

Attention:

Priya Dogra, Chief Executive
Ian Katz, Chief Content Officer
Alisa Pomeroy, Head of Documentaries and Factual Entertainment
Tim Hancock, Commissioning Editor

Channel 4
124 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 2TX

18 August 2026

Dear Sir / Madam

Open letter: Channel 4 Programme 18 August 2026 “The Great ADHD Myth?”

We are writing to you concerning the programme “The Great ADHD Myth?” due to be broadcast on 18 August 2026 on Channel 4. We have concerns around the programme and the impact it will have on the perception of ADHD.

ADHD Embrace is a registered charity in the UK supporting children and young people with ADHD as well as their families and professionals that live and work with them. We have over two decades of experience and expertise in supporting our community. Please refer to our last published ADHD Embrace [Annual Review & Impact Report](#) setting out our cause and the impact our work has had over many years.

The title of the programme, “The Great ADHD Myth?” and the question posed in your press release where you refer to whether ADHD is a genuine neurodevelopmental disorder, or a social construct, raises serious concerns about the premise of the documentary. Its title is highly judgemental in tone and clearly implies that ADHD is a myth.

We have not yet seen the documentary but have seen the letter from ADHD UK and your response where you state that your programme seeks to encourage debate around ADHD. We assume the debate you are seeking is amongst the public.

We do question how an open debate around ADHD can be achieved with a programme that is advertised as “Psychiatrist Max Pemberton takes on conventional thinking on ADHD. Is it really a neurodevelopmental disorder? Has modern life contributed to rising diagnoses? And for kids, is medicating the answer?”.

We are writing to express our concerns on the impact your broadcast may have in terms on public perception of ADHD for the following reasons:

1. The title is highly judgemental in tone, implying ADHD is a myth.
2. There is a wide general perception that ADHD is over diagnosed and over medicated in the UK due to there being increasing awareness of ADHD in general. But this is without a full understanding of the condition and its impact on the lives of sufferers. You may be aware that NICE estimates that 5% of the UK population are ADHD and where today in the UK approximately 3% of children have been diagnosed with ADHD and approximately 1% of adults. These statistics indicate that there is not an over diagnosis.

3. Your letter to ADHD UK indicates the objective of the programme is to encourage public debate. Our understanding is the programme is based on one psychiatrist challenging convention with a case study of one child. Showing your findings on a case study with one child is extremely narrow. From our years of experience working with many families, we know that no two children with ADHD are the same in terms of the severity of their condition and also the extent of co-morbidities / co-occurrences they may have such as dyslexia, sensory issues, autism, Tourette's, dyspraxia and more. This makes it hugely complex and not all children with ADHD can be considered to be the same.
4. Our approach to a treatment plan for ADHD supports a holistic approach where parental and a school support is vital and medication plays an important part in supporting concentration and executive function usually enabling a child to access education. Equally diet, exercise and a good sleep routine are vital for all children and are particularly important for children with ADHD due the additional challenges they face daily.
5. In our ADHD Embrace community we see high levels of children with ADHD suffering from exclusions or school avoidance, often driven by anxiety and other mental health challenges stemming from rejection or challenges in dealing with day-to-day life.
6. Supporting a child with ADHD is different for each family and it is recognised that there is a hereditary aspect. This means that parents with ADHD find it challenging not only for themselves but also to support their child. Therefore, there is no one size fits all for children with ADHD. We believe that with knowledge of the complexities of the condition and with strategies and tools to support young people by the parents and professionals working with them, young people with ADHD can ultimately thrive.
7. ADHD is generally understood by the medical profession; however, the general public have little real understanding of the condition. Both the parents and children with ADHD continue to feel marginalised and discriminated against despite there being more awareness of the label "ADHD". The general public has little understanding of how it impacts children with ADHD and the life outcomes.

In closing we want to highlight that that if you seek to encourage a debate, we sincerely hope that you will convey a well-balanced view in order that the general public have a better understanding of ADHD, its complexities and how it presents in different children. If not, we believe this programme is perpetuating misinformation about ADHD as a condition and discrimination against those families whose lives have been severely impacted by the condition.

Yours faithfully

Annette Wilson
Chair and Founder