

Early Symptoms

Early Symptoms of Dyspraxia

The information below is taken from A Practical Manual for Parents and Professionals by Madeleine Portwood and the Developmental Dyspraxia Foundation UK with their kind permission. Full details of the research and profiles of Dyspraxic children can be found in 'A Practical Manual for Parents and Professionals' Behaviours 0 - 3 Years

"There are many early indications that a child is dyspraxic and a summary is shown below:

- Irritable and difficult to comfort - from birth
- Feeding difficulties: milk allergies, colic, restricted diet
- Sleeping difficulties: problems establishing routine, requires constant adult reassurance
- Delayed early motor development: sitting unaided, rolling from side to side: do not usually go through the crawling stage
- High levels of motor activity: constantly moving arms and legs
- Repetitive behaviours: head banging or rolling
- Sensitive to high levels of noise
- Continued problems with development of feeding skills
- Toilet training may be delayed
- Avoids constructional toys such as jigsaws and Lego
- Delayed language development: single words not evident until age 3
- Highly emotional: easily distressed, frequent outbursts of uncontrolled behaviour
- Concentration limited to 2 or 3 minutes on any task? Summary of Behaviours 3 - 5 very High Levels of Motor Activity
- feet swinging and tapping when seated
- hands clapping or twisting
- unable to stay in one place longer than 5 minutes

Very Excitable

- voice loud and shrill
- easily distressed
- temper tantrums

Moves Awkwardly

- constantly bumping into objects and falling
- associated mirror movements, hands flap when running or jumping

Difficulty Pedaling Tricycle or Similar Toy

- Poor ground awareness
- no sense of danger, jump from inappropriate heights

Continue to be Messy Eaters

- often spill liquid from drinking cups
- prefer to use fingers to feed

Avoids Constructional Toys

- jigsaws
- building blocks (Lego)

Poor Fine Motor Skills

- pencil grip
- use of scissors
- immature drawings

Lack of Imaginative Play

- Do not enjoy 'dressing up' or playing appropriately in the home corner or Wendy House. - Limited creative play

Isolated in Peer Group

- prefers adult company

Laterality Still not Established

- problems crossing mid line Language Difficulties Persist
- children often referred to speech therapist

Sensitive to Sensory Stimulation

- high levels of noise
- dislike being touched or wearing new clothes

Limited Response to Verbal Instructions

- slower response time
- problems with comprehension

Limited Concentration

- tasks often left unfinished"