



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
August 31, 2011

### 8 IN 10 CANADIAN PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH ADHD STRESS AS RETURN TO SCHOOL APPROACHES

*New 'Back to School' guide can help parents make this year  
their child's most successful yet*

TORONTO, ON – Eighty one per cent of Canadian parents of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) admit to being stressed about their child's return to school according to a new survey conducted by the Center for ADHD Awareness Canada (CADDAC). With an average of one to three students in every classroom affected by ADHD, thousands of Canadian families struggle to get their child and their routines back on track.

"These new survey results really show how overwhelming back to school can be for parents of a child with ADHD," explains Heidi Bernhardt, National Director of CADDAC and mother of three children with ADHD. "These parents have to simultaneously plan and organize new school, home and treatment routines, on top of worrying about new teachers, classmates and curriculums - all of which are significantly challenging transitions to a child with ADHD."

#### ***After-school stress: extra-curricular activities and homework***

The vast majority of parents surveyed expressed that one of the most stressful aspects of back to school was managing their child's condition at home, with over 70 per cent of parents (72%) concerned about organizing their child's routine in the mornings and evenings and 89 per cent being stressed about completing after-school and evening homework.

"Homework time is always a challenge for us," explains Karen, a single mother of 9-year-old triplets, one of whom has ADHD and is also hearing impaired. "Evening inattention and impulsiveness can easily lead us off track, so having the right strategies in place – like firm scheduling and effective medication – makes evening time more manageable and reduces conflict."

Extra-curricular activities are an important part of a child's social and physical development, but these can quickly become cause for concern as evening ADHD symptoms prevent child engagement and increase safety risks.

#### ***School stress: New teacher communication***

Another significant stressor for parents is wondering whether the new teacher will understand their child's ADHD, with 84 per cent of respondents worrying about this.

"Being organized and helping to prepare a new teacher is the best way to manage this stress," says Heidi Bernhardt. "Schedule a meeting and help your teacher understand your child and how ADHD affects them, work with them to create communication strategies that you can both commit to – adjusting when necessary."

### ***CADDAC releases complete 'Back to School Guide'***

To help ease the transition, CADDAC is releasing the first complete Canadian back to school guide made specifically for parents of children with ADHD. Offering strategies for restarting school and home routines, reviewing accommodations at school, briefing new teachers and evaluating treatment regimens with a doctor – this guide aims to keep parents ahead of the game and reduce the stress.

“Knowing where to begin is often the hardest part to organizing the transition back to school. Having a comprehensive guide, from a trusted source, like this one, can really help parents stay organized and be less stressed,” says Dr. Kenny Handelman, a child psychiatrist in Oakville, Ontario and expert on ADHD. “Treatment of ADHD relies on a combination of patient and family education, school accommodations and medication if required, so being able to ask the right questions and reflect on the right things can make a big difference in deciding a child’s treatment regimen.”

All children with ADHD are different and therefore require an individualized treatment plan. Frequent treatment review with a doctor is crucial to properly managing the symptoms of ADHD. Discuss what is working well and/or falling short of your expectations throughout the day and into the evening homework and extracurricular activities time. Newer treatment options may be available to help consistently manage your child’s symptoms.

For the complete guide of tips and strategies or to get more information about ADHD, its diagnosis and treatment options, visit [www.caddac.ca](http://www.caddac.ca).

### **About ADHD**

ADHD is a hereditary neurological disorder that primarily results in difficulty regulating attention and impacts almost every aspect of daily living including learning, organization skills and time management. The most conservative estimates indicate that ADHD affects over 1 million Canadians, an average of one to three children in every classroom and at least one employee in every small business. ADHD that is not recognized and treated defers huge costs to our social and economic systems. There are excellent multimodal intervention approaches available to manage the symptoms of ADHD.

### **About CADDAC**

The Centre for ADHD/ADD Awareness, Canada (CADDAC) is a national, not-for-profit organization providing leadership in education and advocacy for ADHD organizations and individuals with ADHD across Canada. CADDAC's mandate is to take a national leadership role in networking all organizations, professionals, patients, caregivers and other stakeholders involved in ADHD related issues, and to then support those people through education and advocacy. For information on CADDAC's up-coming conference and other educational events please visit the events section of the website [www.caddac.ca](http://www.caddac.ca).

### **About the survey**

From July 12<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011, an online survey was conducted among a sample of 140 Canadians who are parents of children with ADHD. The survey was conducted with Fieldwork by Angus Reid National Panels.