



ADDults with ADHD NSW Inc

Support and ADDvocacy

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Newsletter (1st page only – complete newsletter is sent to financial members)

Autumn Edition

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Next Seminar:

Saturday afternoon,
 2nd June 2007 at 2pm
 - Ultimo TAFE, Broadway

Office hours:

10.30am – 2.30pm
 Tues, Wed & Thurs.

Note:

Volunteers are unable to attend our office during school holidays, but the answer machine will be cleared regularly.
 Re-opening Tuesday, 24th April, 2007.

Dear Members,

We always thought ‘*Chinese whispers*’ was a party game played by children....not so, the Australian media recently joined the game, but it was no party for parents of children with ADHD.

Seems it started in the UK where Dr. Spitzer was interviewed for a BBC documentary about *adults with anxiety disorders*, but they completely misrepresented his comments. Before going to air, the makers of the documentary then *sold to hand picked journalists* the ‘idea’ that the head psychiatrist had recanted. By the time the newspapers got hold of it, the focus had switched from adult anxiety to children with ADHD!!!

The ‘London Daily Mail’ went for broke: didn’t see the documentary, didn’t even check with Dr. Spitzer, but claimed Dr. Spitzer had changed his views on ADHD, saying that up to 30% of children had been misdiagnosed!!

They then contacted News Limited in Australia, who just recycled the ‘Daily Mail’s’ article, and away it went like a bushfire, with all forms of media repeating the misinformation one after the other. Newspapers, radio and TV, none of them checking the facts, and of course there were plenty of ‘non-believers’ to confirm their stories. Yet a simple phone call to Dr. Spitzer, by our national body, quickly confirmed the stories had been totally fabricated.

Dr. Robert Spitzer, is Professor of Psychiatry, Columbia University in New York, and Chair of the committees responsible for establishing the diagnostic criteria for mental health disorders (including ADHD) in the current DSM. He was most concerned to hear that he was being widely misquoted in the Australian media, and immediately responded with a statement for our national body to issue to those responsible:-

In part “An article in an Australian newspaper entitled ‘The Great ADHD Myth’ claimed that in the BBC 2 documentary, I said that 20 to 30 percent of the diagnoses of ADHD in children are mistakes. This has been repeated in several newspapers. ***I never made such a statement***”.

He told Media Watch: “***It was fabricated and totally distorted, for a start, I was not even talking about ADHD.***”

The BBC now says the ‘Daily Mail’ got it wrong – but it’s too late, the damage has been done. We don’t anticipate any apologies!

‘Media Watch’ subsequently documented this disgraceful scenario:-

<http://www.abc.net.au/mediawatch/transcripts/s1882075.htm>

Moral of this story: **Don’t believe ANYTHING reported in the media.**

- Joy Toll, Secretary/Editor

**ENJOY A SAFE AND
 HAPPY EASTER**