

Zwicker Lab



JILL ZWICKER

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:



- **Changes to the CYSN funding: What does this mean for DCD?**
- **Current studies**
- **Recent publications**
- **DCD Advocacy initiatives**

The ability for our lab to function relies on the support of families and their children to participate in surveys, interviews, and research studies. This often involves time and commitment in an already busy schedule. We have new studies for which we are actively recruiting that aim to evaluate new interventions and support advocacy efforts.

I want to thank everyone for their ongoing support and time participating in the studies at Zwicker Lab and contributing to the goal of improving services and supports for children with DCD and their families.

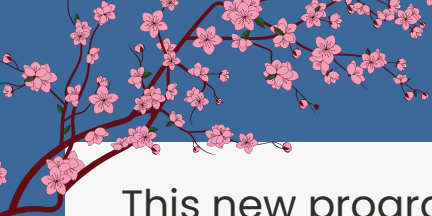
BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit



https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing_your_health/child-behaviour-development/support-needs#pathways-to-support

There has been much discussion in the news about the new Child and Youth with Support Needs funding and service delivery model launched by the Government of BC this year.

We know from previous research with families that a diagnosis of DCD do not qualify for additional funding for services, often leading families to pay privately. Access to therapy services tended to decrease as their children got older, associated with the increasing cost demands of private therapy and the need for more mental health supports.



This new program provides children and youth with DCD an opportunity to access publicly-funded therapy services through child development centres, up to the age of 18 years. This is exciting news, as a diagnosis is no longer needed to access services. There is also a focus on mental health services, an area we know that is needed as DCD is “more than a motor problem.”

For children and youth with DCD, they will likely need to undergo a needs-based assessment to qualify for additional funding to pay for private services, equipment, and other support needs not available through public services, starting April 1, 2027. Currently, the two assessments utilized by the government are the PEDI-CAT (Pediatric Evaluation of Disability Inventory) and the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales, 3rd edition. Unfortunately, our lab found that the PEDI-CAT was not sensitive to detect the functional needs of children with DCD. The Vineland is mainly used for children with communication and social skill challenges.

Details of which functional assessments will be used as part of this new model have not been released. As more information becomes available on what this needs-based assessment requires, we will continue to advocate for tools and resources ensuring that children and youth with DCD can access additional funding, if needed.

NOW RECRUITING!

Movie-fMRI to Advance Biomarker Discovery in Developmental Coordination Disorder

This research study is a partnership between Zwicker and Vanderwaal Labs, using functional MRI to collect brain scan data while watching movies. Movies improve data quality and quantity in pediatric MRI studies, and allow us to study the brain while it is active and processing complicated information, just like it is in daily life. The goal of this research is to identify brain differences in DCD that could potentially lead to new interventions and diagnostic tools for children and youth.



We are actively recruiting participants for this study and looking for **children ages of 8-10** with **motor coordination difficulties or a diagnosis of DCD**. Children will undergo an MRI scan and receive a \$25 gift card.

Please contact Gisela Gosse, Research Coordinator:
ggosse@cw.bc.ca or (604) 875-2345 ext. 5948

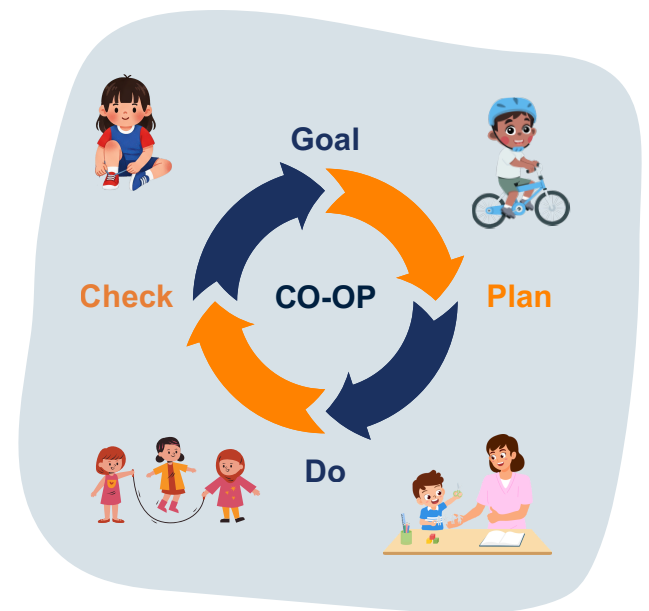




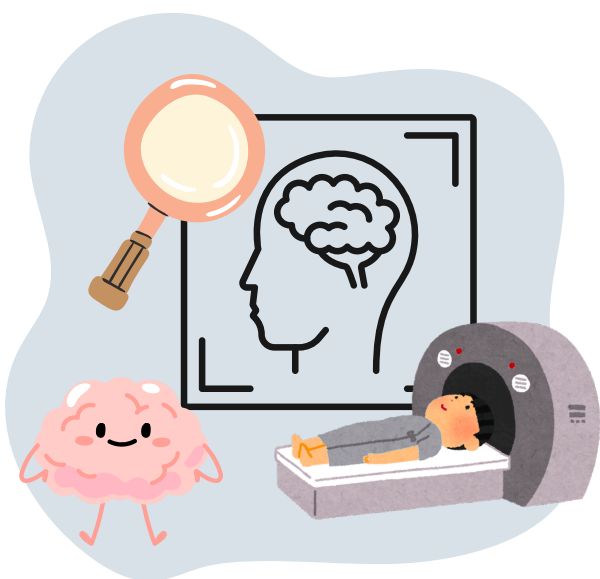
Modified CO-OP Intervention for Young Children with DCD: A Pilot Study Exploring Brain Changes with Intervention

Best practice for children and youth with DCD is a treatment approach called CO-OP (Cognitive Orientation to daily Occupational Performance).

This approach uses problem solving, coaching, and guided discovery to help children and youth with DCD achieve their identified motor-based goals. The research we have done in our lab has shown that CO-OP improves participation and performance in motor-based activities, such as tying shoes, printing, riding a bike, and using cutlery. We also found that this intervention leads to positive changes in brain structure and function.



ICAN
International Cognitive
Approaches Network Inc.



We know early intervention is important to address the challenges associated with DCD. In this pilot project, we will be evaluating the CO-OP approach for younger children with motor coordination differences to see if this leads to positive changes in their motor skills.

In this study, we are actively recruiting children ages **3–5 years with motor coordination differences**. They will undergo two MRI scans (three months apart), get 10 weeks of free intervention with an occupational therapist, receive a picture of their brain, and a \$25 gift card.

**Please share with families who have 3–5-year-old children
with motor difficulties and/or suspected DCD**

HOW CAN I SIGN UP?

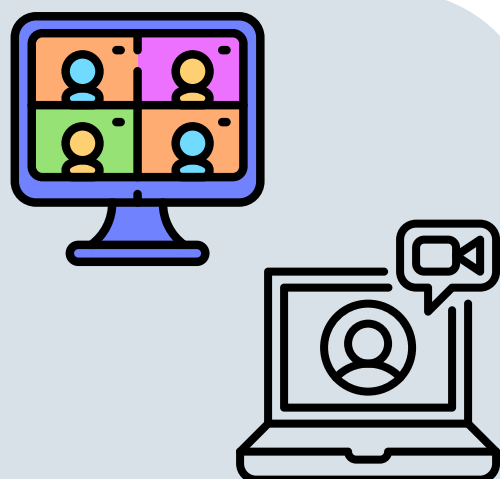
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HELP IMPROVE SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS WITH DCD

The research team that developed the impACT for DCD parent-based questionnaire is now creating an international survey to understand the experiences, strengths, challenges, and unmet needs of young people with Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD).

To make sure this questionnaire asks the right questions in the correct way, they are looking for children and teens themselves to help shape this survey.



What's involved?

Children/youth can choose either a

A 30-45 min online focus group and talk with other young people

- or -

A 30 min one-on-one online interview, if they prefer to speak privately.

Who can take part?

English-speaking children and teenagers, aged 10-18 years who have DCD

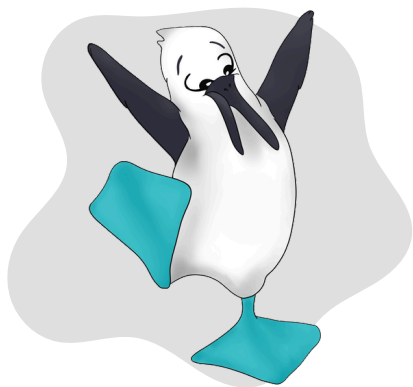


HOW CAN I SIGN UP?

Email: zoe.skoda@thekids.org.au

**Now
recruiting!**





DCD Toolkits for Primary Care Providers and Families

Available on Zwicker Lab Resources:

<https://www.bcchr.ca/zwicker-lab/resources>



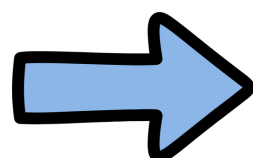
Co-created with family physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and families, the **DCD Toolkit for Primary Care Providers** aims to improve early identification of DCD at well-child visits to support early identification.



Toolkit for
Primary Care Providers



Sharing the Toolkit



College websites and
newsletters



Repositories for
primary care providers



Continuing Medical Education Credit Webinar

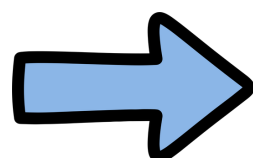
Co-created with families with lived experience, the **DCD Toolkit for Families** provides information and resources to improve awareness and understanding about DCD to support early identification. The Toolkit has been translated into multiple languages.



Toolkit for Families



Sharing the Toolkit



Communications Team



Child Development Centres



Social Media



Parent Partner Networks