

If my child is diagnosed with ADHD, won't they be labeled?

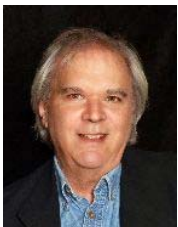
By: Mark Katz, PhD

Children and adults impacted by attention, executive function, and related learning challenges are better able than ever before to see their differences in a hopeful new light. And researchers who study resilience through the lifespan remind us of the important role this plays in helping us rise above life's adversities, whatever they may be.

Terms we use to identify our attention, learning and other challenges can serve to either stigmatize our differences, or conversely, **legitimize our differences**. By legitimize, I mean **help us to understand them, validate them, and learn to see them in a hopeful new light**. For many of us, this is an important step in our efforts to grow more resilient in the face of adversity. Researchers who study resilience through the lifespan tell us that this appears to be an **important first step regardless of our age**. It's true for children, as well as for adults.

How can parents of children struggling with ADHD and related differences learn more? Trusted organizations like CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder) can help (www.chadd.org). The organization draws heavily on current research in the field of ADHD and enjoys close working relationships with some of our nation's leading authorities in the field as well. Another important benefit of CHADD is that the information provided encompasses the impact of ADHD and related challenges through the lifespan. As experts in the field remind us, ADHD for many can persist through adulthood.

About the Author



Mark Katz, Ph.D., is a clinical and consulting psychologist in San Diego, California, and author of the book, *Children Who Fail at School but Succeed at Life*. The book is a follow-up to his earlier book, *On Playing a Poor Hand Well*. For over 30 years, Mark has served as the Director of Learning Development Services, an educational, psychological and neuropsychological center in San Diego, California. Mark is also a contributing editor for *Attention Magazine* and writes the magazine's promising practices column. In addition, Mark is also a past recipient of the CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder) Hall of Fame Award, which the organization gives each year to recognize and honor individuals they feel have made significant contributions to improving the lives of individuals affected by ADHD.