



The ADHD National Gazette

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I am thrilled to share the incredible success of our ADHD Awareness Campaign this October! Thanks to your unwavering support and participation, we've reached new heights in raising awareness and understanding of ADHD. Your contributions have made a significant impact, and we are deeply grateful.

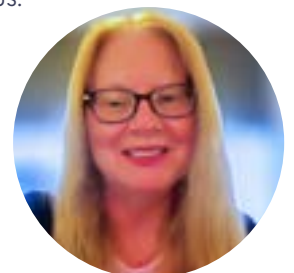
But our work doesn't stop here. There is still time to donate and support our ongoing efforts. Every contribution helps us continue our mission to advocate for those with ADHD and provide essential resources and support.

Since our last newsletter, the ADHD Foundation has been actively involved in numerous advocacy initiatives. From policy changes to community outreach programs, we have been working tirelessly to make a difference. You can read more about our recent activities and achievements in this issue.

We invite you to join the ADHD Foundation family. Together, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone affected by ADHD. Your involvement and support are crucial to our continued success.

Thank you for being a part of this journey with us.

Dympna Brbich
Chair/Director



Medication Update

The work of the ADHD Foundation isn't just limited to our national helpline and community support – did you know we also deliver meaningful advocacy for our community?

Back in November 2023, the Foundation wrote to the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), asking them to increase production of Lisdexamfetamine to help address global drug shortages.

The DEA sets annual aggregate production quotas on controlled substances like Lisdexamfetamine, which is the active ingredient in one of two long-acting ADHD medications registered in Australia. The DEA originally proposed to set the production quota for 2024 at the same level as 2023.

Following advocacy by the Foundation, the DEA revised the annual quota in September 2024. The decision specifically called out the work of Australian organisations ADHD – particularly the ADHD Foundation – in sounding the alarm about ongoing frustration in accessing critical medicines.

We're pleased that the Foundation's submission led to the DEA seeking further information to more accurately forecast global demand for Lisdexamfetamine, and that the DEA referenced our work in their recent decision.

We hope that the 24 per cent increase in the manufacturing quota – 75 per cent of which will be allocated to meet foreign demand for finished product – will make a real difference to Australians and the global ADHD community.

While the severe shortages experienced by Australians in 2023 and 2024 were not the result of the DEA's previous quota decisions, the ADHD community had held serious concerns that the current quota would not meet the international increase in diagnosis and prescribing.

Our most recent analysis of Department of Health data shows that prescriptions of Lisdexamfetamine increased by over 350% in Australia between 2019-20 and 2022-23.

While generic products could enter the US market from 2023 – taking a share of the annual aggregate production quota – Lisdexamfetamine is still covered by a patent in Australia, with limited alternatives for patients.

The ADHD Foundation is a small, volunteer-run organisation that doesn't receive any government funding, but provides significant benefit to the community through our free national helpline, as well our advocacy on behalf of people with ADHD.

While we are still waiting for further detail of how this decision will impact availability of medicines approved in Australia, the Foundation hopes that this outcome will provide some relief for Australians relying on long-acting medication to manage their ADHD.

[Our submission can be found here.](#)

Takeda's Update to the Foundation

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your submission to the DEA advocating for this increase. Submissions from Australia were specifically referenced in the formal notice of the increase and formed part of the DEA's analysis to determine whether an increase was required.

We do not yet know the details regarding Takeda's allocation and what this means for Australia. Given the long lead times due to the complexity of production, it will take some time before we receive stock from any additional allocation. We will let you know when we have further clarity on the details for Australia, including possible timeframes."

[Read the full statement from the DEA here.](#)



Our ADHD Counselling Service

One of the most valuable services the ADHD Foundation offers is ADHD counselling, which plays a vital role in helping individuals and families develop coping strategies, improve mental health, and build confidence.

What does Counselling involve?

Counselling is a powerful tool for addressing the emotional, psychological, and behavioural aspects of ADHD. ADHD doesn't just affect a person's ability to focus or manage impulsivity—it often impacts their self-esteem, relationships, and overall mental well-being.

The counsellors at the ADHD Foundation Australia work closely with clients to provide guidance, helping them understand and manage their condition with tailored strategies.

Do I need to pay?

We fully understand the increased living costs, delays for mental health support and highly, sometimes overpriced services on offer to our ADHD Community across Australia.

Therefore, the ADHD Foundation has introduced a very successful, highly effective, and cost-effective counselling service to our ADHD community across Australia.

There is a **small charge for the counselling services**. If you would like to engage with a counsellor, please complete your details and submit them.



Who are the Counsellors?

The ADHD Foundation has engaged with Master of Counselling Students who are in the final placement of their degree just before registration with PAFCA. Counsellors at the ADHD Foundation are people you can speak with to help you unravel and overcome difficulties in your life. They will listen to you in a non-judgmental, safe, and confidential way. You will be an active participant in the sessions.

How can Counselling help me?

It is important to note that Counsellors don't diagnose issues, but they work with you to improve your mental health, help you understand yourself better and help you develop strategies and work towards goals. Counselling can help you gain new insight into situations and can improve your resilience.

In particular, counselling can benefit:

- **Children and Adolescents with ADHD:** Providing emotional support and teaching self-management strategies to cope with school and personal development.
- **Adults with ADHD:** Addressing workplace challenges, relationship issues, and the day-to-day impacts of ADHD on adult life.
- **Families:** Offering a collaborative space to learn how ADHD affects the family dynamic and how everyone can contribute to creating a supportive environment.

Get in Touch

If you or someone you know is living with ADHD, don't hesitate to reach out to ADHD Foundation Australia for counselling and support.

Our counsellors are qualified to provide you with the help you need. If your circumstances require other interventions, our counsellors can provide information to resources and other more appropriate services.

[Start the process on our website here.](https://www.adhdfoundation.org.au)



Celebrating ADHD Awareness Month with Emily's Run

October was ADHD Awareness Month 2024! This annual event shines a light on ADHD, promotes understanding, reduces stigma, and supports individuals with ADHD.

With 2024 bringing broader public awareness and new research, it's the perfect time to discuss how we can collectively improve our approach to ADHD, both in the workplace and our communities.

What is ADHD Awareness Month?

While ADHD Awareness Month is dedicated to educating others, it's also about celebrating the ADHD community.

People with ADHD are resilient, innovative, and resourceful, often developing unique ways to manage their symptoms and navigate the world.

By recognising the strengths that ADHD brings and offering support for the challenges, we can help ensure that individuals with ADHD thrive in every aspect of life.

21 for 21 – Run with Emily

As part of ADHD Awareness Month 2024, we're excited to highlight the incredible initiative 21 for 21 – Run with Emily.

Emily Fellows, an ambassador for the ADHD Foundation Australia, ran 21 kilometres every day for 21 days—totalling an impressive 441 kilometres.

Her initiative, 21 for 21 – Move with Emily, is more than just a physical feat; it's a heartfelt campaign that combines endurance with advocacy, shining a light of hope for individuals living with ADHD.

[If you'd like to support the initiative, donations are still open. Click here!](#)



Her Story

"Hello, I'm Emily, and I was born with the "how hard could it be" gene. Some days sparkle with color and excitement, while others plunge into darkness, paralysing even the simplest tasks. You see, I have ADHD, and this is my journey.

At 15, I received my ADHD diagnosis. Before that, I struggled silently, assuming my experiences were normal teenage woes.

The diagnosis changed everything. Medication helped me focus, regulate emotions, and navigate school. Yet, ADHD carried a stigma—I feared being labeled the "loud, annoying" person with boundless energy. So, after school, I ditched medication, believing I could manage alone. But as years passed and I became a parent, my symptoms worsened. I sought help.

The first day I went back on medication my mind felt calm for the first time in years. I was able to focus on one thought at a time, like everything was going to be okay.

Over time I gradually rebuilt my life and found myself along the way. ADHD taught me that seeing the world differently is okay. Needing extra help is okay. Good days and bad days (sometimes mere hours) are okay.



I yearned for open conversations about ADHD, for normalisation. So, I celebrate my colourful, energetic ways. Music and dance lift me; trying on eight outfits combats paralysing days. But my ultimate discovery? Long-distance trail running. Amidst the trails, I find freedom and calm—a reset where ADHD fades.

And then, the dream: “21 for 21.”
Running 21 km for 21 days.

Why? Not just because it sounds catchy. I’m doing it for young Emily—the one who needed help. Many with ADHD receive medication, but awareness matters too.

So, here’s to 21 for 21—a fusion of running and ADHD, raising awareness, and celebrating life’s quirks.”

So, how did she go?

She smashed it! We are incredibly proud of Emily in achieving the target she set out to accomplish.

We are deeply appreciative of her fundraising for the foundation and the local media interest she gained in building awareness of ADHD and it’s impacts on daily life.



Did you know, moving your body can help manage ADHD symptoms?

Dopamine is often in short supply for those with ADHD, leading to difficulties in staying focused, organised, or motivated. Physical activity, however, can help regulate dopamine levels by stimulating its release in the brain. Here are some of the benefits:

Improved Focus

Dopamine and norepinephrine are neurotransmitters that help with attention and concentration. This can lead to better focus and productivity.

Reduced Hyperactivity

Running, swimming, or any active form of exercise helps burn off excess energy, calming the body and reducing restlessness

Better Mood

Exercise boosts endorphins, the brain's natural "feel-good" chemicals, which can help ease anxiety, irritability, and depression—common challenges for people with ADHD.

Enhanced Cognitive Skills

Regular physical activity improves executive functions like planning, organisation, and decision-making—skills that are often difficult for those with ADHD.

Improved Sleep

Consistent exercise helps establish a regular sleep routine, leading to better sleep quality, which is essential for managing ADHD symptoms.

Social Skills

Team sports or group exercises provide opportunities to build social connections and improve communication skills.

Increased Motivation

Seeing progress in physical health can boost overall motivation, encouraging individuals to tackle other challenges, including managing ADHD.

Whether it's a walk, a swim, or a yoga session, getting moving is one of the best tools for both the body and the brain.



Jenny's Story, ADHD & Vision Loss From the Helpine

I grew up with both ADHD and vision impairment. It was a big struggle, including school. Unable to read the blackboard, a primary method of teaching, made it very difficult.

There was verbal instruction also, but as my mind wandered, I had trouble concentrating. I was often reprimanded for my distraction and disruptive behaviour.

I was fortunate though to spend the latter years of primary in a school for the blind and vision impaired.

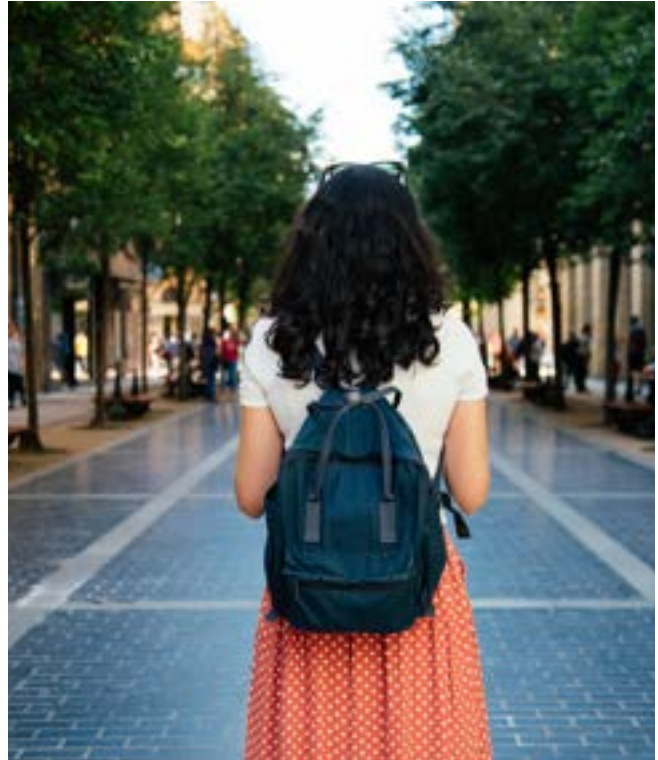
My favourite subject was physical education, where I could run and tumble around, burning off some of my excess energy. I also did gymnastics, and in the tuition, we were taught how to fall well. This has benefitted me greatly throughout my life.

On weekends and after school I played football, rode my bike and skateboarded. Being hyperactive meant I felt the need for lots of physical activity and despite my low vision, I was allowed with hesitancy, as it could involve an increased risk of injury.

I felt grateful to be gifted in athleticism, as this was where I excelled. It also aided my deflated self-esteem with a sense of achievement. Music was a passion of mine and I could sing well which meant I was able to join the school choir. I received piano lessons, and I loved this instrument.

However, practising the chords and scales for a warm-up to play songs - I didn't enjoy it. I was impatient and found it repetitive and laborious. I was told it was important to practice, although I didn't appreciate it at the time.

I went overseas in my late teens to various countries and managed to find work to support myself while over there.



New experiences, different environments, cultures, languages and beautiful landscapes. Adventure excited me. I enjoyed the lifestyle of spontaneity and freedom.

I encountered some challenges due to my impulsivity and failing sight, resulting in somewhat hazardous situations. I returned home to Australia several years later.

In day to day living I would lose belongings, by leaving them on public transport, at train and bus stations. Unable to find my keys, phone or wallet were frequent occurrences.

I would purchase items that I knew I already had, but didn't know their whereabouts. Needing to replace them meant additional time and expense. Later on I would come across the original ones. Unable to see well meant I couldn't easily identify or locate them.

Occasionally I caught a bus going somewhere unintended, unaware there would be more than one route accessing that particular bus stop. Often hailing trucks and tourist coaches – going by the sounds of their motors and their size.

I have ended up on express trains passing through my designated station, being late for appointments or to meet up with friends. Frustration and annoyance with myself, along with anxiety, were familiar territory.

My home was disorganised and cluttered, and I would occasionally break or damage things looking for them. Sometimes I would crawl around on the floor, sweeping my hands across in an attempt to find items I was looking for, in case I had dropped them or left them there.

My paperwork would be scattered throughout and my method of dealing with it would be to put it in piles and place it in plastic bags – of which I had a large collection!

A psychotherapist I was seeing, asked me if I'd ever been diagnosed with ADHD. I said I had in my 20's, but had too much shame and the fear of stigma to acknowledge it.

During our discussion she asked me if I'd be open to seeing a psychiatrist, and I mentioned that I didn't want to take medication, but would make an appointment.

I related well with the psychiatrist and decided to trial medication. I could always change my mind and go off them if I chose.

It was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

Taking it made a real difference, but I knew that I also needed to implement other practices, such as time management strategies, organisational tools, and developing systems in order to function more easily.

Through an ADHD Seminar, I was made aware of ADHD Coaching.

I took the opportunity, gaining further insight, knowledge, strategies and skills to help manage everyday life.

My poor vision still makes life difficult, but my stress levels have lowered considerably.

I attended an adult ADHD support group and felt a great sense of camaraderie, meeting peers who also had ADHD.

I learned a lot and didn't feel so alone with my struggles. I was referred to someone who helps organise in the home, which has made a huge difference. Maintaining it is key though!

I'm much more settled – building relationships, gaining self worth, and accepting my uniqueness.



ADHD & Young People in NSW Custody, Bond University

In 2024, the Bond Law Review dedicated a special issue, titled "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Youth Justice, and the Law" (Volume 36, Issue 2, 2024).

This special issue was inspired by the 2020 online conference titled "ADHD, Youth Justice, and the Law: The Jury is No Longer Out," hosted by the Australian ADHD Foundation. The conference brought together experts from various fields such as law, psychiatry, psychology, and criminology to discuss the challenges faced by youth with ADHD in the justice system.



The special issue addresses the significant challenges faced by youth with ADHD within the criminal justice system. ADHD is often undiagnosed in youth offenders, leading to inadequate treatment and increased recidivism. The special issue seeks to dispel myths, promote awareness, and recommend solutions to better support youth with ADHD.

The articles within this issue are based on both the 2022 Australian Evidence-Based Clinical Guideline for ADHD and the 2023 Senate Inquiry Report into ADHD support services.

Find the full list of article here:

<https://blr.scholasticahq.com/issue/10848>

Article List

"Often Fails to Give Close Attention to Detail" – ADHD in Criminal Justice Offender Populations; Dr. Corey J. Lane, Associate Professor Mark David Chong, and Dr. Geoff Kewley: This article analyses why ADHD is rarely addressed in youth and criminal justice policy. It discusses the neurodevelopmental aspects of ADHD and why youth with this condition are overrepresented in the justice system.

Understanding the Nature of ADHD and the Vulnerability of Those with the Condition Who Fall Foul of the Criminal Justice System; Geoff Kewley, Corey J. Lane, and Mark David Chong: This paper explores the links between ADHD, low self-control, and crime, and critiques current crime prevention strategies while advocating for policy changes to address gaps.

A Practitioner's Perspective Concerning the Links between ADHD and the Criminal Justice System; Dr. Phillip Anderton: Dr. Anderton shares a compelling narrative based on his clinical and law enforcement experience, calling for systemic reform to support youth with ADHD in the health system, rather than the criminal justice system.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): Forensic Issues; Professor Ian Freckelton AO KC: This article reviews legal decisions from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the UK, offering insights into how courts can make informed decisions about individuals with ADHD.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Young People in NSW Custody; Associate Professor John Kasinathan and Joey Le: Based on data from the 2015 Young People in Custody Health Survey, this paper examines psychiatric comorbidities in young people with ADHD in custody and provides recommendations for prevention and intervention..

Erica's Story: ADHD & Hoarding

Adults with ADHD are prone to disorganisation and clutter, but recent research has found that almost **one in five** people with ADHD exhibited clinically significant levels of hoarding, indicating there could be a hidden population of adults struggling with hoarding and its consequences.

These factors often make conditions at home overwhelming - for the individual trying to manage the problem, their children, and their partner.

We found out late last year a valued volunteer with the Foundation, had passed away. We're resharing Erica's story to bring greater awareness to the impacts of hoarding, as she suffered this condition for the whole of her life.

Erica's Story

I feel it goes back to a very early time in my life. When I was 4yrs old my parents moved house, but they didn't take me with them, they took my baby brother and left me with neighbours. Although the neighbours were very good to me, and had a daughter the same age, I always wanted to know where and why my parents disappeared. My father also threw all my toys away, including my precious baby doll "dib dib", a soft cuddly rag doll who had been my constant companion. I missed her terribly - I was left with absolutely nothing of my own.

One night, when I was about 5yrs old, an older cousin decided I needed to see my mother and drove me to her country town. It was very dark as there were no street lights there in those early days, and to my terror my father answered the door with a shot gun demanding to know who was there! He did not make me feel welcome at all, and his attitude towards me never did change. I don't know why I never came up to his standards, or why I was an embarrassment - I'll never know.

I do know that my dad was diagnosed ADD in the 60's by the famous psychiatrist Dr. John Ellard, and I was diagnosed in the 70's, also by Dr. Ellard.



I have suppressed those feelings of being unwanted and unloved for 75 years. Once working and having my own money, I seemed to console myself by purchasing items that made me feel good about myself - in some strange way it gave me pleasure just to have this odd collection of things around me. Consequently I have a well stocked house, an overflowing garage, two storage sheds, three chickens, a rescue dog, and five rescued cats - all of whom I love dearly. Every now and then I make an attempt to sort through items and take some to a charity organisation, or give things to friends and acquaintances - all lovely and new and well received, but very hard to part with.

I couldn't bear it if something happened to me, and some distant relatives came to my home and threw all my precious 'things' away. 'Things' that have happy memories and 'things' that have given me pleasure for so many years - because I would like to make that final choice.....

Resources

If you or a loved one would benefit from more information:

- [ADHD linked to hoarding behaviour - study](#)
- [Anglia Ruskin University, \(February 2022\)](#)
- [Buried in Treasures 2ed, Book. Help for Compulsive Acquiring, Saving, and Hoarding by David Tolin](#)
- [Keep Your ADHD From Turning Into Hoarding Disorder, additudemag.com, \(March, 2023\)](#)
- [What is the link between hoarding and ADHD?, The British Academy, \(June, 2020\)](#)



A True Story of Body Doubling

“Some people who started working from home during the pandemic found it much harder to stay focused and on task without their co-workers nearby. They missed the routine and structure their workplace provided.

As a result, many turned to body doubling to keep them on track during the workday. Some Uni students with ADHD also used body doubling to help them stay on track with class assignments.

I always had trouble getting motivated – housework, Uni assignments, organising my kids – even getting started first thing in the morning.

It wasn't until more recently that I realised that I was taking the cue from my husband. When he got up in the morning and got dressed, I knew it must have been time for me to get up and dressed too.

While he was still in the house, I was able to prepare breakfast for everyone, pack the kids' lunches and perhaps get a load of washing on before going to Uni. But when I was home during the day, and if John wasn't at home, I couldn't seem to get anything done – especially housework or homework!! There is always so much going on in my head it's hard to prioritize, concentrate on one thing, and just get it done.

I became aware of 'Body Doubling' by listening to Tracy Otsuka's podcast 'ADHD for Smart Ass Women', and then I researched more, as those with ADHD tend to do!”



What is “body doubling”?

It's doing a task in the presence of another person. Having someone else present seems to make boring tasks more pleasurable, helping overcome this motivation deficit.

Most popular with body doubling is video calling, an amazing strategy that is tailor made for the job of being a body double. You can hang out with someone in the comfort of your own home, and if you have a computer and a working internet connection, it is free!

This kind of body doubling works particularly well, as it allows visual as well as audio contact – and it's hands-free. Your laptop or phone can be set up in the kitchen, the living room, or simply left in the office, with your friend working away on their project in their home, while you vacuum, put a load in the washing machine, or clean a cupboard.

Body doubling works extremely well if you have a young family member who has ADHD and studying overseas, maybe homesick, but may also be having difficulty with an assignment and needing support. It's reassuring to glance at a parent on the screen to get a smile or some words of encouragement.

The practice emerged from ADHD self-help groups, so the supporting evidence is based on word-of-mouth rather than rigorous scientific research.

Body doubling doesn't work for everyone with ADHD. Whether body doubling or daily strategies, it seems they are more effective when a person is also receiving appropriate treatment in the form of medication and therapy to boost the development of life skills.

References

[What is 'body doubling' for ADHD?, Medical News Today, October, 2021](#)

ADHD in the Workplace

Navigating the workplace with ADHD can feel like juggling multiple tasks while trying to maintain focus, meet deadlines, and manage time effectively.

But with the right tools and strategies, those with ADHD can turn challenges into strengths and build a rewarding career. If you're looking for ways to thrive at work with ADHD, here are some practical tips that can help.

Thriving in the Workplace

While you might struggle with time management or organisation, you may excel at creativity, problem-solving, and thinking outside the box.

Embracing your unique abilities can help you find roles that play to your strengths.

It's important to feel comfortable communicating your needs in the workplace. If you have an understanding supervisor, you can discuss strategies that help you work most effectively.

This might include flexible working hours, extra breaks, or requesting clear, written instructions for assignments.



Workplace Discrimination

It's important to know your rights when it comes to managing your ADHD in the workplace.

It is technically illegal for your employer to take any of the following actions against you on the basis of your ADHD:

- Fire you
- Not hire you
- Change your job duties so that you are left you worse off.

If that happens to you, contact Fair Work Australia on 13 13 94, or submit an online enquiry on their website.

Reasonable Adjustments

Your employer is obligated to provide "reasonable adjustments" to allow you to perform at work if you have a disability.

They can only say no if it's too expensive for them to provide accommodations.

If you need free legal advice, you can go to the Australian Centre for Disability Law: disabilitylaw.org.au

Call 1800 800 708 between 9.30 am and 12.30 pm Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Flexible Working Conditions

You can ask for flexible working conditions if you have ADHD.

If you're a full-time employee, you can only make a request if you have been working for the employer for at least 12 months.

You must make the request in writing (e.g. send an email to your boss).

Your boss needs to respond within 21 days with a yes or no. If no, then they must explain why.



Our Services

The ADHD Foundation Australia is devoted to offering community services at the most reasonable and affordable prices. We acknowledge that the cost of ADHD treatment and support can be prohibitive for many who need it.

We offer low-cost support services to our community, in addition to the National ADHD Helpline. We encourage you to check out the services we currently have on offer.

Psychology

We collaborate with reputable psychologists who offer psychological support and conduct an initial, cost-effective ADHD screening process.

[Learn more](#)

Counselling

Our counsellors work with you to improve your mental health, understand yourself better, develop strategies and work towards goals.

[Learn more](#)

Helpline

We provide a support service to help you find solutions and assist with ADHD Referrals. You can enquire via our website to request a call.

[Contact](#)

Donate

With generous financial and volunteer support we have achieved many milestones. If you are able, we greatly appreciate it.

[Support](#)

Contact the office for media enquiries, partnerships, admin and other enquiries.

Email: office@adhdfoundation.org.au

www.adhdfoundation.org.au

