

# Understanding Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)

*also known as Dyspraxia*

## A Gift for Educators Resource

Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), commonly known as dyspraxia, is a neurodevelopmental difference that affects the brain's ability to plan and coordinate smooth, accurate movements. It is not caused by muscle weakness, intellectual delay, or lack of effort — it is simply a different wiring for motor skills.

Common experiences:

- Difficulty with fine motor tasks (writing, buttoning, using utensils)
- Challenges with gross motor skills (running, catching a ball, riding a bike)
- Clumsiness, frequent bumping into things, or slow/awkward movements
- Trouble learning new physical skills even after lots of practice

Strengths often seen: creativity, big-picture thinking, determination, kindness, and strong problem-solving once motor demands are reduced.

Simple ways to support at home or school:

- Break movements into small steps and give extra time
- Use adaptive tools (grips, Velcro shoes, weighted pencils, fidget tools)
- Offer movement breaks and positive encouragement
- Focus on what the child can do and celebrate every tiny success

DCD is lifelong, but with understanding, accommodations, and patience, children (and adults) thrive. Remember: when we remove the motor frustration, their beautiful minds and hearts shine through.