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Press Release – For Immediate Distribution

October is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Awareness Month. To acknowledge this, APNL is hoping to highlight a frequently missed and underdiagnosed group – girls and women. (see the work of Psychologist Dr. Kathleen Nadeau for much more on this topic).

Although ADHD is conservatively felt to occur in 4-5% of the population, traditionally it was felt that it occurred at a 2:1 rate of boys:girls

- Girls are typically diagnosed later (often adolescence or adulthood)
- More likely to present with inattentive symptoms that can be overlooked
- Often misdiagnosed as depression, anxiety or lack of motivation,
- lack of diagnosis and intervention may result in development of anxiety/depression
- Highly intelligent girls/women likely to have more delayed diagnosis

Common symptoms in girls:

- “Chatty Cathy” – overly talkative, bossy
- Daydreamers
- Shy
- Easily overwhelmed
- More subtle physical restlessness (e.g. twirling hair)
- Social difficulties – trouble fitting in, may not have friends, perceived as immature

Symptoms in women:

- May experience conflict at home – traditional expectation of juggling/multitasking management of the home
- may be very bright but have underachieved in their careers
- may engage in more risk-taking behaviours (e.g. drugs and alcohol)

“ADHD symptoms can be well managed with appropriate assessment, diagnosis and treatment. We hope that highlighting the often missed features of ADHD in girls and women will encourage many to speak to their health care providers and seek assistance” Dr. Janine Hubbard, Registered Psychologist, Communications Director APNL.

Information on how to access a Psychologist who assesses and treats ADHD, as well as recommended ADHD resources can be found by visiting www.apnl.ca

<http://apnl.ca/about-apnl/news/adhd-resources/>

<http://apnl.ca/find-a-psychologist>

Some general facts about ADHD (www.caddac.ca)

- ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder
- ADHD is the most prevalent childhood psychiatric disorder in Canada
- ADHD conservatively occurs in 4% of adults and 5% of children worldwide
- Eighty percent of children maintain their diagnosis into adolescence and at least 60% remain impaired by symptoms in adulthood
- There are three presentations of ADHD depending on which of the three core symptoms (inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity) present:
 - Predominately inattentive (previously referred to as ADD)
 - Predominately hyperactive (very rare)
 - Combined (most prevalent)
- Children, adolescents and adults with untreated ADHD are at a greater risk for:
 - Learning difficulties, less academic success, school dropout, and fewer years of schooling
 - Additional mental health disorders and problems with self esteem
 - Substance abuse and a greater chance of becoming involved in the justice system
 - More accidents and sustaining injuries, more automobile accidents and earlier death

Red Flags for Adult ADHD (www.caddra.ca)

- organizational skill problems (time management difficulties, misses appointments, frequent late and unfinished projects)
- erratic work history (changes jobs frequently, unprepared for meetings, projects not completed on time, reports of coworkers, employers and clients being frustrated with them)
- Anger control problems (argumentative with authority figures, over controlling as a parent, fighting with coworkers or child's teachers, episodes of rage)
- marital problems (spouse complains that he/she does not listen, speaks without thinking, is impulsive, forgets important events)
- being over-talkative, interrupts frequently or inappropriately, speaks too loudly
- parenting problems (difficulty establishing and maintaining household routines, inconsistency in dealing with the children)
- money management problems (making impulsive purchases, running out of money, failing to pay bills or do taxes, history of bankruptcy)
- substance use or abuse, especially alcohol or marijuana, or excessive caffeine use
- addictions such as collecting, compulsive shopping, sexual avoidance or addiction, overeating, compulsive exercise or gambling
- problems with driving (speeding tickets, serious accidents, license revoked, or being overly cautious when driving to compensate for attention problems)
- being a parent of a child with ADHD
- the adult may be successful but shows impairment when compared to their potential
- an adult who is expending more energy than others to do the same amount of work

Media interviews with a Psychologist on this (or other topics), can be arranged by contacting Dr. Janine Hubbard at 682-0235 or janine@janinehubbard.com