

Spina Bifida

- A birth defect that can cause a number of neurological impairments from the spinal defect down
- Three different types:
 - Myelomeningocele
 - Meningocele
 - Spina Bifida Occulant
- Seizures, learning or visual problems
- Need for a wheel chair, walking braces, crutches or walker
 - Little or no feeling in legs, feet or arms
 - Imbalance or muscle strength and function
- Bladder and Bowel control problems
- Need for special footwear or braces

Epilepsy

- A neurological disorder
- Episodes of recurrent, unprovoked seizures
- May have more than one type of seizure
- Can affect one's safety, relationships, work, driving etc.
- Fourth most common neurological disorder which and affects people of all ages
- Anti-epileptic drugs may help to avoid seizures from happening, but do not stop seizures while happening
- Some triggers of seizures: stress, excitement, boredom, missed medication or lack of sleep
- Most children can take part in the same activities as other children

Types of Seizures:

Generalized Seizures

- Grand mal: Unconsciousness, convulsions, muscle rigidity
- Absence: stares blankly for a few seconds
- Myoclonic: sporadic jerks, may cause dropping or throwing objects
- Atonic: Sudden or general loss of muscle tone in arms and legs, can cause a fall

Partial Seizures

- Simple: A) Jerking, B) Unusual sensations, C) Emotional disturbance
- Complex: Automatism- repetitive, involuntary but coordinated movements
- Partial w/ secondary generalization: Symptoms initially associated with a preservation of consciousness; evolves into a loss of consciousness and convulsions

Muscular Dystrophy

- Group of diseases that cause progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass
- Many different kinds
- Symptoms of the most common variety begin in childhood
- Onset depends on type, can start in childhood or not until adulthood

Types of Muscular Dystrophy

- Duchenne: Frequent falls, difficulty standing, trouble running and jumping, muscle pain, learning disabilities
- Congenital: apparent at birth, may involve spinal curvature, respiratory insufficiency, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, eye defects or seizures
- Limb-girdle: Effects hip and shoulder muscles. Limited mobility and can result in inability to lift arms above shoulders.

Asthma

- Respiratory condition marked by spasms in the bronchi of the lungs
- Causes difficulty breathing
- Timing of symptoms usually relates to physical activity
- Management plan can keep symptoms under control during and after physical activity

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- A Developmental Disability characterized by challenges with:
 - Social Skills & eye contact
 - Repetitive Behaviors
 - Speech
 - Non-verbal Communication
- Individuals are usually resistant to change
- Individuals may have unusual responses to sensory input
- A series of disorders merged together to make up the Autism Spectrum
 - Autistic Disorder
 - Childhood Disintegrative Disorder
 - Pervasive Developmental Disorder- Not Otherwise Specified
 - Rett's Disorder
 - Asperger Syndrome
- Approximately 1/3 of individuals remain non-verbal
- Communication difficulties
 - May not respond to social cues
 - May not make eye contact
 - Echolalia: repeating words verbatim
- Stimulatory behaviors (Stimming)
 - Receive sensory input in some way
- Struggle with pretend play
- Behavior Difficulties
 - Because of frustration
 - Over-stimulation
- Range of other deficits varies greatly

Down Syndrome

- Partial or full copy of Chromosome 21
- Diagnosed Prenatally
- 40% also have congenital heart defects. May require surgery.
- Increased risk of other health conditions such as ASD, problems with hormones and glands, hearing loss or vision problems
- Mild to moderate developmental delays, delays in language and speech
- Decreased or poor muscle tone
- Takes longer to reach developmental milestones, though usually milestones are eventually met
- Short attention span
- Poor decision making, impulsive behavior

Dyslexia

- Neurological learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate/ fluent word recognition, poor spelling and decoding abilities
- Struggles in reading and vocabulary growth

UNDERSTANDING SPECIAL NEEDS: A GUIDE TO DIFFERENT DISABILITIES

- Is a genetic disability
- Hard time making friends and interpreting nonverbal cues and body language
- Mix up in letter/number direction and connecting letter sounds to make words
- Struggle in vowel digraphs and diphthongs
- Difficulty visualizing spellings
- Difficulty with sequencing
- Hard time remembering words

Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)

- Sensory Processing: the way in which the nervous system receives and responds to messages from different senses
- Brain has trouble receiving and responding to information that comes in through the senses
- Sensory signals are either not detected or don't get organized appropriately
- Can effect one or more senses
- Oversensitive to things in their environment (sounds, touch, light, smells)
- Symptoms exist on a spectrum: extreme sensitivity to lack of reaction to sensory input (no reaction to extreme heat)
- Can cause clumsiness, behavioral problems, anxiety, depression, school failure, and more

Attention Deficit and Hyperactive Disorder (ADD, ADHD)

- Disorder making it difficult to to pay attention, and control impulses
- May seem restless and have a hard time staying still and controlling their body
- Process language differently
- Increase risk of language delay, because of lack of focus
- Struggle to find the right words when communicating
- Hard time ignoring distractions (noises, visual distractions, etc.)
- Frustration when they get behind
- Often struggle to demonstrate an understanding of material, even if they do understand

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Impulsive: acting out, can't sit still➤ Frequent interrupting, and talking out➤ Running, hitting, jumping, physical aggression➤ Lack of focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Withdrawn➤ Low self-esteem, high anxiety➤ Daydream: inattentive➤ Verbal aggression: teasing, taunting, name calling

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- Effects individuals who have lived through an event that may have caused death or severe injury to themselves or someone else
- Causes of PTSD:
 - 65% neglect
 - 18% physical abuse
 - 10% sexual abuse
 - 7% psychological abuse
- Risk Factors: severity of abuse, parental response, proximity to trauma
- May put the events of trauma in the wrong order
- May repeat parts of trauma in play
- Fear, anxiety, sadness, anger, lack of trust
- May feel like others are looking down on them or have a hard time with trust
- Older children and teens may show aggressive and impulsive behaviors

- Self-harm, alcohol, and drug abuse
- Therapy can lessen or even make symptoms go away

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

- Persistent pattern of angry or irritable mood, defiant or argumentative behavior, and vindictiveness toward people in authority
- May have other behavioral problems as well (ADD, Anxiety, etc)
- Like many mood disorders, a number of factors may be causes: biology genetics, environment
- Behaviors may only occur in one setting, or across multiple settings
- Constant tantrums
- Argumentative towards authority
- Trying to annoy or upset others, easily annoyed and upset by others
- Frequent outbursts of anger and resentment
- Low self-esteem
- Spiteful and seeks revenge

Credits and Acknowledgements

I hope that this has been a helpful guide for understanding different types of disorders you may encounter in your Sunday School/small group or any ministry context. Most of this information has been taken off of medical websites and sites that specialize in the different disorders listed.

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