



# Does My Child Have ADD?

By Barbara Schwartz, M.A.,

**QUESTION:** My child has difficulty focusing and concentrating. He is easily distracted. He takes hours to complete a simple 15-minute homework assignment. I've tried everything. Nothing works. Help!

**ANSWER:** There are many physiological reasons for your child's lack of focus and concentration. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are common diagnoses. Often written off as lazy, children and adults with these disorders actually have a chemical imbalance in their brain that makes concentrating on one task for prolonged periods of time more difficult. Another possibility, and one that is rarely explored, is Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome (SSS), a situation in which reading may be difficult if both eyes are not working properly with the brain. Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome alters how the brain receives and processes light. It prevents many people (adults

and children) from learning, reading, focusing, and/or studying efficiently.

People who are Scotopic may only be able to read and focus for a short time, in some cases, only five to 10 minutes. They may fidget and need to take a break. To someone with SSS, reading can be painful, unpleasant and comprehension poor. The eyes can hurt, water, itch or feel dry or sandy. Other symptoms can include sensitivity to bright light or sunlight, headaches, stomachaches, nausea, feeling sleepy and/or falling asleep after a short period of reading. Sloppy handwriting and careless math errors can also be symptoms of SSS.

A person who has SSS can experience any or all of its five characteristics:

1. **Light sensitivity**—to sunlight; to fluorescent lights; prefers reading in dim light.
2. **Lack of sustained attention**- a 15-minute homework assignment may take hours to

- complete; can't concentrate; takes frequent breaks.
3. **Inadequate background accommodation**—with something printed in black print on white paper, the black print competes with the white paper for your attention, making focus difficult; some complain that the page is too bright.
4. **Poor print resolution**—words move, blur, shake, swirl and/or a variety of other distortions.
5. **Restricted span of recognition**—difficulty reading a group of letters and/or words at the same time; lacks the capacity to move from line to line or even to proofread.

SSS can be evaluated to determine the specific colored overlay(s) needed to reduce or eliminate the visual problems. Sometimes symptoms of SSS can be corrected or eliminated with eyeglasses with specially colored lenses. SSS may require additional help in the form of techniques such as Brain Gym, which helps coordinate communication between the brain and body including the eyes.

If you suspect your child suffers from SSS, ADD, or ADHD, you should have your child evaluated by a qualified specialist to determine the diagnosis. Help is available, and many supposedly poor, lazy, or rebellious students have become great learners, once they know what to do.

*For more details about SSS contact Barbara Schwartz, M.A., toll-free at 800-257-0743. Barbara is director of EQUILIBRIUM, which proves safe, proven, drug-free solutions for children and adults suffering from physical, emotional, learning, behavior, psychological and special needs problems. Alternate resources for questions about ADD can be found at [www.add-adhd.org](http://www.add-adhd.org).*

The above article by Barbara Schwartz, M.A. appeared in Los Angeles Family Magazine



***"Often written off as lazy, children and adults with these disorders actually have a chemical imbalance in their brain that makes concentrating on one task for prolonged periods of time more difficult."***

***"Another possibility, and one that is rarely explored, is Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome (SSS), a situation in which reading may be difficult if both eyes are not working properly with the brain."***

	<p>For more information contact:  <b>BARBARA SCHWARTZ, M.A.</b>          Integrative Healing Techniques Specialist          800-257-0743 818-345-0743  <a href="http://WWW.EQUILIBRIUMHEALING.COM">WWW.EQUILIBRIUMHEALING.COM</a></p>
---	---