acknowledged and funded accordingly.”

ADHD facts:

- Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is **one of the most common mental disorders affecting children**. Symptoms of ADHD include inattention (not being able to keep focus), hyperactivity (excess movement that is not fitting to the setting) and impulsivity (hasty acts that occur in the moment without thought). ADHD is considered a **chronic and debilitating disorder** and is known to impact the individual in many aspects of their life including academic and professional achievements, interpersonal relationships, and daily functioning (Harpin, 2005). ADHD can lead to poor self-esteem and social function in children when not appropriately treated (Harpin et al., 2016). (American Psychiatric Association – [link](#))
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is **one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders in Canada, affecting 4-6% of adults and 5-7% of children**, or approximately 1.8 million Canadians. In other words, 1 of every 21 people in the country has the disorder. Everyone who has ADHD is impaired, or has more difficulty than normal, with regulating their attention or focus (CADDAC, Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada) - [link](#))
- Re: Special Education Systems in Canada and ADHD: Some provinces who use a system of identification (BC, ON, QC) **continue to refuse to officially recognize ADHD in their categories of exceptionality although it is a neurodevelopmental disorder (ND) that impairs learning** similar to other NDs such as Autism and Learning Disabilities (CADDAC, Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada - [link](#), [link](#), [link](#))
- The 2007 National Survey of Children’s Health (NCSH) found that **33% of the children with ADHD had one coexisting condition**, 16% had two, and 18% had three or more (Larson 2011):
(Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD, Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) - [link](#))

ADHD and Coexisting Conditions

Coexisting Disorder	Children with ADHD	Children without ADHD
Learning Disability	45%	5%
Conduct Disorder	27%	2%
Anxiety	18%	2%
Depression	15%	1%
Speech Problems	12%	3%

- Raising a child with ADHD **costs five times more** than raising a child without the condition ([link](#))
- Current wait time in BC for ASD assessments is approximately 80.6 weeks ([link](#)). Assessment wait times for ADHD diagnosis were not easily located, but anecdotally is less than a year as it can be conducted by a GP and assessed by a pediatrician.
- **At least one in five students with ADHD does not receive needed school-based intervention services** ([link](#))