

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Similarities & Differences among Students

Differences between brain injuries and specific learning disabilities:

Similarities

Students with brain injuries and students with specific learning disabilities may both exhibit...

- _ reduced attention span, distractibility, impulsivity
- _ low frustration tolerance
- _ weak organizational skills
- _ overwhelmed reaction to too much information
- _ inappropriate social judgment
- _ problem with integration skills
- _ slow processing of information
- _ deficits in problem solving and abstract thinking
- _ reduced performance relative to abilities

Differences

Compared to students with specific learning disabilities, students with brain injuries have...

- _ greater variation in performance levels
- _ wider gap in abilities
- _ adjustment to learning with a different style than prior to injury
- _ more difficulty with new learning; old facts more often retained
- _ more pronounced memory deficits
- _ adjustment to a new and different self from pre-morbid self
- _ greater success learning prior to brain injury
- _ altered social contacts, loss of friends
- _ exaggerated inconsistent performance
- _ reduced self-control
- _ wide range of inappropriate behaviors
- _ lack of insight into problem

How students with brain injuries differ from those with cognitive impairments:

(Note: The IQ score is not representative of the student's actual learning potential after a brain injury.)

Similarities

Students with brain injuries and students with cognitive impairments may both exhibit...

- _ problem solving difficulties
- _ weak abstract reasoning
- _ reduced judgment
- _ overwhelmed reaction to too much information

Differences

Compared to students with cognitive impairments, students with brain injuries have...

- _ inconsistent learning rate
- _ no previous history of special education
- _ need to adjust to changed sense of "self" by student, family, and peers
- _ more inconsistent behavior

How students with brain injuries differ from students with emotional disturbances

Students with brain injuries may have attention, impulse control, and cognitive difficulties that affect their behavior and emotional stability, but the cause is primarily organic. This may or may not be the case with students classified as emotionally disturbed. While some of their behaviors may appear similar, responses to interventions often differ. For example, injury to the frontal lobe may result in poor ability to respond to reward and punishment systems.

Similarities

Students with brain injuries and students with emotional disturbances may both exhibit...

- _ reduced self-control
- _ difficulties regulating mood

Differences

Compared to students with emotional disturbances, students with brain injuries have...

- _ over-sensitivity to change
- _ over-sensitivity to sensory stimuli such as noise, movement, temperature, light
- _ limited or lack of awareness of deficits
- _ poor recognition of cause and effect relationships
- _ more impulsivity, confusion and/or disinhibition
- _ less responsiveness to rewards and punishments

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