

ALABAMA GAME CHANGERS

Summer 2023

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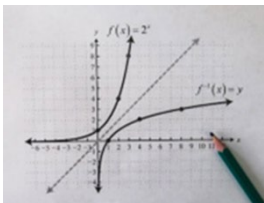
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Alabama Game Changers is a non-profit medical clinic that addresses a wide range of medical, physical psychological, learning, and behavioral issues. AGC diagnoses and treats learning disabilities, many of which often go underrecognized or ineffectively treated. What is a Specific Learning Disorder (SLD)? It is a neurological disorder that affects one's ability to process and understand spoken or written language, altering one's ability to read, write, listen, speak, spell, and do math. Let's sort out some common learning disabilities:



Dyslexia: difficulty with quick and accurate word recognition and poor spelling and decoding that affects reading ability. The brain processes language sounds differently, often in unexpected ways relative to other cognitive abilities. Reading is not enjoyable.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): difficulty with focusing on a given task. The ADHD child may have difficulty with executive functioning, mental skills that help with paying attention, planning, organizing, and completing tasks as well as managing emotions. The ADHD child may lack self-control, be easily distracted or impulsive, and engage in excessive movement.



Dyscalculia: difficulty understanding math concepts, performing arithmetic calculations, and solving math problems. Basic arithmetic operations (+, -, *, /), order of operations, and more complex math skills (algebra, geometry) present great challenges.

Dysgraphia: the inability to write letters by hand efficiently. Messy handwriting and unusual finger grip are common indicators. Neurological conditions, developmental delays or fine motor skills may be involved.

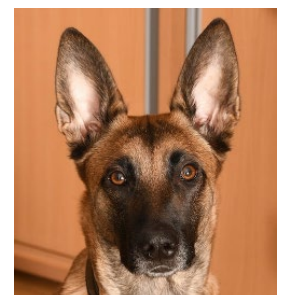


SLD with Impairment in Written Expression: difficulty with spelling accuracy, grammar and punctuation accuracy, and clarity of organization of written expression.



Dyspraxia: difficulty planning and coordinating movement. It can affect fine motor skills (writing, tying shoelaces) as well as gross motor skills (balance, hand/eye coordination). Performing tasks in the correct order is troubling.

Auditory and visual processing disorders: neurological conditions causing difficulty processing information from sound and sight. It is tough to learn to read and write if it is hard to discern the sounds of letters or words. With auditory processing issues, attention isn't wandering because there's something else competing for focus; it's just very hard to focus on anything at all!



Game Changers takes a unique and effective approach! Here's what we do:

First: Treat the WHOLE person,
not just the problem.

First, we take a close look at the struggles. Each child's medical and developmental history is reviewed. This helps determine which evaluations are needed next.

Second: Test, test, test.

Second, testing identifies the issues, pinpoints the problem learning areas, and leads to correct diagnoses.

Third: Develop an individualized plan for each person.

What is the best route to the best outcomes?

Intensive (all day, every day, in-house) therapy? Two hours per day one-on-one instruction?
In-person or virtual? Before, during, or after school? Group sessions?
Speech/language pathologist? Occupational or recreational therapist? Specialized teacher?

Knowing what factors are at play and what therapies are needed are critical for success since we know that a one-size-fits-all approach to therapy actually fits no one!

Barrett Elementary

School: Reading interventions are continuing. Funding for this summer's project is provided by a grant from the Vulcan Materials Company Foundation and matched by an anonymous donor. The literacy project will be supported in the '23-'24 academic year by federal Title I funds.

Expanded Mental Health Services:

AGC now offers a broad range of counseling services provided by a licensed therapist who specializes in childhood development. Our counselor brings extensive experience working with children who have multiple needs, focusing on fostering social, emotional, and behavioral well-being. We help children navigate and overcome challenges, develop coping strategies, and enhance their overall resilience. Children can experience improved emotional regulation, enhanced self-esteem, and strengthened interpersonal skills that will empower them to reach their full potential.

New School Project:

AGC has completed a contract with Avondale Elementary School. Student testing begins in August. Immediately following testing, AGC will provide reading interventions for 24 at-risk students who are reading below grade level. Support is provided by federal funds and private donations.

Thank you for your continued support. Every donation, every word-of-mouth referral, and every new supporter matters greatly to our cause. We want to expand our mailing list with interested parties so please let us know whom to add. Passing this newsletter along to a friend or colleague is a great conversation starter!

"Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them." -- Lady Bird Johnson