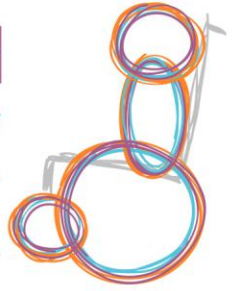


Do children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder typically have handwriting difficulties?

childhood
disability
LINK



Summary

This paper is a systematic review of the available literature on handwriting performance of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These children may exhibit difficulties in handwriting legibility due to related problems with gross and fine motor skills and decreased attention span. The search revealed that there were few papers published that specifically examined handwriting performance in this population of interest. There were 12 articles found on the topic. The existing evidence suggests that children with ADHD are indeed at risk for impaired handwriting performance, which is typically characterized by illegible writing and/or poor (too slow or too fast) speed of execution of writing material. There is a lack of use of standardized measures of handwriting performance and few studies examined factors that may be associated with legibility and speed. Preliminary studies suggest that handwriting improves with pharmacologic intervention (stimulant medications) in a subset of children. Further studies are needed to better understand the elements of handwriting that are impaired, as well as the factors that are associated with performance. This would be helpful in guiding strategies for intervention.

What families should know

- Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder may exhibit handwriting difficulties that can have an impact on academic success and self-esteem.

What practitioners should know

- Health professionals providing services to these children may want to verify if handwriting legibility is problematic, and if so, referral to an occupational therapist may be warranted.

Reference

[Brossard Racine, M., Majnemer, A., Shevell, M. & Snider, L. \(2008\). Handwriting performance in children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder \(ADHD\). Journal of Child Neurol, 23, 399-406.](#)