



Inequitable Access to Education for Canadian Students with ADHD

Key Messages

- At least 5% of Canadian students have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD), a neurodevelopmental disorder which 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
- Most often educators receive superficial, inadequate and not medically up-to-date information on ADHD and the learning impairments that can result
- Educators often misunderstand ADHD symptoms as being under a student's control, wrongly label these students as being lazy, unintelligent and defiant, and interact with them accordingly
- Educators receive inadequate training on appropriate teaching strategies and classroom accommodations for these students – they wrongly believe them to be overly time consuming
- Requiring that a student with ADHD undergo psycho-educational testing and that these tests indicate cognitive impairment to be deemed disabled and an exceptional learner is unreasonable, medically 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 in accessing education across school boards and provinces

Asks of Governments

CADDAC, Parents of Children with ADHD and Children with ADHD ask the federal and provincial governments to:

1. Officially recognize ADHD as a significant risk to learning and uphold these student's rights to accessible education as done in the US <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-guidance-civil-rights-students-adhd>
2. Ensure that educators are trained in ADHD impairments and appropriate teaching methods and classroom accommodations
3. Ensure that all provinces' 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