



# PALS NEWSLETTER

A newsletter of the Pittsburgh ADHD Longitudinal Study

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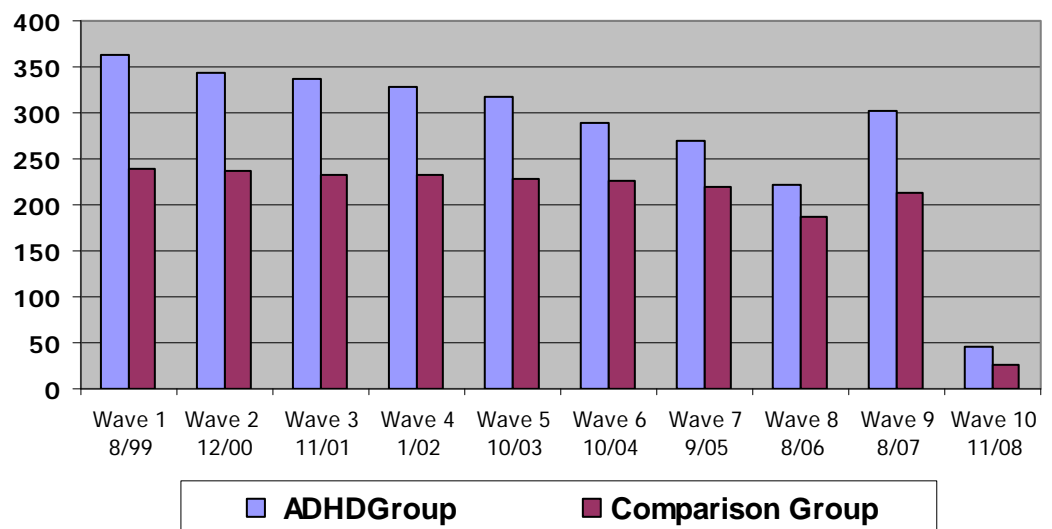
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## Study Update

In November, we started our 10<sup>th</sup> wave of interviews. To date, we have completed 71 young adult (YA) interviews and 56 parent interviews. The interviews have not changed substantially, and most YAs are finishing in about 2½ hours. *There ARE two changes to the study this year that are worth mentioning. FIRST, all participants must complete the informed consent process before completing their 10<sup>th</sup> interview.* The new form requests consent to continue study participation for another five years and to conduct interviews according to YA participant age (annually through age 23, and then approximately at ages 25, 27, 30, and 35). Informed consent involves a staff member reviewing the new consent form with the participant, outlining study procedures and other important considerations such as how we maintain confidentiality of records. Participants are given the opportunity to read the consent form and to

have any questions they may have about their participation answered. Informed consent may be done by telephone or in person at our clinic. If done by telephone, we will mail the consent form in advance and conduct the review over the phone. Once the review is completed, participants sign the consent form and send it back in a postage paid envelope that we provide. The consent document will appear familiar to many of you as it has not changed much since the last review. **The SECOND change we have added this year are interim phone contacts with YAs who are not scheduled for an interview this year.** We are calling each YA participant not scheduled for an interview to confirm or update telephone and address information. At the start of each month, we send a letter to the participants we will be calling that month. We include a copy of the new study consent form and a return envelope. If time permits during the contact call, we also review the consent form.

Young Adult Visits Completed to Date



# An update from Lieutenant Mike in Iraq



We received an email from Lt. Mike to thank us for the school supplies that we sent. He is reveling in both the Steelers victory and the success of Pitt's basketball team—and yes, he watched the Super Bowl! He even correctly predicted the Oakland post-game craziness. Here is a photo of Lt. Mike (center of photo, facing away from the camera) and members of his unit distributing toys and supplies to Iraqi children. He reports that the Iraqi children have very little, and appreciate everything.

★★★★★★★★★★★★

If you are interested in sending supplies or support to the children in Iraq, check out the website [www.operationiraqchildren.org](http://www.operationiraqchildren.org) or call (816) 531- 4701 (ext. 100) for more information.

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## Online Income Tax Preparation

The latest in do it yourself tax preparation is online preparation that lets you electronically prepare, store, and file your tax returns, either free or for a modest charge. Preparing taxes online may be less expensive than using store-bought or downloaded software. While both types allow users to work, store, and return later for changes and electronic filing, online returns are stored on the tax-prep service's server. This would save files in the event your own computer is lost or stolen. To protect your financial information from hackers, Consumer Reports recommends that you look for the logo "Authorized IRS e-file Provider" and certification of the site by TRUSTe, the Better Business Bureau, or both.

If your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less, you are eligible to prepare and file your federal returns at no charge using one of the companies that participates in the IRS's Free File Program. Go to [www.irs.gov/individuals/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/index.html) and click on "Easy. Fast. Find out more. Free File." Preparing state returns is generally not free, but many states offer free e-filing directly through their revenue departments' Web site. The

Pennsylvania Department of Revenue's electronic filing website may be accessed by going to <http://www.doreservices.state.pa.us/>

If you're not eligible for Free File, several commercial services offer online bargains. H&R Block's TaxCut ([www.taxcut.com](http://www.taxcut.com)), Intuit's TurboTax ([www.turbotax.com](http://www.turbotax.com)) and TaxAct ([www.taxact.com](http://www.taxact.com)) offer free or low-cost (no more than \$20) tax prep and filing for people with reasonably simple returns using 1040EZ and 1040 forms.

Source: *ConsumerReports.org*

## Need Help Filing Your Taxes?

Income Tax Assistance is available through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. VITA is a program comprised of volunteers that offer free tax assistance to people that cannot afford professional assistance in filing their taxes. Volunteers help to prepare basic tax returns for individuals with low-to moderate incomes. To be eligible for a VITA program, individuals must have an income below \$42,000 for the 2008 tax year. For more information or to find VITA program locations in Allegheny County, contact the United Way at 412-255-1155 or visit the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare website at <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us> and enter the keyword "VITA".



## Worldwide Differences in ADHD Prevalence: A Result of Culture or is it Studied Differently Around the World?

Researchers who have studied the prevalence of ADHD have found that it varies by geographic region. For example, some studies indicate that ADHD may be more common in North America than in Europe, raising the possibility that ADHD could be a product of cultural factors. Other researchers argue that the differences between prevalence rates of ADHD in North America and Europe are an artifact of the way that ADHD is assessed. A group of researchers recently set out to determine 1) the worldwide prevalence of ADHD and 2) which factors may account for the geographic differences in ADHD prevalence.

The researchers consulted internet databases, textbooks, ADHD experts and reference lists to find studies that could help address the questions above. They located 102 studies of individuals with ADHD who were 18 years of age or younger and who were recruited from schools or the community. Using these data, the researchers determined that 5.29% of children and adolescents worldwide have an ADHD diagnosis, and they confirmed that there are significant differences between the rates of ADHD depending on where the study was conducted. Specifically, there were lower rates of ADHD in Africa and in the Middle East than in North America or in Europe; there were no differences in the prevalence rates of ADHD between North America and Europe.

The researchers found several methodological factors that may have contributed to the worldwide differences in ADHD prevalence. First, studies that assessed ADHD symptoms only (e.g. hyperactivity) reported higher rates of ADHD than studies that assessed and required ADHD-related impairment (e.g. school suspension) to assign an ADHD diagnosis. Second, when comparing four diagnostic manuals that are used to diagnose ADHD, the studies that used the manual currently used in the United States had the highest rates of ADHD diagnosis. Third, studies that relied on reports provided by parents or teachers had the highest rates of ADHD diagnosis compared to other sources of information (e.g. participant self-report). Research conducted separately in the USA (originating at the University of Pittsburgh) has shown that children tend to under-report their symptoms of ADHD. This reporting tendency may explain differences in prevalence rates between studies that do and do not rely on self-report.

Although the researchers found geographical differences in the prevalence of ADHD, when study methods that varied between geographic areas (discussed above) were held constant, there were no

differences in the prevalence rates of ADHD across geographic areas. Therefore, the worldwide differences in ADHD appear to be due to differences in how ADHD is assessed and diagnosed rather than cultural factors per se. These findings suggest some degree of consistency worldwide in the proportion of children from industrialized nations who experience difficulty with day-to-day demands on their functioning due to problems with inattention, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity. Efforts to use similar assessment methods internationally may further our understanding of ADHD and its prevalence in different cultures.

FIGURE 2. ADHD/HD Pooled Prevalence According to Demographic Characteristics and Geographic Location



Kat Belendiuk  
Clinical and Developmental Psychology  
Graduate Student

*This research was conducted by Guilherme Polanczyk, M.D.; Mauricio Silva de Lima, MD., Ph.D.; Bernardo Lessa Horta, M.D., Ph.D.; Joseph Biederman, M.D. and Luis Augusto Rohde, M.D., Ph.D and was published in the American Journal of Psychiatry, 2007.*



## Sudoku Classic

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

**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—9 with each numeral appearing only once. **SOLUTION:** An answer key is available on our website at [www.youthandfamilyresearch.com](http://www.youthandfamilyresearch.com). From our home page on the website, select *Studies*, click on *PALS*, click on *Newsletters* and on the center of the page see *Sudoku Puzzle Answer Key*.

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



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, 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



Congratulations to our Super Bowl Champions ~

The Pittsburgh Steelers!

Test your Black and Gold Knowledge

- 1. Who won the coin toss?
2. What was the score at Half Time?
3. What All Pro linebacker intercepted the ball and rumbled down the field for 100 yards - the longest play in Super Bowl History?
4. What quarter did Roethlisberger give up the game's first turnover?
5. Who was awarded MVP?
6. Is Mike Tomlin the youngest head coach in the NFL to win a Super Bowl?
7. What did broadcaster Myron Cope create in 1975 to excite the fans?
8. What is the name of the Steelers' Mascot?
9. Four Steelers have been Super Bowl MVPs (one guy twice). Who are they?
10. Steelers now own a NFL record six Super Bowl Championships, surpassing what two other NFL teams?

\*\*\*\*\*



- 1. Cardinals
2. 17-7, Steelers lead
3. James Harrison
4. Second
5. Santonio Holmes
6. Yes, at age 36
7. Terrible Towel
8. Steely Mcbeem
9. Franco, Swann, Bradshaw (2) and Ward
10. Cowboys and 49ers



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

February 26, 2009

Speaker

Joseph Strayhorn, M.D.

Improving the Emotional Climate in Adult ADD Relationships

Meeting in WPIC Auditorium

March 26, 2009

Speaker

Andrew S. Mahoney, M.S., L.P.C.

Coping Strategies for Gifted Adults with ADD/ADHD

Meeting in WPIC Auditorium

Regular Monthly Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month at WPIC, Room 292, 3811 O'Hara at DeSoto St. in Oakland from 7:00 to 9:30 pm.

Parking is available in the Soldiers & Sailors Parking Garage (Corner of O'Hara St & Bigelow Blvd)

For more information, please contact Leslie Stone at 412-682-6282 or visit www.pittsburghadd.org

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