

Anti-Ableist ADHD Media Guidelines

The Anti-ADHD Ableist Media Coalition

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Following the recent barrage of negative press coverage, we have seen how damaging uneducated words can be. The impact has been felt throughout the Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) community. As a result, we have come together to compose these guidelines as a framework for the media.

We fully support freedom of the press, freedom of speech and everyone's right to their own opinion. However, media outlets have a social responsibility and publishing uninformed opinions endangers lives.

In following these guidelines your organisation is actively demonstrating that it cares about the impact its coverage has on vulnerable readers, viewers or listeners.

Our intention is to work with the media to help prevent ableist coverage. Ableism is akin to racism, sexism and homophobia and is just as damaging. ADHD is a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and has the same protection in law.

Guidelines set by the Anti-Ableist ADHD Media Coalition:

- 1. Media coverage of ADHD should not reinforce negative stereotypes or stigma that are known to be false**
e.g. that ADHD is a trend, that everyone has it or that people seek diagnosis to access medication
- 2. Editorial fact checking:** see our verified checklist of ADHD facts
- 3. Balance the opinions of people who do not have direct experience of ADHD with those representing people with lived experience of the condition** e.g.: as INSERT JOURNALISTS NAME does not have personal experience of living with this debilitating brain disorder; here is the experience of someone that does
- 4. Coverage to include accurate signposting to support**
e.g. If you think you may have ADHD, reach out to the charity ADHDadultUK. If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts, please call Samaritans on 116 123
- 5. Media coverage of ADHD should be handled respectfully** as if it were a physical disability being discussed or any other protected characteristic

In the interest of public safety, it is essential to use these five simple guidelines when discussing ADHD. Organisations choosing not to do so will be challenged by the Anti-Ableist ADHD Media Coalition.