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## Guidance on 504 Plans Issued by U.S. Department of Education

Have you had to fight with your child's school to have a 504 plan created or fully followed? You're not alone; in the past five years, more than 16,000 complaints of discrimination against students affected by ADHD have been filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR).



The OCR just issued a groundbreaking guidance to every public school district in the country about creating and following Section 504 plans specifically for students with ADHD. It clarifies what school districts are required to do to provide

students with ADHD an equal educational opportunity under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

“The department will continue to work with the education community to ensure that students with ADHD, and all students, are provided with equal access to education,” says Catherine E. Lhamon, assistant secretary for civil rights. [Read more.](#)

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## CHADD’s Public Policy Committee Survey Provides Information to the Office of Civil Rights

CHADD’s Public Policy Committee has been working diligently behind the scenes to provide input to the OCR while it was developing the guidance on civil rights for students affected by ADHD.



In 2014, the committee conducted a survey of CHADD members and learned most 504 Plans were not properly implemented. Parents responded that violations of the Section 504 evaluation process were common.

“We shared the concerns of our members (with the OCR) about the implementation of Section 504 and the effects on their children. The individual stories, albeit brief, were heart-wrenching and provided a painful human dimension to the statistics,” the committee members write. “These students with ADHD were being denied a free and appropriate public education and an equal opportunity for participation in school. The safeguards of the Section 504 regulations were not providing adequate protection from the problems these children experienced.”

The public policy committee noted that more than one out of every nine complaints to the Office of Civil Rights in the past five years involved students with ADHD.

“We applaud the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education for their efforts to make sure that the civil rights of students with ADHD are protected in our public schools,” they write. “We appreciate the guidance on implementation of Section 504 that they have developed for all school districts nationwide.”

[Read more from the CHADD Public Policy Committee.](#)

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## Why Medicine Should Taste Good

There is a universal truth: children don’t like to take medicine.

Many children have trouble swallowing pills and most medications—whether a pill, tablet or liquid, taste bitter or leave an awful aftertaste. Adults may be able to force themselves past the bitterness of medicine, but for children, getting them to

take medicine can be a struggle.

“If the medicines have a bad taste, the kids are not going to take them,” says Max Wiznitzer, MD, a pediatric neurologist and co-chair of CHADD’s Professional Advisory Board. Dr. Wizniter has worked with many young patients and their parents to find a solution to the bitter-pill problem. “Things have to have a reasonable taste so they will be willing to take them. When you try to give kids the regular medications, they won’t take them. They can be bitter and bad tasting, and the kid won’t take them again. That’s not in the kid’s best interest.” [Read on.](#)



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## How to Find a Therapist Near You

If you are struggling to find an ADHD specialist to help you or your child, you are not alone. Finding a qualified behavior therapist who takes your insurance can be particularly hard for parents of young children diagnosed with ADHD.



Could it be the problem is not a lack of providers, but a question of insurance company practices in recruiting and maintaining a roster of mental health providers that accept their plans? Many providers have stopped accepting insurance because, they say, insurance companies are not reimbursing them at a market rate. Other ADHD providers who want to be included in insurance plans have been turned away after being told the provider list for an insurance company was full. [Continue reading.](#)

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## Q&A: How Do I Get Updates on My College Student?

**Question:** Our family is very excited since my oldest child is getting ready to go to college for the first time. We want to make sure she has the supports she needs to be successful. As her parents, we want to keep communication between her college and us open the way we did while she was in high school. However, we heard that the school won’t send us her grades or contact us if there’s a problem. Is this true?



- College Dad in New York

**Answer:** With classes starting in about a month, now is the time for you and your daughter to discuss where midterm and end-of-semester grade reports will be sent. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, FERPA, parents don't automatically receive notices on how their young adult is doing academically in college. [Read more.](#)

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The logo features a stylized orange sunburst icon to the left of the text "ADHD in the News". "ADHD" is in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, while "in the News" is in a blue, cursive script font.

## ADHD in the News

- ADHD is now classified as a specific disability under federal civil rights law
- ADHD medication reduces risky behavior in children, teens, research finds
- Web technology can improve care for ADHD
- BPA plastics linked to ADHD in boys

Read these and other articles in the [ADHD in the News weekly digest](#).

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### Did You Know?

The 504 plan falls under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973--a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against public school students with disabilities including students with learning and attention issues who meet certain criteria. Know your rights. [Read on.](#)

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