

Dyspraxia

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Developmental Dyspraxia (also known as Developmental Co-ordination Disorder and the Clumsy Child Syndrome) is a **neurologically based disorder** of the processes involved in praxis or the **planning of movement** to achieve a predetermined idea or purpose, which may affect the acquisition of new skills and the execution of those already learned. More specifically, it is a disorder of praxis, or the process of ideation (forming an idea of using a known movement to achieve a planned purpose), motor planning (planning the action needed to achieve the idea), and execution (carrying out the planned movement) – essentially making it difficult for the body to do what the mind tells it to do.

Dyspraxia may affect any or all areas of development - physical, intellectual, emotional, social, language, and sensory - and may impair the normal process of learning, thus is a **learning difficulty**. It affects each person in **different ways at different ages and stages of development, and to different degrees**. It is inconsistent, in that it may affect an individual one day but not the next and it may affect someone in different ways at different ages and developmental stages.

It is a **hidden handicap** as, under normal circumstances, children with Dyspraxia may appear no different from their peers, until new skills are tried or known ones taken out of context, when difficulties may become apparent. In many affected children, Dyspraxia occurs with or as part of other neurological conditions so that defining common symptoms may be confusing. Therefore a diagnosis is often very difficult, and sometimes the closest may be 'shows some Dyspraxic tendencies'.

The World Health Organization states in their 'Diagnostic and Statistics Manual-IV', that it affects 6% of all children to varying degrees, while other estimates vary between 10-20%. Insufficient studies have been done to confirm these statistics. Whatever the incidence, it is only those children whose disorder markedly impairs their learning and development who stand a chance of having their difficulties recognized, diagnosed, and treated.

Expert in Dyspraxia? DSES is always looking for volunteers to help teach or give presentations!!

Resources and Additional Information

Dyspraxia USA; www.dyspraxiausa.org
National Center for Learning Disabilities; www.nclld.org