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Self-esteem for Kids with Learning and Attention Issues

March 7, 2017

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Learning outcomes

Upon completion of this webinar, attendees should be able to:

- Define what learning and attention issues are and what they are not
- Explain why some kids with learning and attention issues struggle to maintain positive self-esteem
- Implement strategies that will help students with learning and attention issues develop positive self-esteem
- Offer parents practical tips to help their kids develop and maintain positive self-esteem

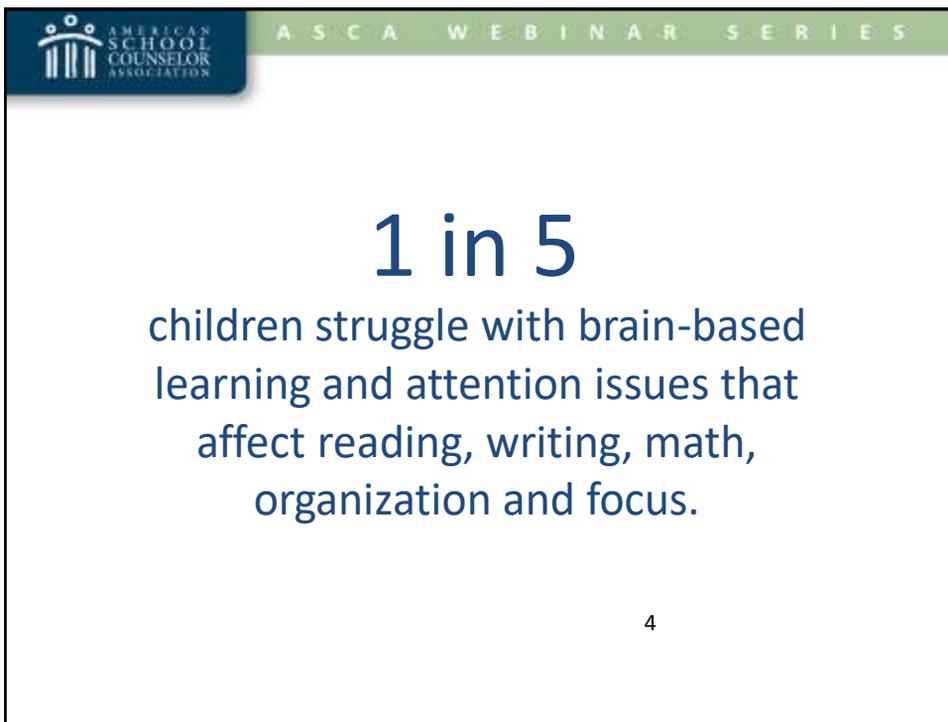


The slide features a green background with faint circular patterns. A dark blue banner on the left contains the ASCA logo and the text "AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION". A white rounded rectangle on the right contains the title "What are learning and attention issues?". At the bottom, the text "ASCA WEBINAR SERIES" is displayed in a spaced-out font.

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What are learning and attention issues?

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The slide has a white background with a green header bar at the top. The header bar contains the ASCA logo and the text "AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION" on the left, and "ASCA WEBINAR SERIES" on the right. The main content is centered and includes the statistic "1 in 5" in a large font, followed by a description of the issue.

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1 in 5
children struggle with brain-based learning and attention issues that affect reading, writing, math, organization and focus.

4



Learning and attention issues

- ADHD
- Dyslexia
- Executive Functioning Issues
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyspraxia
- Nonverbal Learning Disabilities
- Auditory Processing Disorder
- Sensory Processing Issues
- Visual Processing Issues



ADHD: A complex condition

- Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) isn't a learning disability, but it affects learning. ADHD can make it hard for kids to sit still, concentrate, focus and control impulses and emotions.
- This isn't because kids with ADHD are lazy—it's because they have a brain-based medical condition.
- While the exact cause of ADHD isn't known, research shows that genetics and differences in brain development and in how the brain processes neurotransmitters (brain chemicals) play a role.



Dyslexia: Trouble with reading

- Dyslexia is the most recognized and best-researched learning issue. It's what's known as a "language-based learning disability" and is sometimes referred to as a "reading disability."
- Dyslexia can cause trouble with basic reading skills – including trouble with connecting letters to sounds, sounding out words and recognizing sight words. When kids struggle with these underlying skills, it can lead to trouble with reading comprehension and reading fluency.
- But dyslexia can affect more than reading skills. It can make writing, spelling, speaking and even socializing difficult.
- It's a common issue that affects the way the brain processes written and spoken language.



Executive functions: The CEO in the brain

- Executive functions consist of several mental skills that help the brain organize and act on information.
- Executive function skills enable people to plan, organize, remember things, prioritize, pay attention and get started on tasks. They also help people use information and experiences from the past to solve current problems.
- Having issues with executive functioning can make it difficult for kids to keep track of time, make plans, make sure work is finished on time and multitask, for example.

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Dyscalculia: Trouble with math

- Dyscalculia is sometimes called a “mathematics learning disability.” You may even hear it referred to as “math dyslexia.”
- Dyscalculia causes ongoing trouble understanding and working with numbers and math concepts from 1:1 correspondence to concepts like *more* and *less*. But dyscalculia can be missed in the early years because kids learn many basic math skills through memorization.
- Although many kids (and adults) have anxiety about math, dyscalculia is not the same thing as math anxiety. Researchers know less about dyscalculia than they do about other learning issues. But they’re looking more at the causes of dyscalculia and ways to help.

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Dysgraphia: Trouble with writing

- Dysgraphia affects writing skills. Kids with dysgraphia may have messy handwriting and may struggle to hold a pencil, draw or form letters.
- Dysgraphia can present a wide range of writing challenges. Kids with dysgraphia may also struggle to organize their thoughts and express them using proper sentence structure.
- But this learning issue isn’t related to how intelligent a child is. It’s a brain-based issue that can affect kids’ ability to put thoughts down on paper.



Dyspraxia: Trouble with motor coordination

- Dyspraxia, also known as developmental coordination disorder, causes trouble with planning and coordinating physical movement.
- Dyspraxia can affect things like fine motor skills (using the small muscles in the hands), gross motor skills (using the large muscles in the arms, legs and torso), balance, coordination and movement involved with speaking.
- Dyspraxia isn't a sign of muscle weakness or of low intelligence. It's also more common than you may think. As many as 10 percent of kids may have some symptoms of dyspraxia, such as trouble with grasping a pencil or working buttons and snaps, or struggling with games that require hand-eye coordination.



Nonverbal learning disability (NVLD): When spatial skills are a lot weaker than verbal skills

- NVLD is a brain-based condition that affects skills like abstract thinking and spatial relationships.
- NVLD can cause difficulty with understanding nonverbal communication, like body language, voice and facial expressions.
- Math issues are common with NVLD.
- Kids with NVLD often have social challenges such as making and keeping friends. They tend to talk a lot, but don't always share in a socially appropriate way or relay the most important information.



Auditory processing disorder (APD): Trouble processing sounds

- APD makes it hard for kids to recognize subtle differences between sounds in words. It is also known as central auditory processing disorder (CAPD).
- APD isn't an issue with hearing. Kids struggle to process and make meaning from sounds (not the meaning of what's said). This is especially true when there are background noises.
- Children with APD may have difficulty speaking clearly and may struggle to develop reading, spelling and writing skills.



Sensory processing issues: Trouble accurately interpreting sensations

- Sensory processing issues occur when the brain has trouble organizing information from the senses.
- Sensory processing issues can cause kids to be over- and/or undersensitive to sights, sounds, textures, flavors, smells and other sensory input.
- Sensory processing issues can also affect a child's motor skills, ability to focus, and ability to maintain self-control.



Visual Processing Issues: Trouble processing what is seen

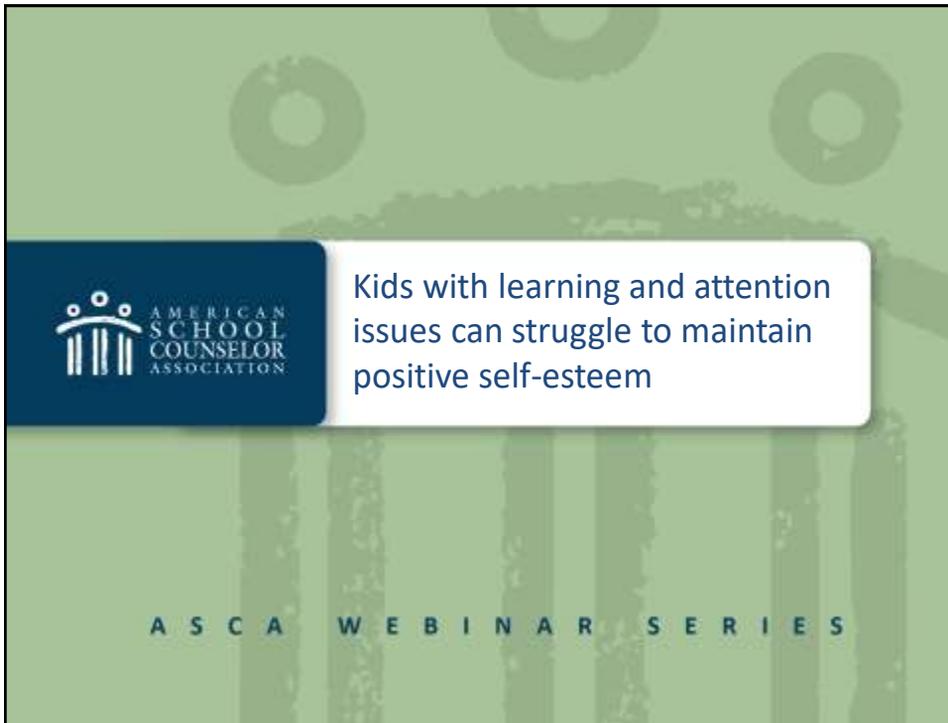
- Visual processing issues are not the same as vision problems. They're a complex brain-based issue. There are eight different types, and people can have more than one. These issues often go undetected because they don't show up on vision tests.
- Visual processing issues can cause difficulty with reading, writing and math.
- Differentiating between letters, numbers and symbols may be a challenge for kids with visual processing issues. They may also have difficulty tracking text, finding information on a page, and remembering and recognizing what they read. Kids with visual processing issues may also struggle to copy notes from the board.



Learning and attention issues do *not* include...

- Intellectual disabilities
- Developmental disorders, such as Down syndrome
- Autism spectrum disorders (ASD)
- Sensory impairments like blindness
- Physical and motor impairment, congenital or acquired
- Social/emotional disorders
- Emotional disturbance or effects of trauma

• Note: Individuals can have an issue listed above *as well as* learning and attention issues. For example, people with autism can also have ADHD.

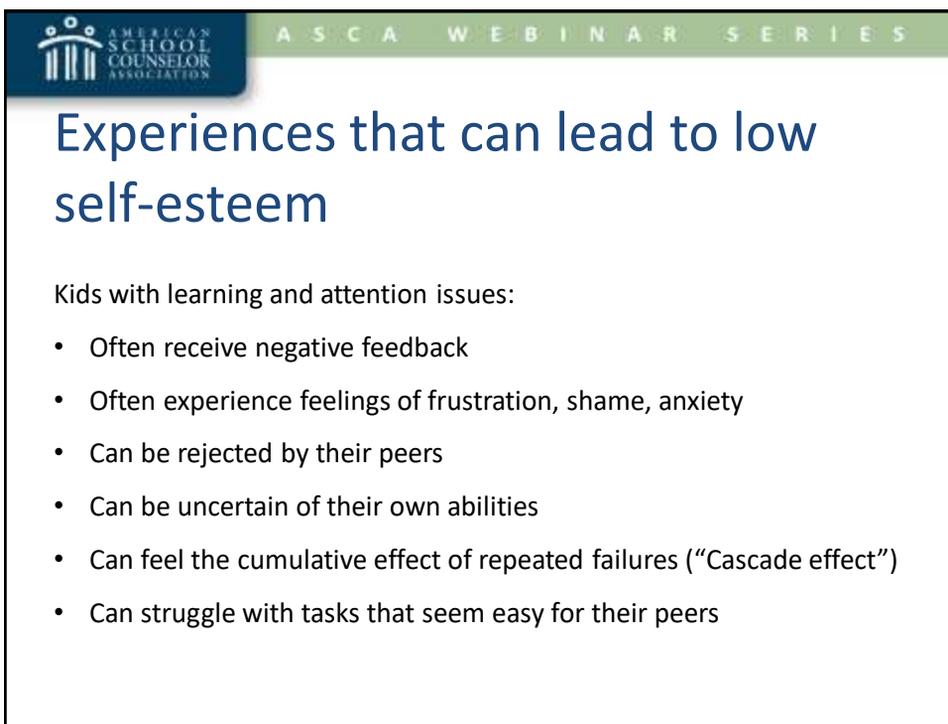


The image shows a title card for an ASCA webinar. It features a green background with a faint pattern of circles and vertical stripes. On the left, there is a dark blue box containing the ASCA logo, which consists of a stylized building with three columns and a semi-circle above them, with the text 'AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION' to its right. To the right of the logo, a white rounded rectangle contains the text 'Kids with learning and attention issues can struggle to maintain positive self-esteem'. At the bottom of the card, the words 'ASCA WEBINAR SERIES' are written in a light green, spaced-out font.

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Kids with learning and attention issues can struggle to maintain positive self-esteem

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This slide is part of the ASCA Webinar Series. It has a white background with a green header bar at the top. The header bar contains the ASCA logo on the left and the text 'ASCA WEBINAR SERIES' on the right. Below the header, the title 'Experiences that can lead to low self-esteem' is written in a large, dark blue font. Underneath the title, the text 'Kids with learning and attention issues:' is followed by a bulleted list of six points. The list items are: 'Often receive negative feedback', 'Often experience feelings of frustration, shame, anxiety', 'Can be rejected by their peers', 'Can be uncertain of their own abilities', 'Can feel the cumulative effect of repeated failures ("Cascade effect")', and 'Can struggle with tasks that seem easy for their peers'.

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Experiences that can lead to low self-esteem

Kids with learning and attention issues:

- Often receive negative feedback
- Often experience feelings of frustration, shame, anxiety
- Can be rejected by their peers
- Can be uncertain of their own abilities
- Can feel the cumulative effect of repeated failures ("Cascade effect")
- Can struggle with tasks that seem easy for their peers



Tips for promoting positive self-esteem

- Help students find positive role models
- Collaborate with the students' teachers to identify and nurture interests and strengths; facilitate opportunities for repeated success
- Praise students for effort-based work (avoid empty praise)
- Encourage students to express their feelings
- Support students in developing accurate self-awareness



What can parents do?

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Understood
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Get personalized recommendations for you and your child.
Dive in.

Reading Assist

How can we help? My child struggles with...

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We believe...

...an informed and confident parent, who helps and gets help as needed, can enable a child with learning and attention issues to thrive in school and in life.

We brought together...

...a diverse team of field experts, nonprofit organizations and funders deeply committed to helping families of children with learning and attention issues.

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Experience a child's struggle firsthand with the Through Your Child's Eyes tool

Meet Merrill. She's a grade-schooler with dyslexia. Meet Kendall. She's a grade-schooler with ADHD.

How it works:

- Hit the yellow "Continue" button.
- First you'll hear from a child who has learning and attention issues.
- Then you'll play a simulation to see how it feels.
- Finally, an expert will break down what it means.

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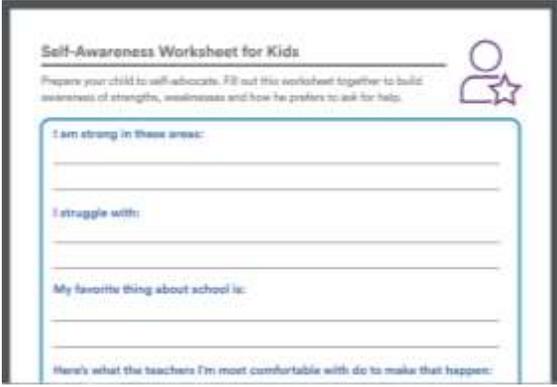
Parent and school collaboration

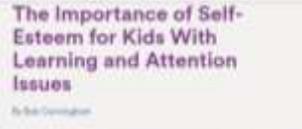
- Working with your child's teacher
- Emotional support at school
- Understanding IEPs/504 plans



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Examples of self-esteem resources for parents








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Parenting Coach: Practical ideas for social, emotional and behavioral challenges

Work on Improving Self-Esteem

- Don't give empty praise. 308
- Discourage making comparisons. 296
- Create a wall of fame. 107
- Schedule quality time each week. 66
- Comment on behavior, not on your child. 615
- Recognize and build on her strengths. 45



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Questions?

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Links to content and tools featured on slides

- <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/self-awareness/download-self-awareness-worksheet-for-kids>
- <https://www.understood.org/en/tools/parenting-coach>
- <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/celebrating-successes/how-to-give-praise-that-builds-your-childs-self-esteem>
- <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/self-esteem/the-importance-of-self-esteem-for-kids-with-learning-and-attention-issues>