

Inequitable Access to Education for Canadian Students with ADHD

Summary of the Existing Situation:

- At least five percent of the Canadian student population suffer from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a neurodevelopmental disorder and the most common childhood psychiatric disorder.
- ADHD significantly impairs learning.
- Unlike the United States, the Canadian government does not document the obligation of schools to provide students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) the right to an equal educational opportunity.
- This has allowed ministries of education and school boards to develop policies leading to inequitable access to education for students with ADHD.
- Most often educators receive superficial, inadequate and not medically up-to-date information on ADHD and the learning impairments that can result.
- Most educators receive inadequate training on appropriate teaching strategies and classroom accommodations for students with ADHD.
- Requiring that psycho-educational testing indicate impairment in a student with ADHD for them to be deemed disabled and receive accommodations is unreasonable, invalid and discriminatory.
- When we fail to recognize and assist students with ADHD struggling in our school systems, we squander socioeconomic capital as well as precious school resources.
- Ministry and school board systems of special education across Canada, in combination with lack of educator training, are prohibiting students with ADHD equal access to education resources to accommodate their disability.
- Canadian students with ADHD face great inconsistency and inequity when accessing education across Canadian school boards and provinces.

Asks of Government

CADDAC, Parents of Children with ADHD, and Children with ADHD are Asking the Federal and Provincial Governments to:

1. Officially recognize ADHD as a significant risk to learning and uphold these students' rights to accessible education as done in the US
2. Ensure that educators are trained in ADHD impairments and appropriate teaching methods and classroom accommodations
3. Ensure that all provincial and territorial special education systems officially acknowledge that ADHD significantly impacts learning and allow students with ADHD to be recognized as exceptional learners securing their legal right to accommodations for their disability