

Case study: does Lilly have ADHD?

Attention problems and poor executive functions can cause great difficulties in children and adolescents, negatively impacting school performance, leading to social and emotional problems and difficulties in task execution. To determine appropriate interventions, it is important to assess the nature of the problem and its severity. Lilly's case study describes how the IDS-2, the d2 and the Conners can be used to evaluate the extent of attention deficit and executive dysfunction.

Background and current situation

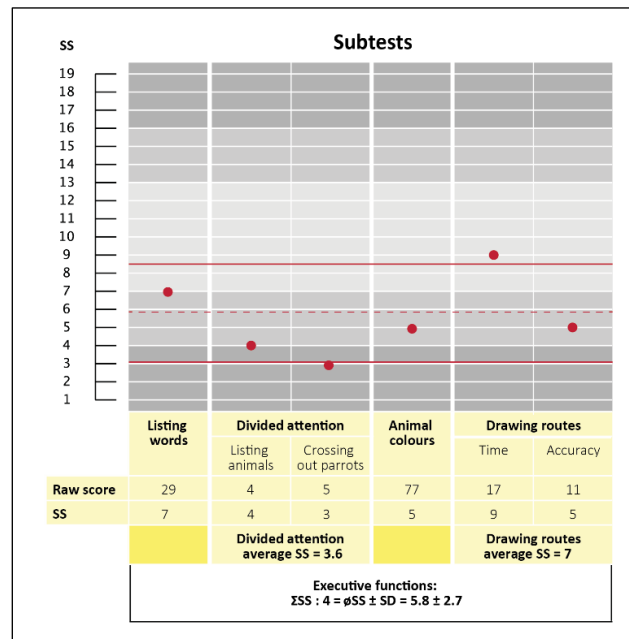
Lilly is an eight-year-old girl and is in Year 4 at primary school. The class teacher has referred her to an educational psychologist due to concerns about Lilly's tendency to make careless mistakes, her disorganisation and daydreaming. She also notices that Lilly often interrupts others and does not know when to keep quiet. The teacher believes that addressing these issues could significantly improve Lilly's academic performance.

The psychologist decides to assess Lilly's cognitive abilities, executive functions and scholastic skills using the IDS-2 Intelligence and Development Scales – 2nd Edition (IDS-2). Additionally, the d2 Test of Attention is used to assess Lilly's visual attention, speed of information processing and ability to concentrate. Finally, the Conners 4th Edition is administered to the teacher and to Lilly's mother in order to compare behavioural assessments from different contexts. These results aim to gauge the pervasiveness and impact of Lilly's challenges.

Results from the Intelligence and Development Scales – 2nd Edition (IDS-2)

The IDS-2 is used to assess the extent to which Lilly's executive functioning deviates from her intelligence level and basic or scholastic skills. The results of the intelligence component of the IDS-2 show that Lilly's cognitive abilities are average relative to her peers: the estimated IQ score is 98. Lilly also has an average performance in Scholastic skills, such as *Logical-mathematical reasoning, Language skills, Reading and*

Spelling (SS 10), which is consistent with her report scores. However, in the Executive Functions section, the score range of the subtests appears to be much lower than in the Intelligence section (SS 6). This discrepancy aligns with the teacher's observations and suggests challenges in executive functioning are affecting Lilly's performance.



Conclusion

Combining the results from the IDS-2, the d2 and the Conners indicates that Lilly experiences above average problems with attention and executive functioning compared to children of her age. These challenges manifest both at school and at home, providing sufficient evidence to consider a diagnosis of combined-type ADHD. The psychologist believes that Lilly's inattention interferes with her learning because she misses important information in class. It is also suspected that Lilly's current school performance does not accurately reflect what she can attain. Without further intervention, Lilly will begin to experience increasing problems in school because she is missing important basics. Her hyperactivity and impulsivity also adversely affect her school performance. Lilly often misses instructions from the teacher and makes frequent interruptions.

Intervention goals are established to address Lilly's challenges, including learning to wait before asking questions in class. The psychologist devises an intervention plan with clear objectives to be implemented, particularly at school. A summary of these goals and their timelines is provided to Lilly's parents and teacher, so they know exactly what skills and strategies to teach and reinforce.