How Wait-and-See Compounds Problems for Children

Developmental coordination disorder (DCD) affects 5 to 10% of the pediatric population. Research shows that many children will not outgrow motor delay problems. In the absence of intervention, roughly half of children identified with developmental delay have persistent motor problems in adolescence and beyond.\(^1\)\(^-\)\(^6\) Unfortunately, as children age, developmental coordination disorder becomes much more than a motor skills challenge.

One mother describes the difficulties of her young son. She says he becomes unusually frustrated at Boy Scouts because he cannot do the same activities as the other boys at the group’s skill or pace. The frustration can result in tears and withdrawal. The other boys see his frustration, and he becomes socially isolated. She also finds her son hesitant to ride his bike to friends’ houses, because the friends invariably want to do something active, something which will frustrate the son. This sort of withdrawal creates a snowball effect of reduced social opportunity and reduced opportunity for enhancing motor skills.

As children age beyond the preschool years, the psychosocial difficulties connected with DCD become more significant. For instance, Gillberg and Gillberg found that preschoolers with DCD and attention problems have a higher incidence of depression at age 13, 13% vs. 7% in typically developing children.\(^7\) The self-esteem and social issues for a 10-year-old with DCD are so much more complex than those of a preschool child with the same degree of delay.

This is one of the main reasons why it is much better to identify developmental delay in the preschool years and to begin productive intervention before the problems become compounded. Expert pediatric occupational therapy at Emerge - A Child’s Place can give children a better foundation for academic and social success in elementary and middle school. Intervention will not only focus on improving a child’s motor development and self-confidence. Emerge also focuses on working with parents to help them understand the roots of each child’s delays and how to help each child at home, long-term.

New Summer Programs at Emerge
(and old favorites, too)

Capable Kindergarteners • Ready Writers
Cooking Camp • Preschool Power

Our summer programs offer an opportunity for children to receive a more intensive therapy experience, in a small group setting, for less cost. Many of these fun programs focus on skills that will help in pre and elementary school settings (e.g. fine motor skills, social skills, visual motor skills). To learn about these and other great programs, please call us or check out our website at www.EmergeAChildsPlace.com
References