

What is Dyspraxia?

Dyspraxia can affect any or all areas of development, intellectual, emotional, physical, social and sensory and may impair a person's normal process of learning. Associated with this may be problems of language, perception and thought.

Dyspraxia is surprisingly common in both children and adults. Up to 10 per cent of the population may show symptoms of dyspraxia; and 2 per cent are severely affected by the condition. Of those diagnosed, 80 per cent are male. Dyspraxia is often described as a hidden condition because children who have it appear to be no different to children who don't have it. It sometimes can run in families.

What are the symptoms?

- **Perception and Thought** People who have dyspraxia may find it difficult to judge heights and distances, and have poor sense of time and direction. They may have difficulty in planning and organising thoughts. Limited concentration, poor short-term memory and easily distracted. It may be difficult to work out right from left. Performing tasks may prove difficult as one day they may be able to complete it, the next day they can't.
- **Movement** Children may be late in reaching milestones and may not be able to run, hop or jump, for example when their friends can. Physical activities are hard to learn due to difficulty in co-ordination, catching a ball, riding a bicycle and sports that involve using a bat. Adults may find routine daily tasks such as personal grooming, driving and household chores challenging.
- **Speech, language and Writing** Speech may be immature or unintelligible in early years. Language may be impaired or late to develop. At school children with dyspraxia may have difficulty with maths and writing stories. Poor handwriting is one of the most common symptoms. The spelling and pronunciation of words may be a challenge.
- **Social and Sensory** People who have dyspraxia may be over or under sensitive to noise, touch, light and taste. The lack of

awareness of potential danger, mood swings or erratic behaviour. Tendency to take things literally: may listen but not understand. Can be impulsive and easily frustrated; difficulty working in teams. Tendency to be stressed, depressed or anxious leading to difficulty in sleeping. Slow to adapt to new situations.

What's the treatment?

It is not possible to cure dyspraxia, but those affected can learn ways to get around their difficulties. Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, and specialist teachers can offer advice and exercises to help the person with dyspraxia learn how to perform problematic daily tasks and activities, and to develop reading and writing skills.

Publications

Living with Dyspraxia compiled by Mary Colley (ISBN 1-84310-452-0)

A guide for adults who have, or think they may have dyspraxia. It covers symptoms, diagnosis and coping with everyday life at home, college and in the workplace.

The Adolescent with Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD) by Amanda Kirby (ISBN1-84310-178-5)

A common sense approach this book gives a series of practical ideas on how individuals can tackle these difficulties. An essential resource for the adolescence and parents, teachers and therapists.

Caged in Chaos by Victoria Biggs (ISBN 1-84310-347-8)

A dyspraxic guide to breaking free: a practical guide written by a teenager with dyspraxia.



Useful Websites

The Dyspraxia Foundation

www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

SKILL (National Bureau for Students with Disabilities)

www.skill.org.uk

Further help in the Library

If you need help in the Library contact:

Lisa Croft	01204903092	L.Croft@bolton.ac.uk
Denise Mercer	01204903264	D.Mercer@bolton.ac.uk

Support in the University of Bolton

If you require any advice regarding Dyspraxia or other disability issues please contact the Disability Service:

Phone: 01204 903478
E-mail: disabilityinfo@bolton.ac.uk
Website: <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/disability>



The Library

Dyspraxia *awareness*

