

- . Emphasize the fantasy and emotional themes within play. The disorganized child often has a wonderful imagination and can do more when attending to the process and pretense of the play, rather than attending to the actual performance of the activity.
- Forecast transitions. Beginning and ending activities requires organizational abilities that may be difficult for the child.
- Provide a routine that is reasonably predictable, consistent, and structured.
- Enhance body awareness and motor control by increasing somatosensory input through gross motor activities (e.g., provide resistance to the child's movements by having the child push a heavy carriage, or walk up a ramp instead of a flat surface).

- Engage the child in planning activities. If you build an obstacle course, the child may develop better motor abilities. If you and the child plan and build the obstacle course, the child gains organizational abilities, increased sensory experience, and self confidence.
- Accept the fact that it usually takes the disorganized child more attention and effort to accomplish even simple motor tasks. Therefore, performance is often inconsistent. Do not assume that child is "not trying hard enough." The children are often working VERY hard to do even the most simple tasks.



***Interacting with Young Children
Who Have Dyspraxia***

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- Engage in periods of child directed play where you imitate and join into the child's activities without asking questions or initiating any demands. Follow the child's lead and allow time for the long latency of response found in some of these children.
- Follow periods of child directed play with modeling of elaborated and expanded themes in related play activities (e.g. If the child is "cooking" in the kitchen, you can expand to setting the table and feeding the baby). This strategy will help the child build upon his play repertoire instead of relying on an inflexible preference for the familiar.
- Rather than suggest solutions to a problem solving task during play, ask questions about next steps (e.g. "Wow, you are really good at climbing; now how are you going to get down?")
- Modify the environment, rather than the specific task, to foster flexibility and creativity in play.
- Differentiate between the child who has latency due to poor sensory registration (i.e. hyposensitivity) and the child who has a latency due to slow motor motor planning. The first child needs more sensory input to reach threshold, whereas the second child primarily needs time to plan. This distinction can best be determined by natural observation of the child during play or functional tasks. Work on the child's organization and not yours! do "less" instead of "more" when it comes to adult directiveness.
- Allow for repetition and practice. It usually takes the disorganized child longer to learn motor activities and the required practice can appear to be perseverative.
- Progress the child from the stage of skill acquisition to fluency and generalization of the skill in order to achieve functional performance.
- Reinforce successive approximations of desired behavior, but do provide honest feedback. Sometimes these children have difficulty evaluating their actions.
- Be aware of the child who tends to escape from a difficult activity by abandoning the initial task goal for a "crash" solution (e.g., using aggression, refusals, or "accidents" to avoid having to complete a task). A crash solution may be indicative of a task that is too demanding and needs simplification.