



**2024 STAR Sensory Symposium:
Not a Bad Kid: Supporting Participation & Belonging for
Dyspraxic Children**

Saturday, October 26

8:30 AM-9:30 AM

Dyspraxia & Dyspraxia Profiles

Gain insights into the nuances of dyspraxia and developmental coordination disorder, exploring how these conditions affect children's daily lives and participation.

9:30 AM-10:30 AM

Sensory Integration Therapy & Dyspraxia

This section will examine the relationship between dyspraxia and sensory integration, particularly in the context of occupational therapy interventions. It highlights the importance of assessing and addressing sensory and motor difficulties to improve social participation and engagement in daily activities. The benefits of self-directed, sensory-rich activities in ameliorating praxis deficits and correlated social and communication challenges will also be discussed.

10:30 AM-10:45 AM

Break

10:45 AM-12:00 PM

**Internalizing & Externalizing - "Behaviors" and
Dyspraxia**

Internalizing: Anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, withdrawal, poor sense of self. Externalizing: acting out, aggression, or disruptive behaviors (aka distress behaviors).

**The Pain of Social Exclusion and the Burden of
"Fitting in"**

Research consistently highlights the challenges dyspraxic children face in social settings, particularly in sports and team activities. When children are allowed to choose their own teams, those with dyspraxia are often left out due to perceived or actual difficulties with coordination and motor skills. This exclusion can be deeply painful and damaging to their self-esteem and sense of belonging.



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True Belonging

Belonging is essential to well-being; it is a fundamental human need that significantly impacts mental health and emotional stability. Social connections enhance life satisfaction and resilience. Fostering community connections can improve therapeutic outcomes and support clients in building meaningful relationships. Belonging can be supported in play, team sports, clubs/groups, family occupations, classroom occupations, community events, and cultural/religious events. How does this look for dyspraxic clients?

12:00 PM-1:00 PM

Lunch

1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Reclaiming the Concept of Behaviors

"Behavior" encompasses a broad spectrum beyond just negative actions. Explore distinctions between "bad behaviors," and "distress behaviors," which arise from unmet needs or emotional struggles, while also recognizing adaptive and neutral behaviors that serve positive or neutral purposes. Additionally, the presentation explores unintentional behaviors, which may not reflect a person's true intentions but instead result from stress or misunderstanding. By addressing these nuances, it illustrates how all behaviors can be better understood through empathy and context. Ultimately, the discussion encourages a more evidence based and compassionate view of behaviors, supporting deeper insights into human interactions.

2:30 PM-2:45 PM

Break



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2:45 PM-4:00 PM

Reframe - Understanding and Advocacy

Join us as we explore the often-misunderstood behaviors associated with dyspraxia. By examining distress behaviors, motor disinhibition, and eloping and aggression, we aim to highlight the importance of context and intent in understanding these behaviors. The discussion will also address the impact of social exclusion and bullying, advocating for greater awareness and empathy within educational and social environments. Ultimately, this session seeks to empower attendees to become advocates for individuals with dyspraxia, fostering supportive communities that recognize and accommodate their unique challenges.

4:00 PM-5:00 PM

Appreciative Inquiry

Participants will engage in appreciative inquiry to identify practical actions they can take based on their knowledge and strengths. We will explore how to leverage existing resources and strategies to create a supportive environment for these children. Additionally, we will envision how we want our practices to evolve, discussing specific changes and innovations that can be implemented to enhance the support provided to dyspraxic students. By the end of the session, participants will have a clear framework for translating their learning into meaningful practice improvements.

Times noted are in Mountain Time