Developmental Coordination Disorder - Dyspraxia

Information for younger children

Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) is when it is difficult for someone to move around and do things easily, and the way they do it is not as good as it should be for their age, or how smart they are.

How you care for yourself, your daily activities and school life are affected by this.

A doctor needs to see if there are any other reasons that you are doing things differently before you are told you have this.

What is Dyspraxia?

Dyspraxia is a type of DCD.

Dyspraxia means someone finds it difficult with organising things, movement and often what they think. They might find it difficult to communicate with other people, to pay attention, to solve problems and to do some tasks.

What might I find difficult?

- PE/team games – especially throwing and catching balls, balancing and doing dance routines
- Sitting still – you may keep fidgeting, leaning over, getting tired when you try and sit up
- Struggling to get dressed, or slower than others
- Tying your shoelaces, buttons, zips and putting your socks on
- Using two hands together, such as when you are using scissors or cutlery
- Maths problems
- Learning to ride a bike or swim
- Forgetting things
- Learning to write

What does this mean?

- It might take you longer to learn new things, so don’t give up!
- You might need more time to get things finished
- You will need to go over things more times and check you’ve done it right
- You might need help to be organised with school work and sharing your ideas
- You might need help remembering or following instructions

Will I get better?

- You can get better in some things with help from different people
- You might be given exercises to help make your back and stomach muscles stronger and exercises for your arms and legs
- You will be shown ways to make activities easier for you
- You can practise things like throwing and catching
How can my school help?

- Use timetables with pictures on them
- Use lists
- Support you with friendships
- Help with homework planning
- Movement breaks to help keep your attention
- Help you to have your chair at the right height so your feet are flat on the floor
- Make sure your desk is the right size
- Use of timers so you can see when an activity will finish
- Extra time for activities, such as dressing and PE
- Special scissors and pencils

How can my family help?

- Have patience with you
- Use a timetable with pictures on it
- Put labels on drawers
- Use checklists and to-do lists
- Have set routines for bedtimes and mealtimes
- Give you a special knife and fork
- Find activities that you are good at

Who else can help?

**Occupational Therapist** – they can help you find ways to make things you do everyday easier

**Physiotherapist** - they can help with the way you control your muscles and how you sit and stand.

**Online resources** - [www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)

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Acknowledgement: [www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk) and [www.canchild.ca](http://www.canchild.ca)