DSM-5 Changes Enhance Parent Identification of Symptoms in Adolescents with ADHD

Margaret H. Sibley, Aparajita B. Kuriyan

Psychiatry Research, June 2016
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2016.05.036.

Abstract

This study evaluates the impact of the DSM-5 ADHD symptom wording changes on symptom endorsement among adolescents with ADHD. Parents of adolescents with systematically diagnosed DSM-IV-TR ADHD (N=78) completed counterbalanced DSM-IV-TR and DSM-5 ADHD symptom checklists in a single sitting. General linear models were conducted to evaluate whether the new DSM-5 symptom descriptors influenced the total number of ADHD symptoms and overall ADHD symptom severity endorsed by parents, how demographic factors were associated with noted changes in symptom endorsement when moving to the DSM-5, and which DSM ADHD items displayed notable changes in endorsement rates under the new wording. On average, parents identified 1.15 additional symptoms of ADHD in adolescents when moving from the DSM-IV-TR to the DSM-5. Increased symptom identification was not specific to age, sex, ethnicity, race, or socioeconomic status. Over half of the sample experienced increased symptom endorsement when changing texts (59.0%). Under the new DSM-5 wording, four symptoms had statistically significant endorsement increases (range: 11.2%-16.7%): difficulty sustaining attention, easily distracted, difficulty organizing tasks and activities, and does not seem to listen.