

Overview

SNAP-SpLD suggests Leanne's learning might be affected by dysgraphic and hand-eye coordination difficulties, which means that she may struggle with hand-eye coordination, handwriting and page planning skills, and may have difficulty using tools such as scissors, etc.

How will this affect Leanne?

Leanne's handwriting and page layout will be a mess and spelling may be weak. This will be discouraging, especially when neatness is something teachers work hard to encourage.

Interventions selected to help Leanne at school

Alternatives to writing

Suggesting a range of technological aids that can help with the presentation of work.

What can I do to help Leanne at home?

The tips, strategies and advice shown here are not comprehensive and are certainly not prescriptive. You may already be using some or most of them. They are intended just as a resource for you to draw on, using your own judgement and knowledge of Leanne – you know more about her than anybody else!

- Try to encourage Leanne to verbalise the nature and direction of strokes while tracing and drawing individual letters.

- Encourage activities which make the right hand move across to the left side of the body and the left hand move to the right side (e.g. simple juggling, even with just one ball from hand to hand). Swimming can also be beneficial in this way.
- Most sports are helpful but ensure that this does not demotivate as others may be better than Leanne at sport. Participation for pleasure rather than for competition should be encouraged.
- Encourage the development and use of keyboard and typing skills.
- Remind Leanne that most of her writing will be done with a computer in the future, so while she should continue to develop these skills, handwriting will be less important as the years go by.

Activities to try at home

- Any task that involves hand–eye coordination will be beneficial (e.g. threading a needle, catching a ball, playing table tennis).
- All ball games are good too (e.g. cricket, rounders, baseball, catch, etc.).
- Practise tracing activities from a colouring-in book. Give Leanne plenty of time to do this and praise often.
- Team Lego®: Leanne and a friend can build together which will give her practice at fine motor activities but in a non-threatening way as it is done with a friend.

Useful websites and resources

www.cot.co.uk is the website of the British Association of Occupational Therapists / College of Occupational Therapists, which has a list of occupational therapists (OTs).

www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk is the website of the Dyspraxia Foundation, which overlaps with dysgraphic difficulties.

<http://educationpossible.com/teach-writing-child-dysgraphia/> has a useful account of the way one parent helped her child develop these skills.

<https://www.hope-education.co.uk/product/primary/english/handwriting/angled-writing-aid/he1122718> are suppliers of angled writing surfaces.

www.inpp.org.uk/learning_difficulties/dysgraphia considers dysgraphia from the perspective of retained primitive reflexes, as well as providing movement therapy to address/mitigate the underlying causes.

www.left-handersday.com is the website for the Left HHanders Club which may have useful material for children whose handwriting difficulty coincides with being left-handed.

www.nha-handwriting.org.uk is the website of the National Handwriting Association, which is a charity dedicated to improving and supporting handwriting difficulties.

Bryce, B. (2014) *The Dysgraphia Sourcebook: Everything You Need to Know to Help Your Child* (CreateSpace). Provides tools to help your child including causes, treatment options for dysgraphia, a software review for dozens of free and paid programs, suggestions for dealing with your child's school, and specific techniques to help your child overcome dysgraphia.

Cavey, D. (2000) *Dysgraphia: Why Johnny Can't Write: A Handbook for Teachers and Parents* (Pro Ed). An enduring and popular text.

Sutherland, J. (2014) *Dysgraphia: Causes, Connections and Cures* (CreateSpace). A useful account of what dysgraphia is and how to respond to it.