

From the Editor: In Praise of Imperfection

Our kids with ADHD and LD aren't perfect, but we can still be proud.

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Tags: [Behavior in ADHD Kids](#), [ADHD Parenting Skills](#)

It's easy to brag about a son who started reading at two, won the school spelling bee in seventh grade, and has more followers than Conan O'Brien on Twitter. There are fewer opportunities to [praise a child with a disability](#), who has none of those achievements on her list. (Example: You're at the drive-thru at McDonald's and the waitress says, "May I take your order?" You say, "I'll have a Whopper. And speaking of whoppers, my autistic kid just told his first lie.")

"We live in a perfection-preoccupied society," write Gina Gallagher and Patricia Konjotan in their wonderful book, [Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid](#). "Parents are always telling you how smart, athletic, gifted, and talented (blah, blah, blah) their kids are without you even asking."

It's not that these mom/authors don't want to hear parents talk about their high-achieving kids. They just want those same parents to ask about *their* kids -- two daughters with disabilities. "Our kids may not be gifted athletes, students, or musicians (or room cleaners), but they've given us plenty of reasons to be proud. [Reasons most people don't think about.](#)"

For instance, when Konjotan asked her bipolar daughter, Jennifer, if she was sure she wanted speak in front of a crowd at a suicide prevention fund-raiser, she filled with pride when her daughter said, "Well, Mom, I am nervous, but I want to do this. Sometimes I feel like no one can relate to me. This is my chance to be heard." To her mom, Jenn is a profile in courage and maturity. Gina loves and admires her daughter Katie, a 15-year-old with Asperger's syndrome, for lots of reasons, but especially for her ability to bounce back from adversity time and again. "Mom, it's OK that I didn't get invited to that party with my friends," said Katie. "I'm just lucky to have friends."

The authors want you to join their so-called "Movement of Imperfection" that is sweeping the country. "We want [parents of kids with disabilities](#) to come out of their messy closets and celebrate the joys, gifts, milestones, and quirks of their imperfect children. And, of course, to finally do some bragging."

Sounds like an imperfectly good idea to us. You, too? Tell us about it by leaving a comment below!

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