

TLC NEWS

"Learning Problems Don't Have to Be Permanent"

New Services for 2017

Individual and Affordable Small Group Therapies



"When students can't keep up, they assume they are stupid. Regular kids, with average to above average intelligence are sitting in class, day after day, frustrated and misunderstood by their teachers, parents, classmates, and even themselves.

They want to do well in school. They know they should be able to. But somehow, they just can't seem to do it.

Why does it take so long to do their work?"

Find out more pages 2 and 5

NEW for 2017: Affordable Small Group Sessions

Through our work over the years, we have learned that the one-on-one individual therapeutic approach works and is the best answer for some students. However, through working with our day-school kids and vacation Boot Camps we have also found that certain types of therapy are very conducive to a group environment.

In fact, some children THRIVE in a setting with one or two of their peers. The small group approach allows them to receive the individualized attention and feedback (the cornerstone of our therapy) while also interacting with and witnessing the progress of their peers.

Find out more on page 6

TOPICS

Signs of Trouble



It is difficult to watch your child struggle, but you are not alone. Specific warning signs alert parents to seek academic help.

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Real Solutions



The Learning Continuum demonstrates how seven systems need to be working together for efficient learning to happen

5

Attention/Focus Skills



It can be *extremely* frustrating to hear yourself saying, "Just try!" or "This doesn't have to take so long if you just focus on what you are doing!?!"

3

Auditory Processing



Auditory processing is such a hidden challenge. It can appear that they have attention problems, "day dream," have a reading disability or they aren't motivated

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Automatic Skills for Math and Writing



How much time is spent in teaching the fundamental skills of handwriting and basic math facts? How important are these really???

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Signs of Trouble: When you know your child is struggling.

It's a TERRIBLE feeling to watch your child struggle in school. Parents do everything to avoid feeling that pain. Parents usually feel the pain before the child is able to articulate their own suffering by saying, "It's boring," "It doesn't matter," "I'm not good at that," and finally, "I'm not smart."

Recognizing the signs before they get to that point is important but not always possible. Kids are smart. The smarter they are equates to the better they hide. But no child wakes up and says, "I want to have a bad day." No child wakes up and says, "I don't want to learn," or "I want to work harder than other people."

Is this your child?

- Struggling to keep up with peers
- Low Self Esteem
- Anxiety
- Frustration doing homework
- Resistance to reading
- Slow laborious reading
- Difficulty sounding out words
- Guessing at words based on the first letter
- Get the details of a story but not the main idea
- Poor "listening skills"
- Difficulty following directions
- Telling stories that go off on tangents but don't have a point
- One word answers to questions
- Poor spelling
- Difficulty remembering
- Difficulty comprehending when reading or listening?

The good news is that there is a real and permanent solution.

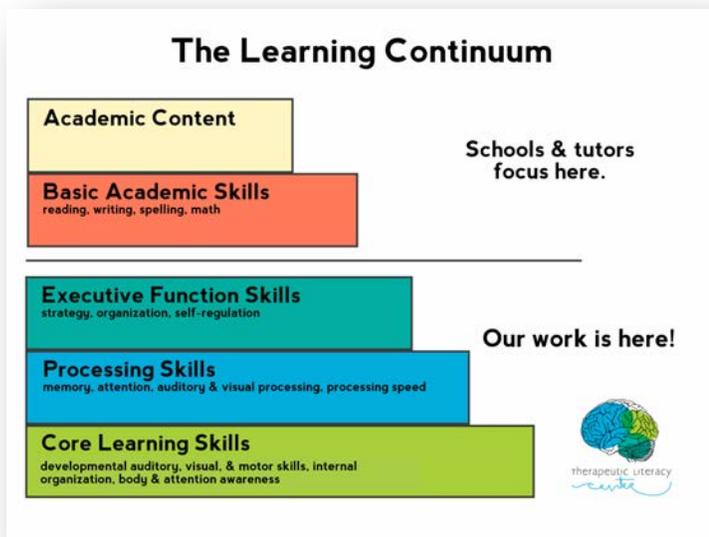


"The improvements in a few months have been nothing short of AMAZING!!"

My son absolutely loves going to TLC because it's fun and he feels like the gifted and smart child he really is."

- Mother of a 5th grade boy.

Real Solutions: Treat the underlying cause of the problem.



Learning problems happen when a child's underlying processes are not working as efficiently as they could. This can be changed.

Therapies in the following areas for ages 7-77:

Attention/Focus Training

Study Skills

Executive Function Training

Memory and Processing Skills

Reading Fluency

Reading Comprehension

Math Fact Automaticity (+,-,x,/)

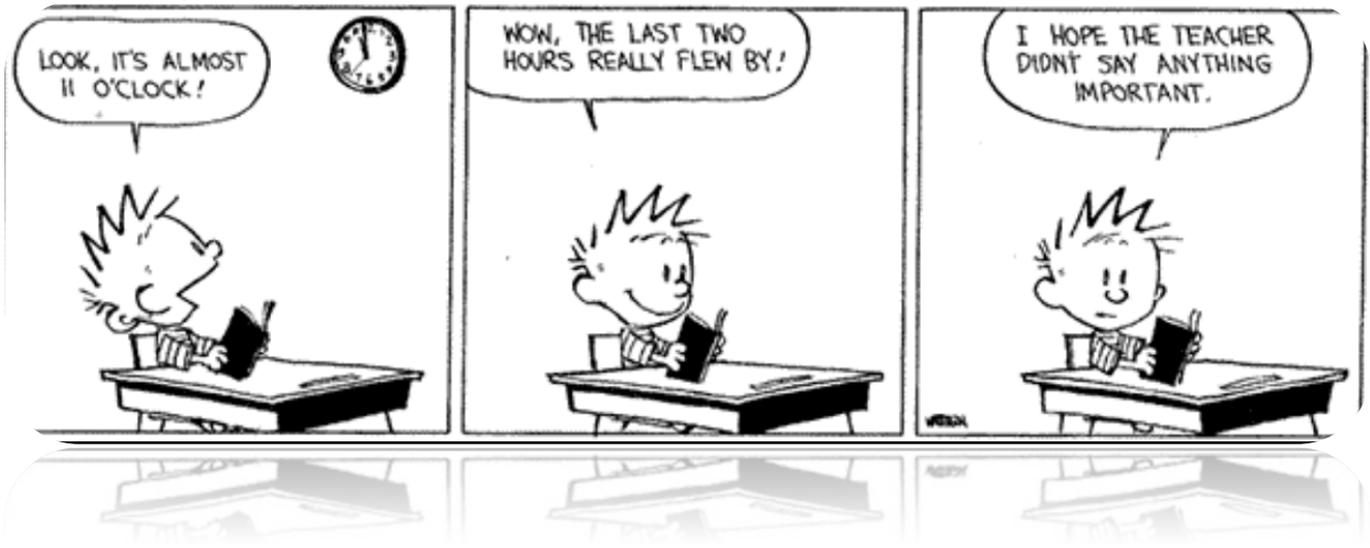
Penmanship/Handwriting

Spelling

Writing: Content and Organization
and

Deficit Specific Therapy for the 4 types of Auditory Processing Disorder

Continued on page 5



Developing Attention & Executive Function Skills

It can be **frustrating** when you see your child struggling, but they don't seem to be listening. How many times can a child hear, "Focus on what you are doing!" and "Just sit there until your work is finished!"

Parents tell us stories of their guilt in losing patience and raising their voices and even of family stress and conflict as a result of the challenges with just getting homework done. Parents regularly talk about feeling like the police and how they feel their relationship within the family are affected.

Attention and **memory** are bottom line important learning skills. If a person can't focus long enough to let the information in, or if he doesn't have a way to hold onto it, there will be interference to all further learning. *Learning and behavior depend on attention.*

Testing for attention and focus deficiencies can be tricky. That is why it is so commonly diagnosed using surveys given to the parents and teachers for observations. There is no known mechanism in the brain causing attention challenges. Medication may not be the right answer. The real solution is to find out WHY those observations exist and treat the cause, not the symptoms.

Following are a three essential types of attention and an important skill related to improving attention.

Sustained Attention is the ability to stay on task for a length of time. During homework, you may notice a clue to your child's attention span if he/she makes mistakes at some point or time in the assignment.

Selective Attention is the ability to concentrate on one task and not be distracted by other things.

Divided Attention is the ability to complete two separate tasks at the same time (i.e. taking notes in class). This is also referred to as multi-tasking and demands a strong working memory.

An important skill: **Shifting Attention** is what we do when we pause our focus on one thing to listen or look at something else. Developing awareness of self and when they shift and strengthening the self-regulation to shift back to complete the first task.

What would it be like if these challenges were **permanently fixed** or significantly improved with the appropriate cognitive training?

There IS a real and permanent solution.

Auditory Processing

People with APD present with a variety of characteristics that affect academic and work performance such as:

- Common for middle and high school students:
Attends class, but takes extra time doing homework because they essentially have to teach themselves because of all that they missed hearing/processing in class.
- Poor attention and focus
- Often says "What?" or "Huh?" or asks for repetition
- Poor reading, writing, and spelling
- May read without comprehension
- Difficulty taking notes
- Poor phonics and speech sound discrimination
- Difficult time memorizing
- Problems following a sequence of instructions
- Often mishears what is said
- Responds more slowly than others
- Difficulty hearing in noise
- Difficulty hearing speakers who do not speak clearly
- Appears to have poor short-term memory
- Doesn't remember details from previous conversations
- Poor phonological awareness making reading/spelling difficult
- Difficulty "sounding out" words
- May not understand jokes or humor
- May appear to be very literal in their thinking

As many as 50% of those diagnosed with ADHD, don't have ADHD but rather they have auditory deficits causing problems with their ability to attend. People with auditory deficits typically have normal hearing. But they struggle to process and make meaning of sounds. Auditory processing is such a hidden challenge. It can appear that they have attention problems, "day dream," have a reading disability or they aren't motivated because it's obvious that they can "hear" you.

Typically the brain processes sounds seamlessly and almost instantly. Most people can quickly interpret what they hear. But with these types of deficits, some kind of glitch delays or "scrambles" that process of compromises the clarity of what is heard. To a child with APD, "Tell me how the chair and the couch are alike" CAN sound like "Tell me how a cow and hair are like."

Researchers don't fully understand where things break down between what the ear hears and what the brain processes. But the result is clear: People with auditory deficits, or even APD, can have trouble making sense of what other people say. It only takes a screening to be able to identify whether this is the source of a problem or not or what type of auditory deficit it may be.

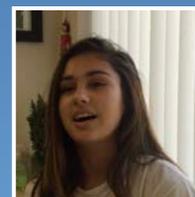
A screening for auditory deficits take 15-20 minutes to rule auditory deficits out as a cause of other problems. Luckily for us in 2017, there are treatments that can permanently FIX these deficits with commitment in a relatively short amount of time.

WHAT DO THEY SAY?



22 year old with APD

"Every time I come here my life keeps getting better. I find I can do things that I couldn't do before. I didn't used to be able to do what my sergeant was asking because I couldn't remember what he said. Now I am getting new responsibilities and feel so much happier in my job."



16 year old with APD

"I felt like there was like a cloud or something. Like all the stuff they were saying wasn't getting all the way through. Now I can actually understand what they are saying and it's easier with my friends and I'm getting A's without so much work like before."

Real Solutions: Treat the Underlying CAUSE (Continued)

How Learning Works

Jill Stowell is the author of the book, "At Wit's End: A Parent's Guide to Ending the Struggle, Tears and Turmoil of Learning Disabilities." As a special education teacher in the field of learning challenges for over 30 years, she uses an analogy of a tree to describe how underlying skills support learning:

"Imagine a tree. Your eye is probably drawn to the top of the tree with all the leaves and branches. It is the most noticeable part of the tree, but the branches and leaves cannot thrive without a strong trunk and root system below to support them."

If you stop to think about learning, you probably think about all the content learned in school or maybe reading, writing, math, history or the social sciences. **"Academic skills are like the top of that tree: important, visible, but only part of the picture,"** writes Jill.



She goes further to describe a typical successful student looks like. She describes a student that has control over his body so that he can walk around the classroom without bumping into anything, one that has inner language to remind himself to get out his homework and mental imagery that aides him in remembering where his homework (or backpack) are and which assignments belong to which class. This student has good listening and attention skills so he can take in the information presented by the teacher and handwriting and spelling are automatic so he doesn't have to think about those things when taking notes..... need I say more?

All of the skills noted above need happen simultaneously and with coordination for fast and efficient learning to happen.

What are the 7 systems that can make or break easy, successful learning?

Learners with the physical and mental skills at an automatic level are able to focus on the material they need to learn. They enjoy school and have energy left over for time with friends. Homework doesn't rule their lives!

The seven systems these students have working smoothly together are:

1. The motor system and body control
2. Visual processing
3. Auditory processing
4. Language processing
5. Attention awareness and control
6. Memory
7. Executive function

What Happens When They DON'T???

A weakness in one or more of these learning systems – motor and body awareness and control, visual processing, auditory processing, language processing, attention awareness and control, memory, or executive function – will make school more difficult than it would otherwise be, even with strong intelligence and good compensation strategies. In fact, sometimes the most intelligent students hide an area of deficit really well!

The good news is that none of these systems is static. Jill Stowell writes: **"With specific and intensive training, the brain can learn to work more efficiently in all of these areas."**

Stowell, Jill (2010) "At Wits End: A Parent's Guide to Ending the Struggle, Tears and Turmoil of Learning Disabilities"

The Importance Automatic Skills for Math and Writing

How much time is spent in teaching the fundamental skills of handwriting and basic math facts? **How important are they really???**

Common Core has become the topic of focus in our schools following the years of testing and curriculum changes. In itself, the contents in Common Core is very solid and full of what we want for our students. Yet, even the best of intent is misunderstood when used as a checklist of "to do" within the classroom.

Standards Based Education (SBE) in the 90's was designed to encourage curriculum planning to

"keep the end in mind." The Standards state the GOALS.... not the content to be taught daily in the classroom.

One needs to write and spell in order to write the content at the level of the end goal. **Is key-boarding enough?**

"MRI pictures of the brain have illustrated that sequential finger movements activate massive regions of the brain involved in thinking, language and working memory - the system for temporarily storing and managing information."

Our next newsletter will talk more about how penmanship benefits brain development.



More about how handwriting trains the brain in our next issue.

"What's *Really* Going on When Kids with Average (or Above) IQs Struggle in School and Drive Their Teachers and Parents Crazy?"
When students that you know are struggling in school, when you are tempted to write it off as lazy, or attention, or immaturity, take a closer look. There are dozens of skills that may not all be working together to make learning easy. The Good News : All those skills can be taught, built, corrected. There is REAL hope for all those kids.

THERAPEUTIC LITERACY CENTER

990 Highland Dr. Ste 106-D, Solana Beach, CA92075

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