

Information about Dyspraxia

'**Dyspraxia**' is a neurologically based disorder of the process of ideation, motor planning, and execution, which may affect any or all areas of development. It is inconsistent, and affects each person in different ways, at different stages of development, and to different degrees. Dyspraxia can be acquired through damage to the brain by accident, stroke, or illness, or it can occur from an early age, thus impairing development, and from no obvious cause. It is a hidden handicap as, under normal circumstances, children with Dyspraxia may appear no different from their peers.'

The Dyspraxia Support Group of New Zealand

- Dyspraxia was once unfortunately known as 'clumsy child syndrome' but is now also known as developmental co-ordination disorder, motor dysfunction and DAMP (disorder of attention, motor control and perception) among others.
- There is no known cause of dyspraxia and up to 10% of the population is thought to be affected by it.
- Dyspraxia is not due to low intelligence, poor schooling, family tensions, emotional or behavioural problems, social or cultural factors.

Areas of challenge

People with Dyspraxia may have difficulties with one or more of the following:

- Gross motor co-ordination skills – such as poor hand-eye co-ordination.
- Speech and language issues. People with dyspraxia may repeat themselves often.
- Perception. There may be difficulty in picking up non verbal signals and a lack of awareness of space which can result in the person tripping, bumping and dropping objects.
- Learning, thought and memory. Students with dyspraxia have to work harder and may take longer than other students to complete work.

Useful techniques when working with people with dyspraxia:

- Be patient.
- Use a multi sensory approach. Demonstrating a practical project rather than just verbalising it will help.
- Write down instructions.
- Give a 'to do' list.
- Be respectful of the personal space of the person you are working with.
- Break down tasks into smaller, more manageable parts.
- Express yourself clearly and remember that people with dyspraxia may misinterpret non-verbal messages.
- People with dyspraxia often require quiet distraction-free time to organize themselves.

'...many people with dyspraxia are creative, determined, original and hardworking. They also develop strategic thinking and problem-solving skills. They can also be very caring and intuitive'

Living with Dyspraxia

Information has been sourced from:

The Dyspraxia Support Group of New Zealand <http://www.dyspraxia.org.nz/>

The University of Auckland encourages partnerships between Faculties, student services and students, to support students achieve their academic potential.

Colley, M. (2006). *Living with Dyspraxia: A guide for adults with developmental dyspraxia*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION OR SUPPORT

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University Medical Services

City Campus Clinic
Level 3, Student Commons Building
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Ph: 373 7599 ext 87681

Grafton Campus Clinic
The "White House"
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Ph: 373 7599 ext 86962

Tamaki Campus Clinic (Registered Nurse Clinic only)
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