

Dyspraxia

Problems with movement and coordination, language and speech.

A disorder that is characterized by difficulty in muscle control, which causes problems with movement and coordination, language and speech, and can affect learning. Although not a learning disability, Dyspraxia often exists along with Dyslexia, Dyscalculia or ADHD.



Signs and Symptoms

- Exhibits poor balance; may appear clumsy; may frequently stumble
- Shows difficulty with motor planning
- Demonstrates inability to coordinate both sides of the body
- Has poor hand-eye coordination
- Exhibits weakness in the ability to organize self and belongings
- Shows possible sensitivity to touch
- May be distressed by loud noises or constant noises like the ticking of a clock or someone tapping a pencil
- May break things or choose toys that do not require skilled manipulation
- Has difficulty with fine motor tasks such as coloring between the lines, putting puzzles together; cutting accurately or pasting neatly
- Irritated by scratchy, rough, tight or heavy clothing

Strategies

- Pre-set students for touch with verbal prompts, "I'm going to touch your right hand."
- Avoid touching from behind or getting too close and make sure peers are aware of this
- Provide a quiet place, without auditory or visual distractions, for testing, silent reading or work that requires great concentration
- Warn the student when bells will ring or if a fire drill is scheduled
- Whisper when working one to one with the child
- Allow parents to provide earplugs or sterile waxes for noisy events such as assemblies
- Make sure the parent knows about what is observed about the student in the classroom
- Refer student for occupational therapy or sensory integration training
- Be cognizant of light and light sources that may be irritating to child
- Use manipulatives, but make sure they are in students field of vision and don't force student to touch them