

INVISIBLE DISABILITIES FACT SHEET

Special Needs Resource and Training November 2019 Fact Sheet # 8

According to the Invisible Disabilities Association, the term invisible disability refers to symptoms such as debilitating pain, fatigue, dizziness, cognitive dysfunction, brain injuries, learning differences, mental health disorders, as well as hearing and visual impairments. They are not always obvious to the onlooker, but can sometimes or always limit daily activities range from mild challenges to severe limitations and vary from person to person

This fact sheets focuses on invisible disability that focus on those with special needs and developmental disabilities.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurological disorder characterized by a pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that disrupts functioning in both children and adults

Typically, a person with ADHD, the difficulties lies in the part of the brain that allows people to perform higher level task known as the executive function. 90% of people with ADHD also have an executive function disorder. This is the part of the

brain that engages in goal-direction and self-regulations.

Two Types of ADHD:

Types of ADHD

Type 1: Inattention Without Hyperactivity

- Trouble paying attention
- Trouble following direction
- Trouble following through with task
- Easily distracted
- Seems disorganized or careless
- Slow to process information

Type 2: Hyperactivity Without Inattention

- Trouble paying attention
- Restlessness
- Impulsive speech and action
- Excessive talking
- Difficulty waiting turns
- May have a quick temper
- Overactive

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that impacts social, speech, behavioral and motor skills. It is a spectrum

disorder meaning it varies from person to person. No two people have the same symptoms. It is estimated that 1% of the population is diagnosed with autism.

Dyslexia

Dyslexia is also known as a language-based disability. It is defined as difficulties with accurate and word recognition and by poor spelling which can affect reading fluency, reading comprehension, recall, decoding, writing, spelling, and sometime speech. Signs of dyslexia in adults include:

- Poor spelling
- Avoids writing task
- Gifted and creative
- Difficulty in following oral and written instructions
- Difficulty staying on task
- High level of frustration
- Difficulty in retaining information
- Test-taking anxiety.
- Highly curious
- Insightful
- Curiosity
- Good communication of stories read to them

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder which causes seizures through electrical impulses occurring in the brain. It is the fourth most common neurological disorder. Epilepsy affects 50 million people worldwide. In the U.S., 1 out of 26 people are affected.

A person is considered to have epilepsy if they meet any of the following conditions:

At least two unprovoked seizures occurring greater than 24 hours apart.

One unprovoked seizure and after two unprovoked seizures occurring over the next 10 years.
Diagnosis of an epilepsy syndrome.

Seizures

A seizure is caused by a burst of abnormal activity in the brain. With a seizure, a person has change in awareness, behavior, body movement or sensation. A seizure can last from a few seconds to a few minutes. Seizures can take on many different forms and affect people in different ways.

Auras

Auras are often described as a warning before the occurrence of a seizure. Not everyone experiences an aura. Some have described it as a change in feeling, sensation, thought or behaviors. this may include:

- An overpowering smell.
- Nausea or indigestion.
- A rising/sinking feeling in the stomach.
- a sleepy/dreamy feeling.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) according to the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome describes the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These affects may include physical, mental, behavioral,

and/or learning disabilities with lifelong implications.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders is not a diagnosed rather, it is a term that is used to describe a wide-range of effects on a person whose mother drank alcohol during her pregnancy. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, show in three areas: abnormal facial characteristics, slowed growth and the central nervous system.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders affects each person differently. Signs and symptoms include the following:

- Abnormal facial features including a smooth ridge between the nose and upper lip
- Small head size
- Shorter than average height
- Poor coordination
- Hyperactive behavior
- Difficulty with attention
- Poor memory
- Difficulty in school
- Learning disabilities
- Speech and language delays
- Intellectual disability or low IQ
- Poor reasoning and judgement skills
- Sleep and sucking problem
- vision and hearing problems
- Seizures
- Processing information
- Problems with the heart and kidneys
- Poor concept of time
- Trouble getting along with others
- Staying on task

Sensory Processing Disorder

Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD, formally known as sensory integration dysfunction) is a condition in which the brain has difficulty in receiving information from the senses.

Signs and symptoms may include:

- oversensitive
- Common sounds may be overwhelming
- Uncoordinated
- Hard to engage in conversation or play



Special Needs Resource and Training Blog provides tools, resources and information to people who serve, educate, train and employ individuals with developmental disabilities