

Sensational OT Tip of the Month

Dyspraxia

Do you know children that ...

1. appear clumsy, messy, or accident prone?
2. have difficulty imitating demonstrated actions (i.e. Simon Says)?
3. tend to play with the same toys or choose the same activity during free time?
4. take longer than other children to learn skills, such as writing letters or catching a ball?

These children might have dyspraxia. Difficulty with praxis is known as dyspraxia. Praxis is the ability plan, organize, and carry out an unfamiliar sequence of movements in a coordinated manner. Accurate information from all of the body's sensory systems is necessary for good praxis skills.

Sensational ideas for dyspraxia:

1. Break down new activities into smaller steps. Use the child's sensory 'strength' to provide information about each step. For one child, he/she may need one verbal direction at a time, yet for another, a picture model of each step may be helpful.
2. Encourage the child to think about playing with a toy in a different way by finding all of the ways that he/she can play with that one item.
3. Provide a sense of structure. Give warnings for transitions or changes within a routine. This helps the child to feel in-control, and in turn, ready to participate. Novel or unexpected events are especially challenging.
4. Give extra time to complete new and complex motor skills.

*Ask the occupational therapist at your school if you are interested in more information about **dyspraxia**:*

Go to <http://www.cintiotinstitute.com/sensoryintegration> and http://thespiralfoundation.org/pdfs/ed_factsheet.pdf for more information.

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