

The NeuroDevelopmental Classroom

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Understanding the Development of Behavior, Attention and Learning Skills in Children: and Strategies for Success

A full-day Professional Development Workshop for Teachers, Psychologists, Social Workers and Paraprofessionals

In the past few years there has been a staggering increase in the number of children with learning and behavioral challenges. There has also been significant progress with recent developments in brain research that have shed light on how children learn, and develop, physically and emotionally. Brain research has also increased our understanding of learning disabilities, attention challenges and anxiety disorders.

Teachers and parents are often at a loss when traditional teaching methods and behavioral intervention strategies do not produce the desired results. In searching for answers, I am often asked "Is it sensory, or is it behavior?" Research has shown that the two are intimately connected. The processing of sensory information combined with neurological organization, determines how an individual will respond to the environment. Sensory processing challenges, motor planning challenges or other neurological challenges can impact children's behavior, attention, learning and social interactions. Understanding and recognizing these challenges can assist teachers in designing classroom strategies, activities and interventions that will be successful. Many times, children who appear 'willful', 'difficult', 'overly sensitive' or 'defiant', or those labeled ADD, or ODD, may actually have motor or sensory challenges that impact their ability for learning, for focused attention and limit their availability of calm coping strategies.

This workshop will assist teachers, and others who work with students, in understanding some of the current brain research as it relates to what they see in the classroom. They will be presented with strategies to identify some of the neurological challenges in children who struggle, and begin to understand how the sensory systems affect learning and behavior. They will learn to identify some of the signs and symptoms of sensory and motor challenges that may be impacting learning and behavior. They will learn some concrete classroom strategies known to assist children with sensory processing challenges.

****In addition to the power point and lecture format, videotapes of students and classrooms will be presented.

Target audience:

Teachers, Psychologists, Social Workers, Para-Professionals, PT/OT & Speech Therapists

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

1. Understand the development of preliminary skills for attention, reading and writing
2. Identify certain types of sensory processing challenges and understand why they impact attention, behavior and school function
3. Understand which types of physical activities can support the development of these skills
4. Understand which activities and environments might present the biggest challenges for certain students.
5. Learn how to modify the classroom environment to meet the challenges of students who struggle, while maintaining effectiveness for all students.

Each participant will receive:

1. A copy of the power point presentation entitled "The Neurodevelopmental Classroom"
2. The companion syllabus "The Classroom Companion" with classroom ideas and activities.