

BrainTrain Bugle

Brains Matter!

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Is this ADHD treatment finally getting the respect it deserves?

Neurofeedback has now been accepted by the American Academy of Pediatrics as a Level 1 "Best Support" intervention for ADHD. Compelling published research supports its effectiveness. Yet, insurance companies have been slow to recognize the clinical efficacy of this non-drug brain training treatment and to provide coverage for it. However, this restrictive policy is beginning to break down. Leading the way, effective May, 2013, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan is allowing insurance coverage of up to 40 neurofeedback sessions for ADHD children through 18 years of age. [Click HERE](#) for more details.



Neurofeedback may improve ADHD children's ability to comprehend and enjoy reading.

What can you do if an insurance provider refuses coverage? Responding to the need for a document that clinicians can use for insurance appeals and insurance parity requests, the International Society for Neurofeedback and Research (ISNR) has published a white paper on the ISNR website ([Click HERE](#)). The white paper provides a meta-analysis comparing the efficacy of neurofeedback to that of behavior therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy and stimulant medication in the treatment of ADHD. It offers powerful documentation of the clinical efficacy of neurofeedback as a treatment for ADHD, supported by a current reference list of published neurofeedback studies.

The efficacy of neurofeedback has been documented in over fifty peer-reviewed, published journal articles. These research studies show that the effectiveness of neurofeedback is equal to or greater than any other therapeutic intervention for ADHD. In addition, the positive

effects of neurofeedback are maintained, and in some cases, even increase once the treatment ends. In contrast, the benefits of stimulant medication stop as soon as the medication is discontinued, and over 50% of the children taking a stimulant medication are reported to have one or more significant adverse side effects (e.g., poor appetite, irritability, stunted growth and sleep problems). It is no surprise that parents are fearful of using stimulant medication on a long term basis and often seek a non-drug alternative.

In an award-winning paper presented at the 2013 ISNR Conference, research using BrainTrain's SmartMind Pro system demonstrated that neurofeedback improved participants' ability to focus their attention on what they were reading. This, in turn, appeared to enable them to be more engaged in the content, resulting in a better understanding of what they read. For an abstract of this interesting study, [click here](#) to access the ISNR conference program, and go to page 34.

As the prejudices and economic barriers against neurofeedback break down, this "alternative" option could well become the treatment of choice for ADHD. The behavioral therapy and medications covered by insurance have been recognized by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and CHADD as meeting the highest standards for evidence based treatment of ADHD. However, the NIMH-funded research that is considered the "gold standard" study in ADHD treatment effectiveness demonstrates that these treatments fail to provide any sustained, long-lasting benefit for the majority of children. Plus, the lack of long-term therapeutic results comes with a high price tag; as an ongoing debilitating disorder, ADHD is expensive to treat and poses a high cost to society and an increased morbidity rate. In contrast, once neurofeedback treatment has been successfully completed, the clinical benefits for most patients continue to be sustained.

In summary, the long lasting effectiveness of neurofeedback in comparison with other treatment options, plus the fact that it is essentially free from side-effects, make it a cost effective and consumer positive treatment choice.



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