



The State ADHD

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IN THE UNITED STATES, we're at a pivotal moment for ADHD advocacy. Over the last several years, significant strides have been made—such as the work by the American Professional Society of ADHD and Related Disorders (APSARD) and CHADD to develop and educate clinicians about the first adult ADHD treatment and diagnostic guidelines. Yet at the same time, individuals with ADHD are facing unprecedented policy challenges to the recognition of ADHD as a legitimate disorder, potential restrictions on future access to treatment, the loss of workplace and school disability accommodations, and greater limitations on insurance coverage.

For individuals with ADHD and their families, these policy shifts could disrupt critical supports, making daily life more overwhelming, uncertain, and even debilitating. Ensuring that ADHD remains recognized, equitably diagnosed, treated with the highest standard of care, and supported at work and in school requires sustained advocacy and active engagement. CHADD is committed to leading these efforts.

CHADD's Role in ADHD Advocacy

For over thirty-five years, CHADD has been the leading voice in ADHD advocacy, working at federal, state, and local levels to educate policymakers and the public, championing the rights and well-being of individuals with ADHD.

Our efforts include:

- **Building and participating in partnerships and coalitions** such as the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities, the Mental Health Liaison Group, ADHD Awareness Month Coalition, and the Telehealth Coalition to strengthen our collective voice.
- **Engaging with policymakers** to educate them about ADHD through evidence-based sources and the lived experiences of our members in an effort to ensure that laws and regulations best reflect the needs of individuals and families affected by ADHD.
- **Providing accurate, evidence-based information** to combat public misinformation and stigma about ADHD.
- **Empowering our ADHD community** by giving individuals and families the tools they need to support and advocate for themselves.

Our work is far from over—the current critical policy issues will need the collective voice of CHADD and our members to advocate and positively impact the rights and protections of the ADHD community.

of Advocacy

Progress, Challenges, and How You Can Take Action



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Key Issues in ADHD Advocacy

The Make America Healthy Again Executive Order

- **What it is.** On February 14, 2025, the president issued an executive order establishing the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission, tasked with reviewing national health trends and policy. While its stated goal is to address chronic health conditions, including mental health disorders, the commission has also stated it intends to evaluate the use of prescription medications, particularly stimulant medications for ADHD, saying they will “assess the prevalence of and threat posed by the prescription of SSRIs, antipsychotics, mood stabilizers, [and] stimulants.”

This language raises concerns that ADHD treatments—such as stimulant medications, which are considered the gold standard for ADHD management—could come under increased scrutiny. Given recent public discourse around the rise in ADHD diagnoses and stimulant prescriptions, there is uncertainty about whether the commission’s findings will lead to new restrictions, insurance barriers, or shifts in federal agency recommendations that could make accessing treatment more difficult.

- **Why it matters.** Access to effective ADHD treatments, particularly stimulant medications, is not only vital for daily functioning but also has significant implications for overall health and safety. Research indicates that untreated ADHD is associated with a shorter life expectancy, primarily due to factors such as increased risk-taking behaviors, higher rates of accidents, and challenges in adhering to medical advice. Proper medication management can mitigate these risks, leading to safer outcomes for both individuals with ADHD and the broader community.

If the MAHA Commission introduces policies that limit stimulant prescriptions or reframe ADHD as an overdiagnosed condition, it could lead to reduced access to these life-saving treatments, increased stigma, and stricter insurance policies. CHADD is working with coalition partners to ensure that ADHD remains recognized as a legitimate, well-researched condition and that individuals continue to have access to the evidence-based care they need.

The Texas v. Becerra Lawsuit

- **What it is.** A coalition of seventeen states, led by Texas, has filed a lawsuit (Texas v. Becerra) challenging recent updates to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination based on disability in federally funded programs, including schools and workplaces. The lawsuit argues that the federal government has expanded disability protections too broadly, which could result in limiting eligibility for accommodations—particularly for individuals with ADHD and other invisible disabilities.

For students, Section 504 ensures access to accommodations that help mitigate ADHD-related challenges, such as extended test time, reduced distractions, movement breaks, and alternative learning formats. In the workplace, these protections provide employees with necessary supports like flexible deadlines,

modified workspaces, and assistive technology. If the lawsuit succeeds, many individuals with ADHD could find it significantly harder to qualify for and maintain these essential supports.

- **Why it matters.** A weakened Section 504 could result in more students struggling academically due to the loss of accommodations that help them focus, stay organized, and manage executive function challenges. Without appropriate support, these students are at higher risk of disciplinary actions, lower academic achievement, and school disengagement. Similarly, employees with ADHD may face new barriers to requesting reasonable accommodations, making it harder to manage workloads, maintain productivity, and remain employed. CHADD is actively monitoring this case and working with advocacy partners to ensure that individuals with ADHD continue to receive the protections they need to thrive in educational and professional settings.

Department of Education Initiatives

- **What they are.** Several proposed changes within the US Department of Education could have an impact on students with ADHD. One major discussion is dismantling the DOE entirely, shifting its responsibilities to other federal agencies like the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice. Another proposed change would convert federal special education funding into block grants, giving states and school districts more discretion over how funds are used, rather than requiring them to follow federal guidelines.

If these proposals move forward, federal oversight of special education programs—including IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) enforcement—could weaken, increasing the likelihood of inconsistent policies from state to state. Unlike the lawsuit targeting Section 504 eligibility, these changes could affect how effectively schools implement IDEA services, enforce Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and allocate funding for ADHD-related supports.

- **Why it matters.** Without strong federal oversight, students with ADHD could experience more delays, denials, or inconsistencies in receiving services like behavioral interventions, executive function coaching, or specialized instruction. If IDEA enforcement becomes fragmented across different agencies or funding is left to state discretion, some students may find it harder to access essential supports. CHADD is advocating to ensure that students with ADHD continue to receive the protections and resources they need, regardless of shifts in federal education policy.

Medicaid Funding Threats

- **What they are.** Proposed federal and state-level budget cuts to Medicaid could have a significant impact on individuals with ADHD, particularly children and low-income adults who rely on Medicaid for access to ADHD evaluations, medications, and

therapy. Medicaid plays a critical role in providing healthcare for millions of Americans with disabilities, including ADHD, covering services such as diagnostic assessments, behavioral therapy, and prescription medication.

If funding is reduced, states may impose stricter eligibility criteria, reduced coverage for ADHD medications, or cuts to therapy programs, making it harder for individuals to access necessary treatments. Additionally, potential policy changes could shift more responsibility to states, leading to disparities in access depending on where a person lives.

- **Why it matters.** Many families and individuals with ADHD already face insurance barriers and provider shortages. If Medicaid funding is cut, those who rely on it for care—often the most vulnerable populations—could lose access to essential treatment, leading to higher rates of untreated ADHD, increased mental health crises, and worsening academic and employment outcomes.

CHADD is actively working with policymakers and coalition partners to oppose budget reductions that threaten ADHD care and to advocate for continued coverage of ADHD-related medical and behavioral health services under Medicaid.

How You Can Take Action

We hear you. In CHADD's weekly and monthly peer support groups and through our website, members have voiced their growing concerns about these impending changes. Many of you have shared that you need clarity on what these policy shifts mean, what CHADD is doing, and—most importantly—how you can help. It's frustrating to watch decisions being made that could affect your health, education, and future without knowing how to respond.

But here's the truth: You are not powerless. Advocacy is strongest when we come together as a community, raising our voices to protect the rights and well-being of individuals with ADHD. CHADD is here to help you take action, and together, we can make a difference.





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reliable, evidence-based information. Talk to your friends, family, and networks about what's at stake, and amplify ADHD advocacy by sharing CHADD's updates on social media. Your voice can make a real difference!

3. Take action. Contact your lawmakers and make your voice heard on key ADHD policy issues by reaching out to your representatives. Our website provides policy updates, talking points, and scripts for emails and phone calls, making advocacy easier than ever. Whether at the state or federal level, your outreach can influence decisions that impact the ADHD community. Plus, stay tuned—a new advocacy tool is coming to our website soon to help you connect with lawmakers even more directly. Get started here: <https://chadd.org/advocacy-blog/contact-your-representatives>.

4. Fuel the cause. CHADD's advocacy efforts depend on the volunteer and financial support of our members and the ADHD community. Whether through volunteering your time with one of our chapters or making a financial donation, you can be a part of helping CHADD continue this critical work. Donations help fund initiatives like our new advocacy software, which makes it easier for individuals to take action. Additionally, CHADD's chapters, committees, and board of directors rely on passionate volunteers who want to help drive change for the ADHD community. To make a financial contribution or find volunteer opportunities, visit our website.

1. Join the movement. Becoming a CHADD member is one of the most effective ways to stay up to date on critical ADHD advocacy efforts. CHADD provides exclusive policy updates, action alerts, and insights into ongoing legislative issues affecting ADHD diagnosis, treatment, and accommodations. Membership also connects you with a community of peer support and advocacy, working together to support, uplift, and protect the rights and well-being of individuals with ADHD. Find out more at <https://chadd.org/get-involved/membership>.

2. Use your voice. Your lived experience with ADHD matters and sharing your story can be a powerful way to raise awareness and advocate for change. CHADD invites you to share your personal journey on our website, where it might be featured as a testimonial to help others understand the real-life impact of ADHD. Submit your story here: <https://video.videorequest.io/request/2025CallToAction>. Beyond sharing your story, you can also help combat misinformation by spreading CHADD's

The Time to Advocate Is Now

The challenges facing the ADHD community are real, but so is our ability to influence change. Every voice matters—whether you're staying informed, speaking up, reaching out to lawmakers, or supporting CHADD's advocacy efforts. By taking action now, we can protect access to ADHD treatment, preserve essential accommodations, and ensure that policies reflect the needs of individuals and families living with ADHD. CHADD will continue to lead the fight, but lasting change happens when we stand together. Join us, raise your voice, and be part of the movement to safeguard the future of ADHD care and support. **A**

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