



**Ask the Brain Fitness DIVA**  
**Reality or Misdiagnosis: Your Child and ADD/ADHD**

**Attentional difficulties, especially in children, are often misdiagnosed as caused by ADHD.**

That's because the exact behaviors that clinically define ADD/ADHD are also created by a number of non-ADD-related causes. In cases where ADD or ADHD is not the correct diagnosis, stimulant medication may actually make matters worse. In fact, approximately 50% of the ADD/ADHD diagnosed children we see at The Institute for Sound Health & Integrative Medicine (Formerly The SETI Institute) should not be taking these medications.

**If it's not ADHD, then what is causing the problem?**

**ADHD-like Behaviors Can Be Generated by Many Conditions**

- 1) Some children experience stress-related attentional problems. Learning disorders that most commonly show up at school are also linked to problems with children's sleep patterns, digestion and expressive speech ability, including stuttering. The stress could be related to school academics or peer group acceptance. In these cases it is important to work on both the focusing problem and the stress-related anxiety in a coordinated program of treatment.
- 2) **Many parents tell us that their "ADD" child had food allergies when they were younger.** These allergies may still be active and contributing to the child's attentional difficulties. In young children the allergic symptoms frequently manifest as ear infections, colds, sinus congestion and headaches. As the child ages the allergy may show up as agitation and restlessness, difficulty in focusing, poor concentration, "foggy brain" and even mood swings and irritability. During teen years this can be compounded by hormonal changes. The good news is that food-allergy-related attentional difficulties are treatable without injections, using homeopathy and orthomolecular nutrition formulated individually for each child.
- 3) **The classic ADD situation arises when** there is an increase in *Theta* and a decrease in *Beta* brain wave activity **at an inappropriate time**. An example might be a child trying to do math or comprehend a reading assignment while operating with a brain wave state *that we would use to relax prior to going to sleep*. Their brain will not permit them to move from a resting to an attentional state on demand. There is also an attentional disorder with hyperactivity (ADHD). These children usually have impulsive and aggressive behaviors that accompany their distractibility. This problem is easily corrected through technology first developed by research at Your Health Your Choice Foundation, which documents results is integrated into SetiSMART© combined therapies.
- 4) Perhaps the most dramatically increasing group of *children who are misdiagnosed* as having ADD are those whose treatment is frequently the easiest: ***global thinkers who are bored with***

*school.* Typically they are extremely bright and are visual/spatial learners, yet they appear to manifest the classic symptoms of ADD. They are generally multi-task thinkers—quite sensitive to their physical and emotional environment—and astute problem solvers. However, their ***distractibility stems from boredom and their giftedness***, rather than true attentional problems. (Albert Einstein comes to mind!) Our work with these children is usually short and very rewarding.

5) **Labels are a real handicap.** With so many different problems masking themselves with ADD or ADHD like behaviors, it is important that parents, teachers and healers not lump every attentionally challenged child into the ADD classification. At The Institute for Sound Health & Integrative Medicine ([www.ISHIM.us](http://www.ISHIM.us)) we start comprehensive evaluations that encompass physical, neurological, emotional, social, and psychological factors. ***Giving a name to a problem does not fix it.*** Labels may keep children in a box of self-doubt that might cause them to give up on their own future. Self-discovery and conscious mental and emotional growth should be part of every child's normal development into adulthood. Only an accurate picture will permit the application of the most appropriate and productive combination treatment program. ***Things aren't always what they seem. So focus on the facts: many learning challenges are now known to be caused by environmental toxins from pesticides in the food, air and water sources. These build up over months and years, and block growing brains from normal development. Get more information about attentional problems and how they can be treated without drugs.***

6) **Auditory processing problems are a case in point. They trigger attentional difficulties.** **The root of this problem may be a history of ear infections in early life. These infections may impair the ability to effectively process a sequence of directions.** For example, when you tell a child with auditory processing problems to do four things in order to get ready for bed, they may be able to remember only the first -- or perhaps the last two -- steps in the sequence. Many individuals, including adults with auditory processing problems, are able to benefit from the SetiSMART© Method of auditory retraining technique offered at The Institute for Sound Health & Integrative Medicine.

Many of you have heard the term "auditory processing difficulties." What exactly does it mean, and how is it affecting you or your child?

Auditory processing refers to ***how you take in, and then process -- store-retrieve-use -- auditory information.*** This involves tonal as well as sequential auditory abilities, both forming the foundation of language processing. The speed of auditory processing is critical to success in learning and communication.

Think about what it's like to try to converse with another person in a foreign language, where your ability to translate is too slow for the pace of the conversation.

***Many children are affected by the slower processing of language; in other words, it takes longer to grasp the meaning of what they've just heard.*** The problem is that while those children are focusing on understanding a word or phrase, they will lose the next set of words. You can see in their faces the struggle to keep up with the teacher. Yet with each new chunk of information they fall further behind. Their days are more exhausting than yours or mine because

they are working so hard all the time. It is also common for these children to have a hard time getting up in the morning because their sleep has not fully restored them.

***Another processing difficulty occurs because the child may not hear sounds in their proper order.*** For instance, "desk" may be heard as "decks," with the s and k sounds arriving in reverse order. ***While some children have a visual letter reversal, these kids have an auditory reversal and are writing what they heard.*** Their spelling reflects their hearing of sound sequences. The SetiSMART© Brain Training Program for Language that uses Sound Entrainment is designed for these children so it "tunes" the ears to listen to sounds at the same loudness (decibels) at the same time. ***This is auditory dyslexia (not visual dyslexia), and it is treatable.***

***Many children are sensitive in a different way. They hear too much sound input all at the same time.*** We think the ear's job is getting auditory information to the brain. *Yet an important role is keeping unnecessary information in the background. Filtering out unnecessary sounds is as important as tuning in or focusing on what we do want to hear. The focusing of attention is done with the ear, as well as the brain. If the muscles of the middle ear are weak, they are not serving their role of filtering sounds so that the mind can be focused and attentive.* It would be like going into a restaurant and hearing the conversations of all the surrounding tables or like turning on the TV and being exposed to all the information coming through all the channels at the same time. It's exhausting to the child.

Frequently, children with this difficulty are either hyper-distracted or hyper-focused; they often moving from one thing to another. So a child who cannot pay attention at school may come home and watch TV and not hear you call his name from three feet away. It is a compensatory mechanism -- a way of giving the brain a rest.

***How do you solve this problem?*** Just like an eye doctor might put a patch over a strong eye to exercise the weak one -- the SetiSMART© Brain Training technology uses special sound programs ***that exercise and retrain the muscles of the middle ear.*** It's like an "aerobic" workout for those muscles. Once they are retrained, they can efficiently filter out unwanted sounds. A child becomes less distracted by noises around him and can then focus on the teacher's or parent's instruction.



Fortunately, most auditory processing problems are easily treated using a Brain Training

SetiSMART© Sound Entrainment program that is non-invasive and provides auditory re-education. Using special bone-conduction headsets, these programs can be as short as a few weeks or last up to several months. Teens and young adults can also benefit from these programs. All therapies are individualized.

Children used to come to the Institute two to three times a week. Now, with the newest SetiSMART© bone-conduction sound technology, parents can be certified to administer the programs at home. ***Better results at much lower cost per family are now a reality. Improved tonal processing -- which supports auditory sequential processing and language processing -- are vital for success in school and life.*** Get more information about auditory processing and other available therapies for learning difficulties of all types.

Bring back the joyful wonder of learning and discovery to your child's world. Retraining the Ear can actually stimulate the nerves in the brain to regrow. This is now called Neuroplasticity.