

NASET Lesser Known Disorders in Special Education Series

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Lesser Known Disorders

Each issue of this series contains at least three lesser known disorders. Some of these disorders may contain subtypes which will also be presented. You will also notice that each disorder has a code. These codes represent the coding system for all disabilities and disorders listed in the [Educator's Diagnostic Manual \(EDM\)](#) Wiley Publications.

Disorders in this issue:

- [LD 9.05-Temporal Disorganization Disorder](#)
- [OI 1.01 Fibrous Dysplasia](#)
- [MR 3.03-Mental Retardation due to Phenylketonuria \(PKU\)](#)

LD 9.05- Temporal Disorganization Disorder

Disability Category- Specific Learning Disability

Definition

A A type of organizational disorder specifically associated with difficulties in time management and the organization of time for the completion of assignments (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, 2005).

Explanation

Spatial-temporal processing deficits result in disorganization which is apparent in a lack of ability to organize oneself to accomplish a task. The more steps required to accomplish a task, the more apparent the disorganization will be. In school, this can frequently lead to assignments not being carried out on time. This deficit is often interpreted as a "lack of motivation", inefficiency, or "lack of initiative", when in reality it is due to an inability to organize one's time and firmly grasp time management principles (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, 2005).

Students with Temporal Disorganization Disorder exhibit many of the following symptoms:

- often become confused about sequences and time
- are often late for events they need to attend
- have difficulties remembering when an assignment is due
- don't know how much time to allow themselves to complete an assignment or job
- appear to never be quite sure what to do first, what to do second, and what to do third when they write a report or work on a project.
- lack appropriate time management skills

OI 1.01- Fibrous Dysplasia

Disability Category- Other Health Impaired

Definition

Fibrous dysplasia is a chronic disorder in which bone expands due to abnormal development of fibrous tissue, often resulting in one, or more, of the following:

- uneven growth of bones
 - pain
 - brittle bones
 - bone deformity (University of Maryland Medical System 2003)
- Some patients have only one bone affected (monostotic), whereas other patients have numerous bones affected (polyostotic) (NIH Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases, 2000).

Explanation

The following are the most common symptoms for fibrous dysplasia. However, each individual may experience symptoms differently. Symptoms may include:

- a waddling walk
- bone pain (as a consequence of the expanding fibrous tissue in the bone)
- bone deformity
- bone pain
- bone fractures
- scoliosis—a lateral, or sideways, curvature and rotation of the back bones (vertebrae), giving the appearance that the person is leaning to one side.

The symptoms of fibrous dysplasia may resemble other bone disorders or medical problems. Always consult your physician for a diagnosis (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2003a; University of Maryland Medical Center, 2003).

MR 3.03-Mental Retardation due to Phenylketonuria (PKU)

Disability Category- Mental Retardation

Definition

Phenylketonuria (PKU) is a metabolic genetic disorder caused by the inability of the body to convert phenylalanine (a common dietary substance) to tyrosine. The consequent accumulation of phenylalanine results in abnormal brain development (The Arc, 2001).

Explanation

Phenylalanine is one of the eight essential amino acids found in protein-containing foods. In PKU, phenylalanine cannot be used in a normal fashion because of the missing enzyme. Subsequently, high levels of phenylalanine, and 2 closely-related phenylalanine derivatives, build up in the body. These compounds are toxic to the central nervous system and cause brain damage (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006; U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2005f; The Arc, 2001).

PKU is a treatable disease that can be easily detected by a simple blood test. Most states require a PKU screening test for all newborns shortly after birth. If the infant is diagnosed with PKU, potential damage to the brain can cause marked mental retardation by the end of the first year of life if the offending proteins are not scrupulously avoided. Consequently, babies with PKU are immediately put on a special diet, which prevents the occurrence of mental retardation (The Arc, 2001).

By analyzing the concentration of phenylalanine in a newborn's blood plasma, doctors can diagnose PKU and treat it with a phenylalanine restricted diet. Most children with PKU who receive treatment have normal intellectual development (Beirne-Smith, Patton, & Kim, 2006)