Understood.org survey: Women, ADHD, and winter blues

In partnership with The Harris Poll, Understood.org surveyed over 2,000 U.S. adults about the winter season to better understand how holidays and shorter, darker days affect their motivation and mood.

For many women, winter is a season of quiet stress.

- 55% say they experience the "winter blues."
- 50% say they start off excited for the holidays, but then burn out.

But the lows are felt even more by women with ADHD.

- 81% **feel more mentally overwhelmed** at this time of year (compared to 58% of all women).
- 69% say **it takes a while for them to recover** from the stress of the holidays (compared to 49% of all women).
- Women with ADHD **are more likely to experience the "winter blues"** (79%) and be diagnosed with **seasonal affective disorder** (42%).

Perfectionism makes New Year's goals challenging.

- 81% of women with ADHD — and 58% of all women — **end up quitting or failing** to meet New Year's resolutions or self-improvement goals.
- When they don't achieve their goals, 85% of women with ADHD **get mad at themselves.**
- 86% of women with ADHD **procrastinate or put things off** if they don't have the time or energy to do them perfectly.

Women with ADHD feel "stuck" this time of year.

- 77% find it especially **hard to motivate themselves** at this time of year.
- 82% say that even though they know what they need to do to feel "unstuck," **it's hard to find time** to actually do it.

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When women with ADHD feel stuck, they...

- Scroll on their phone (51%)
- Lie down and do nothing (50%)
- Isolate themselves (50%)

But they also...

- Do small things that make them feel like they've made progress (37%)
- Make time for self-care (32%)
- Reach out to friends or loved ones (29%)

Overall, 4 in 5 women with ADHD (82%) wish they had better strategies to get "unstuck" when they lack motivation

ADHD Unstuck is a free, digital self-guided activity aimed at helping women with ADHD boost their mood and build self-awareness around emotional regulation. Developed in partnership with Northwestern University's Lab for Scalable Mental Health, *ADHD Unstuck* provides a personalized action plan of motivating quick wins, plus fun and social activities — all in one single session that takes an average of 10 minutes to complete. Try it at u.org/adhd-unstuck.

Methodology: This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Understood.org from November 18–20, 2025, among 2,090 U.S. adults ages 18+, of whom 1,102 are women and 189 are women who identify as having ADHD. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the full sample data for women is accurate to within +/- 3.6 percentage points using a 95% confidence level.

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