Children with ADHD symptoms have a higher risk for reading, spelling and math difficulties in the GINIplus and LISAplus cohort studies.

Abstract:
Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and dyslexia belong to the most common neuro-behavioral childhood disorders with prevalences of around 5% in school-aged children. It is estimated that 20-60% of individuals affected with ADHD also present with learning disorders. We investigated the comorbidity between ADHD symptoms and reading/spelling and math difficulties in two on-going population-based birth cohort studies. Children with ADHD symptoms were at significantly higher risk of also showing reading/spelling difficulties or disorder (Odds Ratio (OR) = 2.80, p = 6.59×10⁻¹³) as compared to children without ADHD symptoms. For math difficulties the association was similar (OR = 2.55, p = 3.63×10⁻⁹). Our results strengthen the hypothesis that ADHD and learning disorders are comorbid and share, at least partially, the same underlying process. Up to date, it is not clear, on which exact functional processes this comorbidity is based.