How DCD Impacts Play and Leisure for Children and Families

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- The information provided is filled with general statements & may not apply to all children who have Developmental Coordination Disorder
- Based on research, my study & ideas



Overview

- Introduce Developmental Coordination Disorder
- Explain how DCD impacts youngsters in their ability to play & engage in leisure activities
- Why? So <u>ALL</u> parents, doctors, educators, & mental health practitioners (MHPs) become aware of, recognize, diagnose, & then treat DCD in early years, so <u>LOST JOY</u> & other negative impacts on play can be reduced



On a beautiful day, most children want to play!











Play Offers:

- Early physical control & body awareness = able
 to learn about one's body through movement...
- Also, opportunities to use one's body to learn...
- Use of tools & objects = feelings of mastery...
- Social communication, engagement, belonging, shared enjoyment, emotional well-being...
- Feelings of competency & resiliency.

Benefits of Play Supported by:

- Common sense understandings about children & how they develop
- Education models in early childhood services
- Theories of cognitive development (JP & LV)
- Theory of lifespan development (EE)
- Theory of emotional regulation (CK)



But Some Children Do not Play:

- A formal diagnosis recognized by APA in DSM
- Also fully recognized by the World Health Organization in their manual (SDMF)
- Research confirms prevalence at 5-6%
- Affects people throughout lifespan
- Functional consequences are broad & serious





Developmental Coordination Disorder

- Always evidenced in early childhood
- Adults may notice low tone, poor motor abilities
- Motor problems affect many areas of functioning
- Multiple rule-outs & inclusionary conditions
- One criteria is that motor difficulties negatively affect play & leisure activities



DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL MENTAL DISORDERS FIFTH EDITION DSM-5^m

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Onset of symptoms is in the early developmental period.

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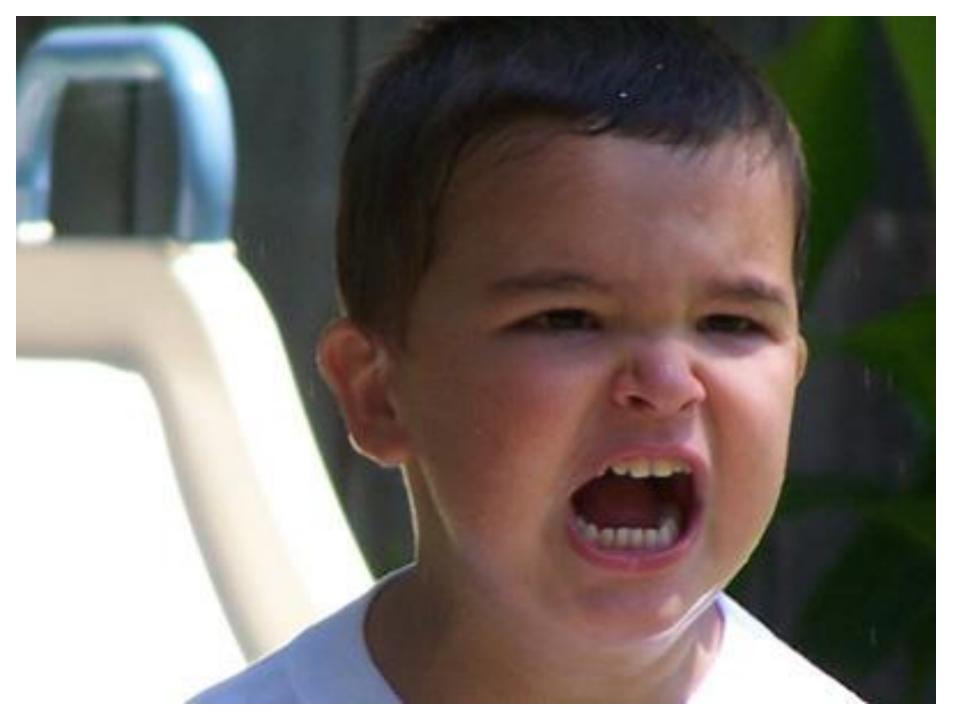
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Children with DCD....















However, DCD Also Impacts:

- Early physical control & body awareness = learn about one's body through movement (-)
- Opportunities to use one's body to learn (-)
- Use of tools & objects = feelings of mastery (-)
- Social communication, engagement, belonging, shared enjoyment, emotional well-being (-)
- Feelings of competency, resiliency (-)



How DCD Relates to Play...

- Skilled & efficient motor abilities are expected at home, in the community, & daily at school
- Play & leisure occurs in class, gym, & playfield
- Child needs good gross motor, visual motor & efficient communication (receptive & expressive)
- Must also recall information, be organized, & able to play with peers







How DCD Relates to Play...

- Child WANTS to play but cannot perform ageappropriate skills or those expected
- Cannot keep up with the skills of peers
- Child may face teasing because of weak skills
- Continued difficulty = ridicule, joking, some
 exclusion = less practice & social experiences
- Reduced peer engagement & <u>lost joy</u>





How DCD Relates to Play...

- After initial teasing & joking, uncoordinated child may become target of taunting & bullying
- Clumsy child may feel anxious about weak play behaviour, being judged, & humiliated by peers
- Early motor-based issues of DCD now affect non-motor functioning
- DCD is a serious mental health condition









Perhaps DCD is Misunderstood

- Motor difficulties & problems misinterpreted
- Person struggles with play, communication, peer engagement = frustration & emotional upsets
- To reduce bullying = withdrawal (<u>LOST JOY</u>)
- Child unable to engage socially = misunderstood as socially disinterested (difficulties documented)
- DCD may be mis-diagnosed as ASD











Encouraging Play

- OTs & PTs are often involved in early motorbased testing & intervention
- Use strength-based programming
- Focus on skills the child wants to learn
- <u>DO NOT</u> forget mental health supports (psych)
- Truly requires multi-disciplinary supports & services & policy changes







With diagnosis and supports, these students can thrive...

- motorically & socially
- emotionally at home & in a school-based setting
- healthier inner being

The call to action for you:

Find DCD; improve play &

restore JOY in childhood!





Resources

- Canchild.ca
- Free assessment tools on WWW
- DCD Questionnaire @ dcdq.ca
- DCDDaily_Q_UK
 @ dcddaily.com
- Ask medical & mental health professionals
- Seek proper diagnosis = new future & supports



Final Comments

- Thanks to ALL researchers who have seen links
 & relationships in the past
- Special thanks to all clients & parents who have been willing to share their distress & concerns
- It is a privilege to share this information with you
- Questions & comments are welcome

