**Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities**

Has trouble interpreting nonverbal cues like facial expressions or body language and may have poor coordination.

Non-Verbal Learning Disability (NVD or NVLD), is a disorder which is usually characterized by a significant discrepancy between higher verbal skills and weaker motor, visual-spatial and social skills.

Signs and Symptoms

* Has trouble recognizing nonverbal cues such as facial expression or body language
* Shows poor psycho-motor coordination; clumsy; seems to be constantly “getting in the way,” bumping into people and objects
* Using fine motor skills presents a challenge: tying shoes, writing, using scissors
* Needs to verbally label everything that happens to comprehend circumstances, spatial orientation, directional concepts and coordination; often lost or tardy
* Has difficulty coping with changes in routing and transitions
* Has difficulty generalizing previously learned information
* Has difficulty following multi-step instructions
* Make very literal translations
* Asks too many questions, may be repetitive and inappropriately interrupt the flow of a lesson
* Imparts the “illusion of competence” because of the student’s strong verbal skills

Strategies

* Rehearse getting from place to place
* Minimize transitions and give several verbal cues before transition
* Avoid assuming the student will automatically generalize instructions or concepts
* Verbally point out similarities, differences and connections; number and present instructions in sequence; simplify and break down abstract concepts, explain metaphors, nuances and multiple meanings in reading material
* Answer the student’s questions when possible, but let them know a specific number (three vs. a few) and that you can answer three more at recess, or after school
* Allow the child to abstain from participating in activities at signs of overload
* Thoroughly prepare the child in advance for field trips, or other changes, regardless of how minimal
* Implement a modified schedule or creative programming
* Never assume child understands something because he or she can “parrot back” what you’ve just said
* Offer added verbal explanations when the child seems lost or registers confusion

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