

# PALS NEWSLETTER

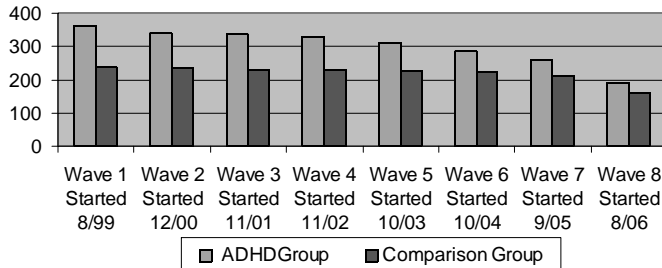
A newsletter of the Pittsburgh ADHD Longitudinal Study

## STUDY UPDATE

- Wave 8 Continues
- Wave 9 to begin this summer
- Application to NIH to extend study

Our 8<sup>th</sup> annual assessment began last August, and to date approximately 355 kids and 460 parents have completed their Wave 8 visit. Letters are now going out to everyone whose last visit was in August or September of 2006. If you have received a letter, and know when you would like to come in for your interview, please call the PALS scheduling line at 412-246-5656. The table below details the number of visits that have been completed at each wave. In total, 9316 visits have been completed since the study began in August, 1999.

Young Adult Visits Completed to Date



Preparation is now underway for our 9<sup>th</sup> annual assessment which will begin in August. Stay tuned for more information about Wave 9 in the next few months. We are also in the process of preparing an application to our NIH funding agency to extend the study. We are proposing some changes to the study—to tie the frequency of assessments and the degree of parent involvement to the participant's age. We plan to interview annually until approximately age 26, at which time we will reduce the frequency of visits and also decrease the amount of information that we gather from parents. The application will be reviewed in the fall and we should know the results in late October.



**If you need to change or cancel your study appointment, please call the PALS scheduling line at 412-246-5656.**

## MAY 2007

### Energy Drinks: Will they help you fly or crash and burn?

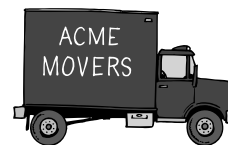


Pittsburghers have been found to brew more coffee than any other city's residents. Coffee and tea, however, are losing ground to energy drinks, with edgy packaging and marketing strategies designed to attract the young and daring.

Along with caffeine and an often hefty dose of sugar (several teaspoonfuls), energy drinks often contain added vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and other substances chosen to replenish vitamins and minerals that are lost during stress and exertion.

Caffeine containing energy drinks have been found to increase reaction time, alertness, and concentration, and stimulate fat burning. Studies have found moderate amounts of caffeine to be helpful in treating migraines, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and to increase performance on both mental and physical tasks.

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**If you have moved, plan on moving or have changed your telephone**

**number, please contact us at (412) 246-5656 to provide us with updated information.**



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## STUDY FINDINGS

### Are Adolescents and Young Adults with ADHD Risky Drivers?

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death among American teenagers, and, as such, researchers have tried to identify characteristics of individuals that may be at increased risk for automobile related injuries and fatalities. Because adolescents and young adults with ADHD are more prone to impulsivity, low frustration tolerance, and high levels of energy than their nonADHD peers, they have been identified as a population that may be vulnerable to risky driving behaviors. While previous research has found a relationship between ADHD and certain negative driving-related outcomes (e.g., license suspensions or revocations, accidents, traffic citations), some questions remain unanswered. Researchers at SUNY Buffalo and Pitt decided to study driving behaviors among adolescents and young adults in the PALS study and to explore which symptoms and associated features of ADHD may help explain increased risk for negative driving outcomes. Amanda Thompson, one of Dr. Molina's graduate students at the University of Pittsburgh, collected driving information from questionnaires completed during the first annual PALS interview to examine these important issues.

Results indicated that adolescents and young adults with ADHD were four times more likely than adolescents and young adults without ADHD to have ever driven without a license or a permit. The ADHD participants who reported driving in the past six months also reported more accidents in the last six months and more lifetime traffic tickets. No group differences were found for risky driving or alcohol-impaired driving. Additional analyses also indicated the importance of current ADHD symptoms, as current levels of hyperactivity and impulsivity as rated by parents and participants explained a portion of the childhood ADHD effect on tickets and accidents.

In the end, it appears that adverse driving outcomes (tickets and accidents) are a possibility for children with ADHD, especially when they have persisting hyperactivity and impulsivity symptoms.

It is important to note that the association between childhood ADHD and driving problems is modest in magnitude, and not all children with ADHD will drive in a way that increases their risk for accidents. At the same time, the level of risk, while small, is important given the potential dangers involved. Dangerous driving (e.g., speeding, reckless driving, alcohol-impaired driving) is also particularly elevated among young drivers with other violations of conduct (e.g., stealing, lying, property damage).

Results from the present study have suggested a number of promising areas for future research. Presently, is not known whether specialized driver training or medication could decrease the identified risk for negative driving outcomes. Further study should also focus on identifying additional risk and protective factors within the ADHD population (e.g., various medication types and regimens, parental monitoring, other contextual factors such as passengers in the car) that distinguish the risky drivers from the non-risky drivers. Finally, analysis of additional waves of data will help to determine whether maturation into middle adulthood will reveal continued or diminished driving risk associated with ADHD.

*Amanda Thompson,  
Clinical Psychology Graduate Student*

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### Important Study Phone Numbers

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**Tracey Wilson**

(412) 246-5673

**Joanne Bethune**

(412) 246-5656





# Oakland!

There's so much to see and do, in addition to completing your PALS interview! Take time to check out the following attractions available in Oakland.

*For an indoor activity, the **Carnegie Museums** are offering some fun and interesting exhibits for the summer.*

- **The Carnegie Museum of Art** is featuring a glass artwork collection called *Viva Vetro! Glass Alive! Venice and America, 1950-2006*. This exhibit, which runs through September, will present about 100 works from both Venice and the United States. The exhibit will show the links between Venice and America and their significance from the 1950's to the present day.
- **The Carnegie Museum of Natural History** showcases an exhibit on how Carnival is celebrated throughout the world. You will have an understanding why in Brazil you are a king/queen of a royal court or in Bolivia why you take the disguise of a dancing devil. This exhibit will show the importance and function of Carnival to these communities and give you a better understanding of their history and cultural traditions of such regions as Italy, Spain, and Mexico to name a few. *Carnival* will be running from June 23<sup>rd</sup> through January 2008.

*For those that enjoy the outdoors, enjoy what nature has to offer in Oakland.*

- **Schenley Park** is located in the heart of Oakland. Not only is the park a great place to relax, there are other activities available such as a golf course, disc golf, nature trails, and a swimming pool.
- **Phipps Conservatory** is a wonderful botanical garden! Stop by to visit the outdoor garden (free to the public during daylight hours) or take time to enjoy the indoor garden (admission fee) that will feature both the Butterfly Forest and Tropical Forest: Thailand. Phipps Conservatory is open 7 days a week (just like PALS)! For more information on Phipps Conservatory, call 412-622-6914.

The above activities are in Oakland and within walking distance of the PALS office. When you schedule your appointment to come in this summer, just remember you can experience a new aspect of Oakland while you are in the area!

*Jason Duin and Bev Worley, PALS Interviewers*



**Don't forget to check our program website! Visit us at**

**[www.youthandfamilyresearch.com](http://www.youthandfamilyresearch.com)**

**Not only can you find information about the Youth and Family Research Program and our Staff, but you can:**



- **Get directions to our office and information on parking**
- **Contact a Youth and Family Research Program staff member**
- **Find information about community resources**
- **Find out about new research projects that are currently accepting participants**

**Log on today!**



# SUDOKU CLASSIC

*Sudoku* is the Japanese word combining "number" and "single". Its origin stems from an 18th century game by a Swiss mathematician. His game was named "Latin Squares". This is truly an international game.

	6		1		4		5	
		8	3		5	6		
2								1
8			4		7			6
		6				3		
7			9		1			4
5								2
		7	2		6	9		
	4		5		8		7	

by [www.sudoku.com](http://www.sudoku.com)



## GAMEPLAY

The object of the game is to fill all the blank squares with the correct numbers. Several of the 9 x 9 grid squares already contain numbers -- you cannot change these. To work the puzzle, fill in the empty squares of the grid with the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

The puzzle is solved when each **ROW** and each **COLUMN**, and each **3 x 3** square within the puzzle contain the numerals 1 through 9 with each numeral appearing only once. **Good Luck!**



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Adults with ADD for Pittsburgh & Tri State Area  
CHADD International Chapter #477  
Upcoming Meetings

**May 31, 2007**

**"Improving Communication Skills"**

**Speaker:** Elaine Gorr, Ph.D. Clinical Psychology, Private Practice, Diagnosis, Counseling & Coaching

**June 28, 2007**

**"Technological Assistance for Organizational Challenges"**

**Speaker:** Thomas Bellucci, M.Ed., M.P.M. Louis & Jennifer Hutmire, Visionspin LLC

**July 26, 2007**

**"Efficacy of Pharmaceutical Treatments for Adults with ADD/ADHD"**

**Speaker:** Oscar G. Bukstein, M.D., MPH, Medical Director, Youth and Family Research Program @ WPIC

**Location:** WPIC Auditorium on 2nd Floor

Regular Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Room 292, 3811 O'Hara St. at DeSoto St. in Oakland (7:00 to 9:30 pm). For additional information or for a complete listing of 2007 meetings, contact Leslie Stone at 412-682-6282 or please visit

[www.pittsburghadd.org](http://www.pittsburghadd.org)

## Energy Drinks....

Unfortunately, too much caffeine can cause headaches, anxiety, heart palpitations, nausea, diarrhea, restlessness, irritability, muscle tremors, and sleep disturbances. Pregnant or nursing women and people sensitive to caffeine should avoid it. Using caffeinated beverages daily can cause withdrawal symptoms—so if you feel the need to cut back, do it gradually.

Up to 300 mg of caffeine is considered safe for most people, though individual sensitivity varies. That sounds like a lot, but it is important to add together all sources of caffeine and to consider the serving size. An 8 oz cup of coffee typically contains 70 mg of caffeine, but a travel mug or Starbucks Grande can easily top 350 mg. Manufacturers are not required to list the amount of caffeine in their products on the labels, making it difficult for consumers to make wise decisions.

Energy drinks are not a replacement for fluids. People may become dehydrated if they consume energy drinks instead of water or other liquids. This can be very dangerous—even leading to death—especially when exercising.

Doctors are warning against the trend of mixing Energy Drinks with alcohol. This is dangerous because both energy drinks and alcohol are dehydrating maximizing the dehydration risk. More worrisome is that the stimulant effect of caffeine can mask the effects of the alcohol, making the person feel they are steady and sober, even though their abilities are impaired.

Current news headlines have touted both benefits and dangers of these controversial drinks. Many schools across America have banned them, as have a handful of European countries. In the U.S., Cocaine energy drink was pulled from the shelves, though this was sparked over the name, rather than the contents. It has since reappeared with a new name—*Censored Energy Drink*. It seems energy drinks are neither miracle cures nor diabolical poisons. As is often true--moderation is the key.

Tara Pienkosky, PALS Interviewer

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Address Correction Requested