

## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Some children with learning difficulties exhibit specific behaviors of impulsivity, hyperactivity, and distractibility. A common term used to describe children who exhibit such behaviors is "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder" (ADHD). Undetected and untreated vision problems can elicit some of the very same signs and symptoms that are commonly attributed to ADHD. Due to these similarities, some children with vision problems are mislabeled as having ADHD.

## Vision and ADHD

A recent study by researchers at the Children's Eye Center, University of San Diego, uncovered a relationship between a common vision disorder, convergence insufficiency, and ADHD. The study "showed that children with convergence insufficiency are three times as likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than children without the disorder." Dr. Granet of the Children's Eye Center commented, "We don't know if convergence insufficiency makes ADHD worse or if convergence insufficiency is misdiagnosed as ADHD. What we do know is that more research must be done on this subject and that patients diagnosed with ADHD should also be evaluated for convergence insufficiency and treated accordingly."

This new research appears to support what developmental optometrists have known for some time -- a significant percentage of children with learning disabilities have some type of vision problem. One study found that 13% of children between nine and thirteen years of age suffer from moderate to marked convergence insufficiency, and as many as one in four, or 25%, of school age children may have a vision problem that can affect learning.

Vision problems can have a huge impact on academic performance and behavior in the classroom. Parents who suspect a vision problem may be contributing to their child's learning or behavior problems should arrange for a complete functional vision examination.

## Symptoms to check for:

Any of the following symptoms may indicate a functional vision problem. Does your child:

1. Skip lines while reading or copying.
2. Lose your place while reading or copying.
3. Skip words while reading or copying.
4. Substitute words while reading or copying.
5. Reread words or lines.
6. Reverse letters, numbers or words.
7. Use a finger or marker to keep place while reading.

## Comparative Symptoms of AD(H)D and of Vision Disorders

Symptoms	ADHD(DSM-IV*)	Learning-Related Vision Problems	Normal Child Under 7
<b>Inattention (At least 6 are necessary):</b>			
Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes	X	X	
Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities	X	X	X
Often does not listen when spoken to directly	X	X	
Often does not follow through on instructions or fails to finish work	X	X	X
Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities	X	X	X
Often avoids, dislikes or reluctant to engage in tasks requiring sustained mental effort	X	X	X
Often loses things	X	X	X
Often distracted by extraneous stimuli	X	X	X
Often forgetful in daily activities	X	X	
<b>Hyperactivity and Impulsivity (at least 6 are necessary):</b>			
Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat	X	X	X
Often has difficulty remaining seated when required to do so	X	X	X
Often runs or climbs excessively	X		X
Often has difficulty playing quietly	X		
Often "on the go"	X		X
Often talks excessively	X	X	
Often blurts out answers to questions before they have been completed	X	X	
Often has difficulty awaiting turn	X	X	X
Often interrupts or intrudes on others	X	X	X
*DSM-IV: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition			

8. Read very slowly.
9. Have poor reading comprehension (unless read to).
10. Have difficulty remembering what was read.
11. Hold your head too close when reading/writing (within 7 - 8").
12. Squint, close or cover one eye while reading.
13. Have unusual posture/head tilt when reading/writing.
14. Have headaches after intense reading/computer work.
15. Have eyes that hurt or feel tired after close work.
16. Feel unusually tired after completing a visual task.
17. Have double vision.
18. Distance vision blurs when looking up from nearwork.
19. Notice that letters or lines run together or words jump.
20. Notice that print seems to move or go in/out of focus.
21. Have poor spelling skills.
22. Have crooked/poorly spaced writing.
23. Misalign letters or numbers.
24. Make errors copying.
25. Have difficulty tracking moving objects.
26. Notice unusual clumsiness or poor coordination.
27. Difficulty with sports involving hand-eye coordination.
28. Have an eye that turns in or out.
29. See more clearly with one eye than the other.

30. Feel sleepy while reading.
31. Dislike tasks requiring sustained concentration.
32. Avoid near tasks such as reading.
33. Confuse right and left directions.
34. Become restless when working at a desk.
35. Lose awareness of surroundings when concentrating.
36. Find you must feel things to see them.
37. Experience carsickness.
38. Experience unusual blinking.
39. Experience unusual eye rubbing.
40. Experience dry eyes.
41. Experience watery eyes.
42. Experience red eyes.
43. Have eyes that are bothered by light.

## Scoring

3 points for items 1-30  
2 points for items 31-37  
1 point for items 38-43

15+ points: Call or email Minnesota Vision Therapy Center for a FREE functional visual evaluation.

952.844.0844 • 877.756.0844 [mvtc@minnesotavisiontherapy.com](mailto:mvtc@minnesotavisiontherapy.com)

vision  
is more than 20/20

*If your child* or someone you know has difficulty learning, chances are they may have a vision related learning problem. Visual wellness evaluations help determine the best course of action.

*“Since Sean started vision therapy, I have noticed he has been much more sure of himself. The things that used to frustrate him have little or no effect on him anymore. He has more determination and an improved self-awareness as well as self-assurance. I have reason to believe Sean’s experience with Vision Therapy has and will continue to play a big role in his character building. Thank you for all your insight.” – Carrie (mom)*



## About the Clinic

Founded in 1995 by Dr. Lori Mowbray, a Board Certified Developmental Optometrist and a Fellow with the College of Optometrists in Vision Development, the clinic specializes in working with children and adults with visual dysfunctions. A Board Certified Developmental Optometrist is an optometrist who has additional training in the testing, diagnosis and treatment of vision disorders. Board certification happens through comprehensive testing completed with the College of Optometrists in Vision Development.

Unsurpassed for its thorough evaluations and highly trained therapists, the clinic has helped people overcome visual disabilities with a 95% success rate after therapy. Our therapists receive training in the latest vision therapy procedures by board certified vision therapist training staff, as well as national leaders in the field of vision therapy.

Programs offered at Minnesota Vision Therapy Center include vision therapy for children and adults, sports vision therapy, post trauma therapy, guided preschool development, and programs for special needs such as autism and Down’s Syndrome. We also offer educational services (many of which qualify for continuing education credits) at no cost as a public service to help you understand and help others with vision disorders.

## Free Evaluations

The evaluation process takes place at our Bloomington clinic. Lasting approximately 1½ hours, the evaluation is followed by a consultation with a member of our staff. During the consultation, the results of the evaluation will be discussed, along with any recommendations for treatment.

## Clinic Locations:

Bloomington • Apple Valley • Mankato • Owatonna • Osseo

952.844.0844 • 877.756.0844

Call today for a free assessment or email at:  
mvtc@minnesotavisiontherapy.com

## Additional Information

- P.A.V.E. Parents Active for Vision Education  
1-800-PAVE-988
- College of Optometrists in Vision Development  
1-888-268-3770 [www.covd.org](http://www.covd.org)
- Visit our website:

[www.minnesotavisiontherapy.com](http://www.minnesotavisiontherapy.com)

# ADD/ADHD AND VISION THERAPY



Is it ADHD or just  
a vision problem?



1650 West 82nd Street, Suite 800  
Bloomington, MN 55431

952.844.0844 • 877.756.0844

[www.minnesotavisiontherapy.com](http://www.minnesotavisiontherapy.com)