

Love & ADHD D.A.T.E. Report

Data • Advice • Trends • Expertise



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Dating with ADHD in 2024

Dating can feel overwhelming for anyone, but for up to 1 in 20 adults with ADHD*, that experience can come with unique pressures.

According to a landmark new study conducted by Hinge's internal team of PhD researchers and behavioral scientists, people with ADHD are 22% more likely than neurotypical* daters to feel overwhelmed while navigating dating apps. With Hinge being on a mission to inspire intimate, in-person connections, the company wants to make it easier for daters with ADHD to find love, and the new D.A.T.E. (Data, Advice, Trends, and Expertise) Report aims to serve as a resource for them and their potential new partners.

*See glossary on page 32

ADHD, which stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, is a neurodevelopmental disability that affects attention, impulse control, and executive functioning. A person with ADHD might be easily distracted, impulsive, and restless. They may also struggle with emotional processing, sensory overload, and other challenges. As communicators, daters with ADHD might not engage with their matches in expected ways. This report explores approaches to address this.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A neurodevelopmental disorder that affects attention, impulse control, and executive functioning.

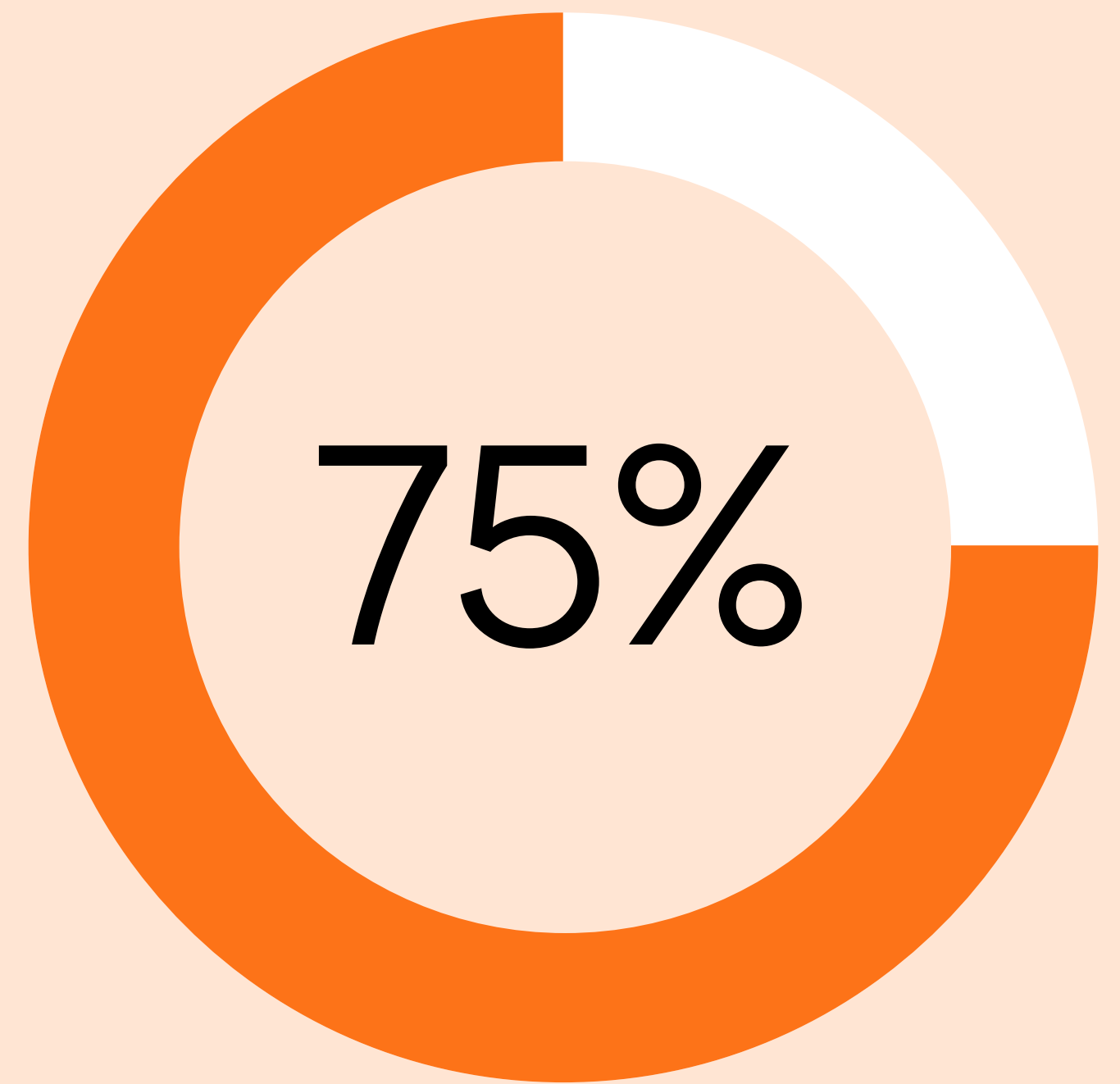


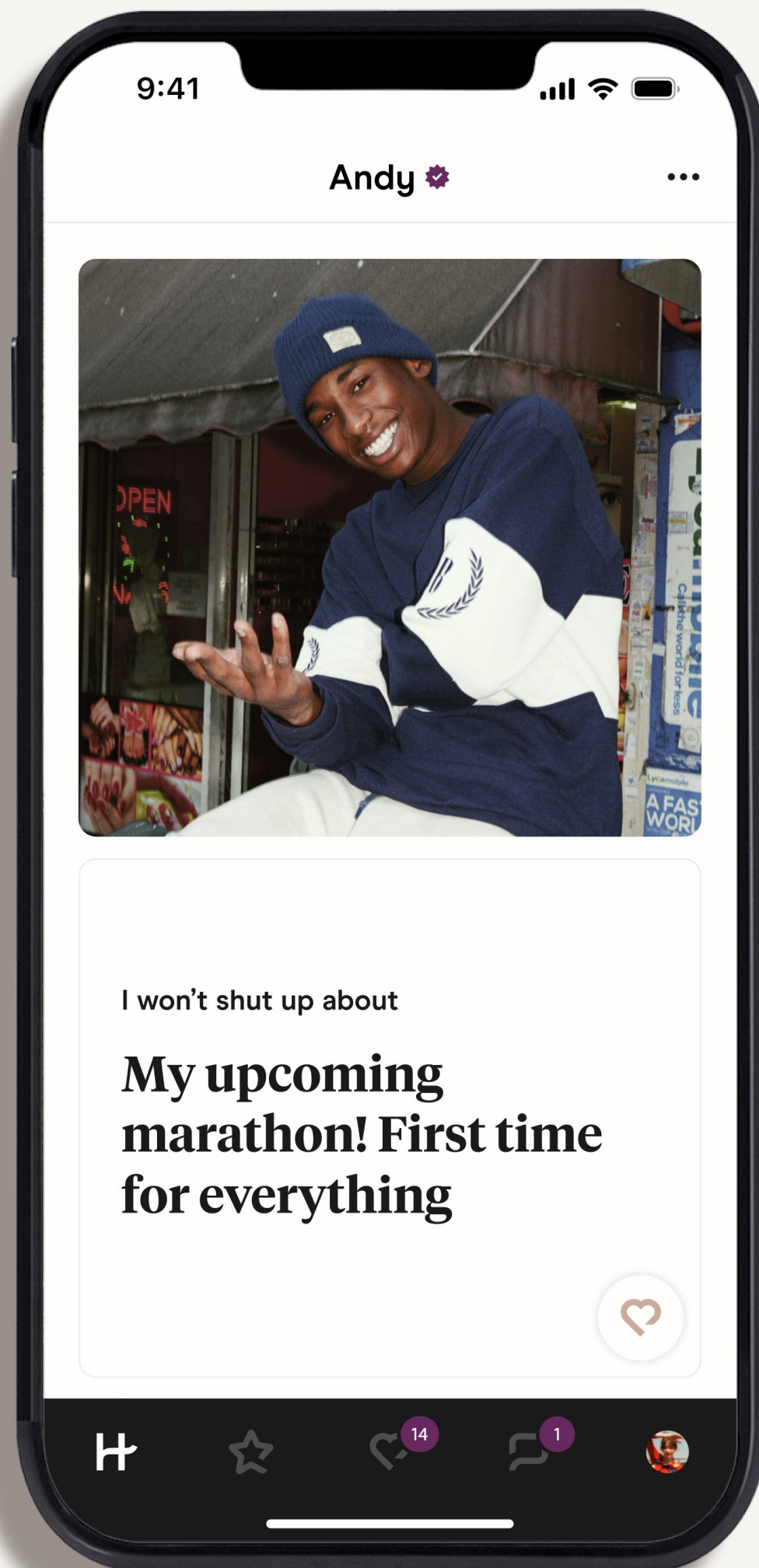
Over 9,000 global daters on Hinge with a clinical ADHD diagnosis shared their experiences for this report. A majority (82%) of Hinge daters with ADHD are seeking a relationship, but many struggle with social interactions and emotional processing. As a result, 3 in 4 Hinge daters with ADHD feel misunderstood by their matches.

Misunderstood Matches

People whose intentions are often misconstrued by potential dates.

75% of Hinge daters with ADHD feel misunderstood by their matches.





When it comes to misunderstandings, the common denominator is text-based conversation. Hinge provides Prompts and other ways for people to connect over their shared interests and lifestyles, but the way people read each other's DBL, or Digital Body Language, can make it harder for people with different communication styles to express their true intentions.

With support from Disability:IN, the leading nonprofit resource for business disability inclusion worldwide, Hinge's team of experts is helping daters with ADHD navigate two common communication challenges: responding to potential dates and navigating small talk.

Responding to Potential Dates

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Navigating Small Talk

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Meet Our Experts



Logan Ury (she/her)
Director of Relationship Science

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Logan Ury is Hinge's Director of Relationship Science. She's a behavioral scientist turned dating coach and the author of the best-selling dating book, *How to Not Die Alone*. She previously studied psychology at Harvard before running Google's behavioral science team, the Irrational Lab.



Moe Ari Brown (he/they)
Love and Connection Expert

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Moe Ari Brown is Hinge's Love and Connection Expert and a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. They also serve as a Diversity & Equity Consultant and on the Board of Directors for It Gets Better Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to uplifting and connecting LGBTQIA+ youth around the globe. Moe graduated from Northwestern University with an MS in Marriage and Family Therapy.

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Chapter 1

Responding to Potential Dates

Love & ADHD D.A.T.E. Report

The Challenge

You've seen the warnings on social media: if a potential partner doesn't respond quickly, they're not interested.

In fact, 71% of Hinge daters expect their matches to respond to messages within one day, and Hinge's research shows that when people respond within 24 hours, they are more likely to go on a date. Understandably, people fear being ghosted or having their time wasted by someone who's not serious about them. However, these expectations can overwhelm daters with ADHD.

People with ADHD get distracted, overstimulated, and overwhelmed easily, which can make it difficult for them to manage daily life. **43% of Hinge daters with ADHD often forget to respond to matches**, and almost a third (32%) end up feeling misunderstood when matches assume they're not interested due to slow responses.



Top barriers that make it hard for daters with ADHD to respond to messages.

Forgets to respond to matches

45%

Conversation feels repetitive and boring

45%

Feels overwhelmed

40%

To cope with the potential for distraction on their smartphone, many people with ADHD turn off notifications or avoid their phones entirely, which might mean forgetting about potential matches. This can make online conversations challenging, as neurotypical daters may assume that their matches are following the same unspoken rules as they are.

While dating with ADHD may seem difficult, daters with ADHD often have deep, powerful connections with other people. There are many ways of navigating these situations that will help everyone feel supported.



Tips for Daters with ADHD

The Opportunity to Reduce Communication Misunderstandings

Logan Ury (she/her)
Director of Relationship Science



Be upfront from the beginning about your communication preferences.

This will help you set expectations and avoid crossed wires. Early on, you can send a text that says, “Hey, I’m not on my phone often, but I don’t want you to think I’m not interested when I don’t respond. Hopefully you’ll see that my actions (in person!) speak louder than words.”

Reduce friction.

If you find that you’re faster at responding to messages on one platform than another, you can exchange phone numbers or socials and start chatting in the place that makes it easiest to respond when you both feel comfortable.

Set reminders.

Daters equate quick response times with interest. To help you maintain momentum with your matches, set a reminder to log in for a few minutes a day to keep the conversation going and move things forward.

Shift to a phone or video date.

This will help you avoid a prolonged talking stage that may lead to mixed messages. Suggest a phone or video date by sending a text like, “What are you doing later? I go for a walk every day at 6 after work, want to chat on the phone then?” or “I feel like text isn’t doing this story justice, want to finish it on FaceTime?”

Tips for Neurotypical Daters

The Opportunity to Reduce Communication Misunderstandings

Logan Ury (she/her)
Director of Relationship Science



Don't make assumptions.

Hinge's research shows that most daters with ADHD choose not to disclose their diagnosis on their profile or in early messages, so you probably won't know if the person you're texting has ADHD.

Keep an open mind.

If you assume that a slow response time means a lack of interest, you might be missing out on great potential matches. Instead, be open to interest showing up in different ways.

Appreciate honesty.

Many people with ADHD tend to be direct and honest in their communication. If something comes across as blunt, know that it's likely coming from a place of sincerity rather than insensitivity.

Get on the same page.

If you're unsure how to read someone's behavior—just ask them! You can say, "Hey, I'm having fun talking with you, but I notice it's taking you a while to get back to me," and give them a chance to explain what's going on. That will help set a foundation of honest check-ins for a future potential relationship.

Dater Stories

“Forgetfulness often stems from boredom, so try to keep dating exciting! Keep talking to people who keep you feeling hopeful and eager to know them more. As someone with ADHD, I want to be engaged in conversations that keep me coming back.”

Sierra Boudreaux (she/her)
Content Creator

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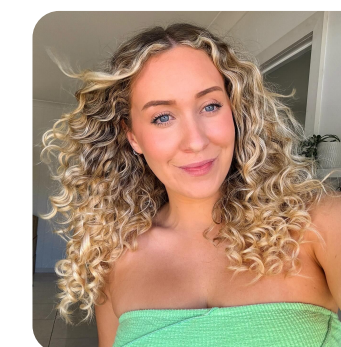


“I wish my matches understood that when I forgot to respond, it wasn’t due to a lack of interest—it was just that my brain often got overwhelmed or distracted. When someone sent a gentle reminder, I appreciated it. A follow-up message helped bring the conversation back to the forefront of my mind, and I was always happy to continue chatting. Understanding each other’s challenges made connecting so much easier.”

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Chapter 2

Navigating Small Talk

Love & ADHD D.A.T.E. Report

The Challenge

While Hinge encourages daters to form deeper connections from the beginning, many early in-app messages consist of small talk.

How's your day? Where do you live? What do you do for work? While well-intentioned, these questions can feel draining, especially when daters are having the same chat with five different people. However, for people with ADHD, this boredom moves from annoying to agonizing, and they may struggle to stay interested in conversations.

In fact, **daters with ADHD are 38% more likely than neurotypical daters to say they find it difficult to keep conversations going**, and 31% more likely to report that they don't like making small talk. Instead of feeling understimulated, many people with ADHD prefer to bypass this discomfort by engaging in deeper discussions with their matches straight away. This helps them focus on the conversation right in front of them instead of bouncing between different topics and activities to seek stimulation.





Deeper discussion doesn't always mean super heavy or personal topics. For many people with ADHD, they're waiting until the moment they can dive into their favorite topic. These “special interests” could be anything—art, basketball, a certain TV show—but they tend to be all-consuming topics they're passionate about above everything else.

Beyond bonding over shared interests or backgrounds, it can be hard for daters with ADHD to read a new person's intentions or reactions without any social cues, such as the person's voice or body language. For this reason, **50% of daters with ADHD on Hinge prefer getting to know their match in person,** where they can more easily read the other person's expressions.



For our Misunderstood Matches, feeling rejected or misconstrued can lead to an especially unpleasant feeling known as **Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria**, or RSD. This condition, which is also experienced by people who are autistic or have Borderline Personality Disorder, goes deeper than feeling pushed away. When a person with RSD experiences rejection, or perceived rejection, their brain cannot regulate the emotions, leading them to feel much more hurt than a neurotypical person. They may feel overwhelmed, embarrassed, or self-conscious. These feelings may also lead to low self-esteem and an inability to contain their emotions.

Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria

RSD is a condition that makes feelings of rejection or perceived rejection incredibly overwhelming. Many people with ADHD have it.

Tips for Daters with ADHD

The Opportunity for Navigating Small Talk on Hinge

Logan Ury (she/her)
Director of Relationship Science



Showcase your interests on your profile.

Integrate your passions into your Prompt responses. For example, if you're an animal lover and want to connect with someone who shares that interest, include it on your profile. By mentioning it upfront, you'll attract like-minded people and spark more meaningful conversations.

Keep a list of questions on your phone to ask your matches.

We form stronger connections when we ask questions, because they allow people to reveal unique details about themselves. What's more, research shows that being inquisitive tends to increase how much others like you.

Get to the date faster (when you're both comfortable).

Hinge has found that it's essential for daters to get out on an IRL date as soon as they feel comfortable in order to establish an authentic connection. The research shows that the sweet spot is after around three days of chatting.

Tips for Neurotypical Daters

The Opportunity for Navigating Small Talk on Hinge

Logan Ury (she/her)
Director of Relationship Science



**Bond over
shared interests.**

When sending likes, make the effort to find something you're both excited to chat about. By forming a connection around your special interests, you can skip the small talk and establish a meaningful bond.

**Be open to exploring
something new.**

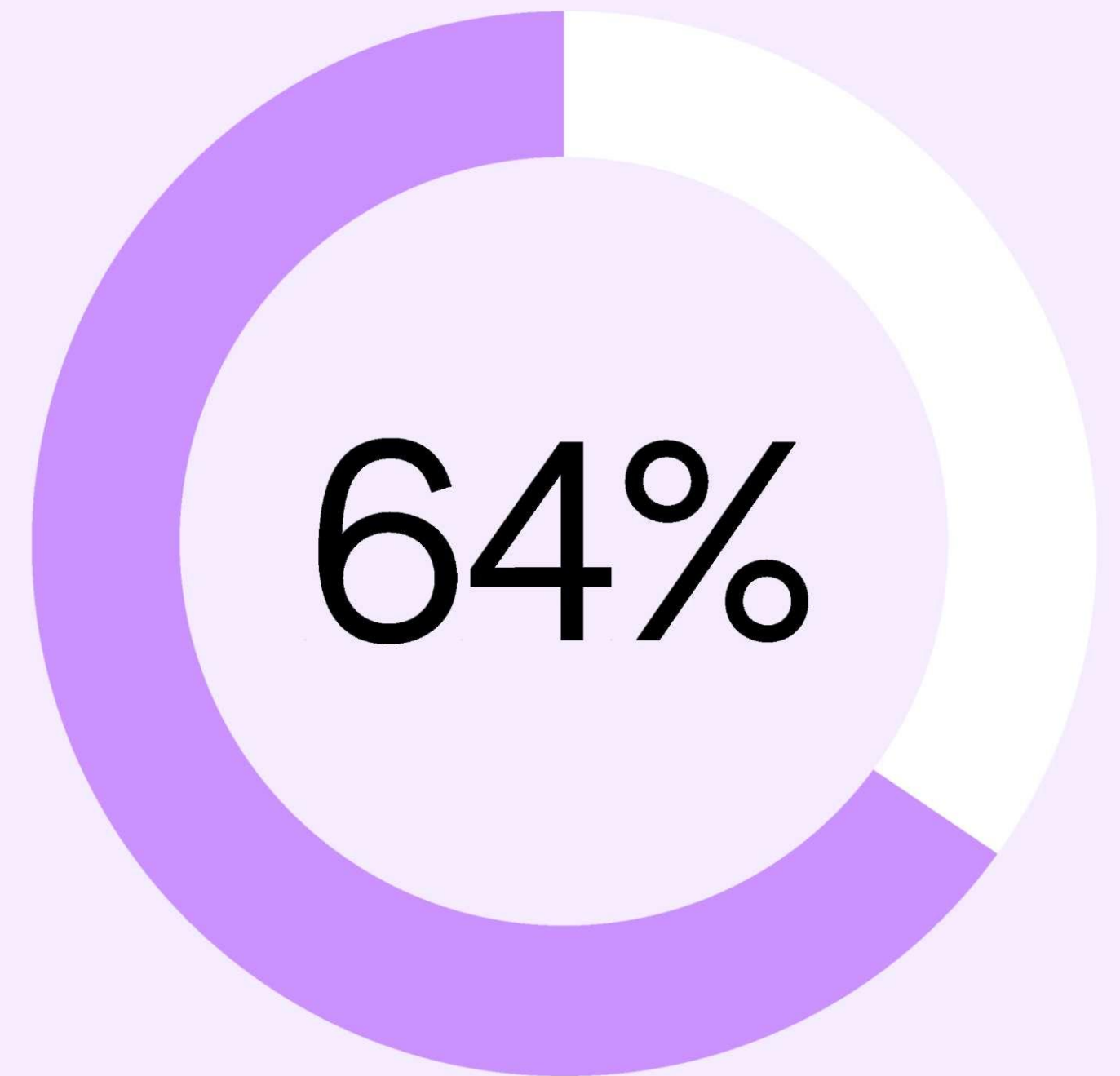
When someone takes the chat to a deeper place more quickly than you're used to, keep an open mind. You never know how your relationship might evolve.

**Embrace the
differences of others.**

Remember that a percentage of people you're speaking to might be neurodivergent* in some way, and small talk can be difficult for many people for different reasons.

*See glossary on page 32

64% of LGBTQIA+ daters with ADHD feel worried about saying the wrong thing.



Tips for LGBTQIA+ Daters with ADHD

Moe Ari Brown (he/they)
Love and Connection Expert



"There are unique social and political challenges for LGBTQIA+ daters. ADHD can add another layer of nuance for LGBTQIA+ daters as it can challenge time management, emotional regulation, and social interactions. Often, there are stigmas associated with being either LGBTQIA+ or having ADHD, but for people who are at the intersection of those identities, even messaging a match can cause anxiety."

Celebrate yourself.

Without embracing all that makes you unique, you won't be able to identify your needs, understand your potential strengths, and communicate what would best support you. For example, when you do a hard thing like messaging each of your matches, take a moment to acknowledge that you did it.

Honor your strengths.

Every person has strengths that help them overcome dating challenges. Maybe your ADHD means that you can hyperfocus on your date talking at length without ever picking up your phone. Instead of seeing your neurodiversity as a challenge, talk to yourself positively.

Find ways to communicate that work well for you.

Too many messages in your inbox may overwhelm you, but it's okay to prioritize fewer matches at a time so you can set a pace for dating that works for you. If you can't keep up with messages but want to keep getting to know the person, ask if they'd be comfortable scheduling a time to chat on the phone or over video call.

Dater Stories

“It’s really easy to get in your head and agonize over every message when you’re chatting online. So much of my personality is physical – my big facial expressions, how my body moves when I speak, how I always need to be doing something with my hands. It feels easier to me when I can connect in-person.”

Alexis Anunson (she/her)
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“I find that my ADHD can lead to an unconventional conversation style. Small talk feels restrictive and unnatural. I wish there was a better understanding of how ADHD brains work in conversation, and that the things we have been taught to be rude are actually just an ADHDers’ way of expressing themselves and sharing within a conversation.”

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Chapter 3

The Round Up

Love & ADHD D.A.T.E. Report

Key Takeaways

Challenge

Daters with ADHD struggle with being misunderstood over text.

3 in 4 Hinge daters with ADHD feel misunderstood by their matches.

Challenge

Daters with ADHD struggle to make connections through small talk.

Daters with ADHD are 31% more likely than neurotypical daters to report they don't like small talk.

Opportunity

Daters with ADHD

Provide clarity from the start by being more upfront about communication and dating styles.

Neurotypical Daters

Long waits between responses doesn't always mean disinterest. Don't be afraid to send a double text to check in with someone.

Opportunity

Daters with ADHD

Transition from a digital conversation to an in-person date as soon as you're comfortable with it. The sweet spot is after around three days of chatting.

Neurotypical Daters

Connecting over special interests is essential for daters with ADHD. When sending likes, make an effort to find something that you are both excited to chat about.

Methodology

The D.A.T.E Report's studies were conducted by Hinge Labs, a one-of-a-kind internal team of PhD researchers and behavioral scientists who have the sole purpose of providing evidence-based insights to help daters on Hinge find love. With support from Disability:IN, Hinge's internal team of PhD. researchers and dating experts conducted surveys in February 2024 with more than 60,000 global respondents, including 9,000 daters on Hinge who reported having a clinical diagnosis of ADHD (formally diagnosed by a healthcare provider). Recognizing that dating is complex and personal, Hinge Labs uses both quantitative and qualitative research methods to study successful daters and uses those insights to help build the most effective dating app for getting people into relationships.

Glossary

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects attention, impulse control, and executive functioning.

Match When two people directly connect on Hinge after liking each other.

Neurodivergent Neurodiversity is the idea that all of our brains work differently, and that's a good thing. A neurodivergent person is someone who has a condition like dyslexia, ADHD, or dyspraxia.

Neurotypical A neurotypical person is someone who does not have a neurodivergent condition, so they may have an easier time fitting into social norms.

Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria RSD is a condition that makes feelings of rejection or perceived rejection incredibly overwhelming. Many people with ADHD have it.

Hinge

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