Family and Maternal Characteristics of Children With Co-Occurring ADHD and Depression

Lindsay A. Borden; Jessica Hankinson; Carisa Perry-Parrish; Elizabeth K. Reynolds; Matthew W. Specht; Rick Ostrander

Journal of Attention Disorders (August, 2016)
doi: 10.1177/1087054716666321

Abstract

Objective:
This study examined differences between children with ADHD and comorbid depression (n = 26), ADHD only (n = 111), and a community control group (n = 130) on measures of family and maternal characteristics.

Method:
The present study utilized a large, community sample. Diagnoses required positive endorsements from multiple sources. ANOVAs and chi-square tests were conducted to determine group differences.

Results:
Compared with children with ADHD alone and community controls, mothers of depressed ADHD children reported decreased family cohesion, limited participation in social/recreational activities, increased maternal depressive symptoms, difficulty coping with parenting roles, and higher rates of bipolar and anxiety disorders. Mothers of children with ADHD (with or without comorbid depression) reported increased conflict, decreased cohesion, and poor maternal coping compared with community controls.

Conclusion:
Findings are consistent with prior literature suggesting that families of children with ADHD and depression demonstrate both similar and unique characteristics. Clinical implications are discussed.