**Introduction**

- College students with ADHD experience challenges with course preparation, sustained focused, heightened substance use, risky sexual behaviors, and executive functioning that can prevent college success (Fleming & McMahon, 2012; Leffler et al., 2016) and lead to lower graduation rates relative to peers (Adovkt et al., 2011; Kurth et al., 2018).
- Parents of college students with ADHD may mitigate challenges by offering supports that align with students’ needs and requests; whereas a reduction of parental support can be detrimental to college students (Fleming & McMahon, 2012; Stevens et al., 2023).
- During the college transition for students with ADHD, positive parent-student relations are related to increased support seeking from parents and a smoother transition. Conversely, negative parent-student relations and high levels of unwanted control may hamper adjustment (Padilla-Walker et al., 2021; Nelson & Walker, 2013).
- More generally among college students with ADHD, positive interactions and low conflict with parents has been associated with better quality of life (Greenwald-Mayer, 2002). An authoritative parenting approach (high warmth and high expectations) has been linked with reduced ADHD symptomatology, risk for comorbid disorders, and academic impairment (Jones et al., 2015; Stevens et al., 2019).
- Additional research is warranted to further examine student perspectives on the quality of their parental relationships among a diverse sample of students with ADHD. This may offer increased generalizability and implications for parental intervention in college.

**Method**

- **Participants—** Students (N = 41; M age = 21.61, SD = 2.31) were recruited via campus fliers. Participants identified as majority Cisgender Women (46.3%) and White (65.9%) and Black (26.8%). A portion (22.0%) identified as Hispanic/Latinx.
- **Procedures—** Participants were scheduled for individual interviews. They completed a series of measures (only those applicable to this poster will be included below) and an interview assessing various topics, namely their perspective on ADHD, academic adjustment, and accommodations.

**Results**

- **Themes Derived from Thematic Analysis—**
  - **Parents** are a means to services and medication, with mothers primarily providing a pathway to resources
  - Being understood by parents is highly valued
  - Sub: Trying to understand is appreciated, but not sufficient
  - Sub: Listening is part of being understood
  - Sub: ADHD education is insufficient and does not equal understanding the student with ADHD
  - Cultural identity of parents can influence beliefs about disorder and lack of support
  - Students take a teaching role in educating parents about ADHD
  - Mothers: Initial lack of acceptance/support of ADHD, currently offers multiple types of support, primarily including listening and pathways to resources
  - Fathers: Offers superficial or no support unless included as part of parental unit; a portion reported to have ADHD
  - Desire for parents to be more educated about ADHD and more sensitivity and involvement from Fathers
  - A portion are unsure how parents could be supportive

**Quantitative Analysis (NRI-RQV)—**

Across P1 and P2, scale means generally indicated that the frequency of these relationship subscales were “seldom” or “somewhat.” Satisfaction ratings for P1 and P2 were similar (specifically, both have rating of “somewhat” and large standard deviations indicate frequency spans from “seldom” to “often”). A general trend emerged with lower scores across most subscales in P2 compared to P1, with the exclusion of Approval that was meaningfully higher than all other subscales for P2. Lastly, P1 had meaningfully higher scores in Disclosure and Emotional Support relative to P2.

**Discussion**

- **Key Findings—** The NRI-RQV showed students reported similar relationship satisfaction frequency among caregivers 1 and 2 (which was predominately mother and father, respectively). However, these scores are interpreted as “somewhat” satisfied, which was lower than reported in among students in Stevens et al 2023’s qualitative interviews. This may be due to methodological differences (satisfaction measured as frequency in this study, demographics differences). Indeed, Stevens et al (2023) examined students of a homogenous group of primarily white, married parents which differed on the level of affection, support, and closeness of these parents/guardians. IRB approval was granted for the present study. This is supported by our results that cultural identity of parents was associated with disbeliefs about ADHD as a disorder and a lack of support. Thematic analysis revealed that parents as a unit were identified as a pathway to services and medication. However, mothers and fathers (generally) displayed salient differences across both methods of analysis with mothers as the primary involved in the support of ADHD. Mothers provided support in multiple ways, including instrumental support (via providing a pathway to services and emotional support (via listening). This was corroborated by NRI-RQV scores, as mothers scored relatively higher frequency on emotional support and disclosure about ADHD than fathers. Mothers were interviewed in part of the parental unit; yet were separately reported to have little or no involvement. The NRI-RQV revealed that parent (2nd) scores meaningfully higher in their frequency of approval. Interestingly, this is a relationship quality that is superficial and does not require significant involvement (versus listening or connecting to services). Students reported they wished their fathers were more involved and sensitive to their child’s needs. Students could possibly identify parental support and/or understanding. This most reported feeling misunderstood. Being understood was critically important to these students and it seemed they tried to facilitate this in part by trying to educate their parents about ADHD. Students reported a strong desire for their parents to be educated about ADHD but acknowledged it would not necessarily lead to understanding.

- **Limitations and Future Directions—** The qualitative analysis included 10 of 41 interviews. As analysis expanding and interviewing additional assessment interview questions beyond those in the method, qualitative themes and interpretations may change. Additional research on parental support is warranted given its link to college student success (Stevens et al., 2023). This is important as a portion of our sample reported lacking parental support or were unable to identify how parents could be supportive. This research has clinical implications for future studies that could increase parental education of ADHD and understanding, increase father involvement in ADHD support and management, and explore formal venues for engaging parents in intervention to support college students at this developmental stage.

**References**

- Kuriyan et al., 2013).

**Contact Information**

Tjohns83@students.towson.edu

**Exploring the Parent-Student Relationship in College Students with ADHD: A Mixed Methodological Study**

Tyre Johnson, B.S., Minha Asif, B.S., Mikaela Alderite, B.S., Naftali Zeilinger, B.S., & Erin Girio-Herrera, Ph.D.