

# **NASET Lesser Known Disorders in Special Education Series**

## **Issue # 38 – March 2013**

### **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 9.02- Cognitive Disorganization Disorder \(Internal Disorder\)](#)

[LD 9.03- Directionality Organizational Disorder](#)

[LD 9.04- External Disorganization Disorder](#)

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## **LD 9.02- Cognitive Disorganization Disorder**

### **(Internal Disorder)**

**Disability Category: Learning Disability**

### **Definition**

A type of organizational disorder specifically associated with difficulties in thinking in an orderly, logical way, often leading to incomplete thoughts and statements (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, 2005).

### **Explanation**

Students with cognitive disorganization disorder struggle with organizing their thoughts and feelings. They frequently exhibit many of the following symptoms:

- difficulty thinking of words (but for the most part can communicate normally)
- slowed mental process
- make occasional mistakes

- have failures in thinking and speech which can be corrected easily
- loss of train of thought
- forget what they are thinking or talking about
- leave statements incomplete
- sudden unexplained shifts in trend of thought or speech that they can correct with effort if asked
- thoughts or statements that become incoherent and difficulties clarifying them.
- difficulty thinking in an orderly, logical way
- often jump to conclusions and have difficulty planning tasks
- may often miss or forget steps in a sequence (Peniston, 1998)

## **LD 9.03- Directionality Organizational Disorder**

### **Disability Category: Learning Disability**

#### **Definition**

A type of organizational disorder specifically associated with difficulties in directionality, e.g., distinguishing left from right; learning north, south, east, west; or learning the layout of a large symmetrical building (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, 2005).

#### **Explanation**

Students with directionality type disorder have great difficulty with orienting themselves in the right direction. They frequently get lost, roam as if they lack a direction or purpose, and seem confused and unable to maneuver around the school or community without getting lost.

These problems become quite apparent during physical education and/or locating a new classroom at the beginning of the school year. In physical education, this individual has significant problems copying the movements of the teacher, as well as difficulties mirroring responses. Going in the correct direction may require many practice runs before exhibiting adequate skills (Peniston, 1998).

## **LD 9.04- External Disorganization Disorder**

### **Disability Category: Learning Disability**

### **Definition**

A type of organizational disorder specifically associated with difficulties in being neat, structured, and organized in school, home, and other environments where organization of materials is essential for every day functioning.

### **Explanation**

Students with External Disorganization Disorder are outwardly disorganized. Almost everything that they work on or have to do appear to lack structure, is messy, and borders on “completely unorganized.” These children exhibit many of the following symptoms:

- may have desks that are always cluttered and disorganized
- notebooks and loose-leaf with papers falling out, ripped pages
- limited/no awareness of order or neatness
- absentmindedness
- appear unable to incorporate suggestions dealing with organizational skills
- difficulty with organizing their room, clothing, and homework assignments
- often forget things
- misplace things
- seem confused with the reactions of frustration on the part of those around them