



DYSPRAXIA CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Childhood Guide 5-12

What is Dyspraxia?

Dyspraxia, also known as Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), is a neurodevelopmental condition and a recognised disability protected under the Equality Act 2010.

Dyspraxia impacts executive functioning, emotion, motor planning, motor coordination, and sensory processing.

Many Dyspraxic individuals are tenacious, creative and 'out of the box' thinkers.

What might feel harder?



Living skills

- Cutting food and keeping it on a fork or spoon
- Carrying drinks without spilling them
- Brushing teeth, toileting, getting washed
- Getting dressed, fastening buttons or zips and putting shoes on the right feet
- Climbing stairs, running, cycling and playing ball



Education

- Writing, copying shapes, using scissors, colouring, craft, jigsaws
- Getting changed for P.E.
- Playing at break and lunch, e.g., football or tag
- Organising and remembering belongings
- Having enough processing time to plan and carry out a task, try using a sand timer or an app



Social-Emotional

- Withdrawal from clubs or play due to frustration and anxiety
- Increased risk of emotional dysregulation and low self-esteem, feeling slower or less able than peers
- Fatigue from sustained motor or cognitive effort



What might help?

Reducing executive load, motor demands, and fatigue, while promoting autonomy, self-advocacy, and self-efficacy examples include:



- Alternative recording strategies, e.g. a talking tin, a scribe, verbal responses or typing
- Learning supports, e.g. written instructions, task checklists and demonstrations
- Reminders that there is no 'right' way to do a task
- Handwriting support, e.g. thicker pens, slanted boards and wider lined paper



- Reduced sensory load, e.g. quieter environments, less visual distractions
- Extra time, rest breaks, smaller or quieter rooms
- Giving one instruction at a time and space to process this
- Velcro shoes, elastic laces, plenty of time to dress without pressure



- Structured social opportunities, e.g. interest-based clubs in spacious, uncluttered environments
- Smaller groups in P.E., simplified rules
- Self-esteem and emotions work, e.g. ELSA sessions
- Buddy systems and supported friendship groups
- Rewarding effort, not output



Reading

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