



Breaking News

Parents Pursuing Rx for Academic Excellence; Two-Thirds of Physicians Report Unwarranted Requests within the Last Year

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A new national survey of 640 physicians revealed that nearly two-thirds of physicians (67%) reported requests from parents to prescribe behavioral drugs with the goal of enhancing their child's academic performance.

The national survey was conducted by HCD Research and Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO) during September 8-11, in response to a recent article on msnbc.com quoting pediatricians who have reported an increase in 'academic doping', as more parents are requesting Ritalin and other behavioral drugs to boost their child's academic performance.

Among the findings:

-- In the last year, on average, a physician has seen 11 parents who have requested a behavioral drug such as Ritalin; with the goal of improving the academic performance of their child whom the physician believes did not have ADD/ADHD.

-- Two-thirds of physicians (67%) reported that they have experienced unwarranted parent requests for behavioral drugs at least one time in the past year. However, physicians prescribe a behavioral drug to only 9% of children when they do not believe they have ADD/ADHD.

-- Physicians estimated that approximately 16% of parents whom they deny unwarranted requests for behavioral drugs are obtaining them without physicians' approval.

-- Physicians reported that 58% of the time a prescribed behavioral drug such as Ritalin has a positive effect on a child's performance in school.

-- 65% of the parent requests for a behavioral drug such as Ritalin to improve their child's academic performance are mainly from mothers while 14% are from fathers and 21% are from both parents.

-- Of all the prescriptions for behavioral drugs solely for the purpose of improving children's academic performance, 56% are made as a result of parents' direct request and 34% are made due to school personnel's request.

To view detailed results for the physicians' poll, please go to:

<http://www.hcdhealth.com/publish/P1019/index.htm>

Editors/Reporters: For more information on the poll, or to speak with Glenn Kessler, co-founder, managing partner, HCD Research or Chris Borick, Ph.D., director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion, please contact Vince McGourty, M&M Communications, Inc., at (908) 638-5555 or (vinmcg@earthlink.net).

HCD Research is a marketing and communications research company headquartered in Flemington, NJ. The company's services include traditional and web-based marketing and communications research. HCD Research is also the developer of [hcdhealth.com](http://www.hcdhealth.com), a web site for health care professionals. For additional information on HCD Research, access the company's web site at

www.hcdi.net or call HCD Research at 908-788-9393. Headquartered in Allentown, Pennsylvania, MCIPO is a respected source of public opinion data on local, state and national issues.

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