Understood Quick Insights Series

The power of podcasts: How women with ADHD engage with media

Understood.org provides free, expert-vetted resources and support so people who learn and think differently can thrive — in school, at work, and throughout life. One of these resources, the Understood Podcast Network, is a collection of 12 ad-free shows exploring the experiences of neurodivergent people. For the millions of U.S. women who have ADHD, we offer a variety of podcasts: ADHD Aha! and MissUnderstood: The ADHD in Women Channel.

In 2025, Understood.org, in partnership with Torrens University Australia, sought to examine how women with ADHD engage with media — specifically podcasts — as a source of health information. Research has long overlooked women when it comes to ADHD. Their experiences, needs, and perspectives are often missing from field and cultural conversations.

Through this first-of-its-kind study, "Women With ADHD: The Power of Podcasts," we learned that women with ADHD place a high value on podcasts compared to other forms of media as a source of health information and health literacy.

Why women with ADHD?

- ADHD research historically focuses on boys, leaving major gaps in understanding how ADHD affects women.
- ADHD diagnosis rates for women ages 23-49 nearly doubled between 2020 and 2022.
- An ADHD diagnosis is associated with having a lower quality of life.

Why podcasts?

- Podcasting has grown significantly in influence over the past two decades, becoming an increasingly important medium in the media landscape.
- Podcasts are a valuable tool for sharing health-related information in ways that are personal and accessible.
- Despite this, studies of podcast listener perspectives are rare, especially in the areas of condition management and thriving.

Key insights

We surveyed 424 women with ADHD who listen to *ADHD Aha!* and *MissUnderstood*. Here's what they told us.

They engage critically with health-related information.

- **94%** say they think critically about the health-related information they read and where it comes from.
- **7 in 10** trust medical and mental health professionals regarding health information.
- **76%** say they trust their own research more than they trust mainstream media for health information

They regularly engage with podcasts.

- **78%** say that they prefer audio platforms, like Spotify, Apple, and Audible, compared to video and text platforms.
- **62%** listen to podcasts between two and five times per week.
- **4 in 5** listen to podcasts for 30 minutes to two hours a day.

They trust podcasts more than other forms of media.

- **94%** say they have increased their level of ADHD expertise through podcasts and their own research, compared to social media **(86%)** and mainstream media (**85%**).
- **72%** say they trust podcasts to provide them with accurate health information. They trust podcasts more than they trust mainstream media (**56%**) and social media (**47%**).

Implications

These findings show that podcasts are more than entertainment for women with ADHD. They are preferred and trusted sources of health information.

By amplifying lived experiences with expert insights, podcasts can help women with ADHD thrive in ways traditional health information channels often overlook.

On the research side, we'll be publishing more of our insights and results from the second phase of this study. Stay tuned!

Connect with us

We're always looking to collaborate and partner with others on our research. Reach out to our team at evaluation@understood.org to learn more.

Methodology: This survey was conducted online internationally by Understood.org from March 12 to May 15, 2025, among 424 adults who identify as women ages 25+, of whom 384 have been diagnosed with ADHD and 40 have symptoms of ADHD. The sampling precision of the survey is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. The full sample data has a 95% credible interval of approximately 45.7% to 54.3%, or about ±4.3 percentage points around the 50% estimate. The survey results will contribute to a broader ongoing international study being conducted by Understood.org in partnership with Torrens University Australia into women with ADHD and podcast listenership