

Developing Your Home Schooled Child's Long Term Memory and Emotional Control

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Does your child reverse letters or numbers, experience right/left confusion or produce "mirror writing"? Has this child been called "dyslexic"? Is remembering letters, numbers or sight words difficult? Does your bright child learn math computation but quickly forget what was learned? Does your child easily read words but not remember what was read or have to decode the same words the next day? These symptoms all relate to inadequate "long term" retention of visual information.

Does your child easily forget math facts? Does he easily forget what has been said to him or information that he has heard. Does he forget names and words? Does he stutter or stammer? Is he disorganized? Does he lack a sense of time? Is learning a foreign language difficult or impossible? These symptoms all relate to inadequate "long term" retention of auditory information.

Does your child become emotional when trying to learn certain subjects (like math or reading), over-react, or become easily frustrated?

These learning and emotional issues are not resolved by having your child labeled or medicated. The key to improvement lies in organizing your child's brain for better function.

When a child is well-organized neurodevelopmentally, information and learned academics are retained and accessible for further learning. Emotionality is under control and is expressed in reasonableness and settling down quickly after emotional events, such as tests or social situations.

Neurodevelopmentalists have found that the major factor in the long-term retention of information is neurological organization and something called cortical hemispheric dominance. That is, one hemisphere of the brain is organized to be dominant or controlling and the other to be sub-dominant. The dominant hemisphere deals with logic, cognitive thought and the long-term memory of information, including academics. The other hemisphere, the subdominant, specializes in emotionality and music.

Outwardly dominance is reflected in a dominant hand, eye, ear and foot all on that same side of the body. Therefore, the right-handed person should also be right eyed, eared and footed. The left-handed person should be left eyed, left eared, and left footed. The person with right sidedness has a dominant left hemisphere and the person with left sidedness has a dominant right hemisphere due to the structure of the nervous system.

Dominance is the result of a long process of brain organization called lateralization. Lateralization is seen in early cross patterns when a young child is learning to crawl and creep. Organization proceeds to higher levels of the brain and is reflected outwardly in cross pattern walking, marching, skipping, and running and the development of a dominant hand. When the process of lateralization is complete to this point it is possible to develop cortical hemispheric dominance.

Dominance can be developed and this is an important step in remediation of the learning and emotional difficulties that some children experience. Occasionally lower levels of development must be revisited so that they may be completed and dominance may be established.

To help your child move toward dominance, there are a few things you can do in your home school P.E. time. Have him creep on hands and knees and crawl on his tummy many minutes every day. Have him knee walk, carrying soup cans in his hands. Take him on fast walks, breaking into jogging. Have him march and skip.

If you have been doing these activities for several months and your child is still not retaining information as well as you would like, you may need professional help to address additional neurodevelopmental issues.

When a child has difficulties that relate to dominance issues they will not "grow out" of these difficulties. But, by treating the root causes, dominance can be corrected and the difficulties related to incorrect dominance will no longer hold a person back from his or her full potential.

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