

WORKING SMARTER, NOT HARDER

by Adeena Pelberg

“MY DAUGHTER TRIES so hard to please but still struggles to understand Chumash and has a hard time with reading comprehension...”

“My child is so impulsive! I’m scared he’ll hurt himself and/or others...”

“My child is rigid in his thinking and is very hard to get along with...”

“I need to remind my son what he needs to be doing all the time...”

Many times parents are told their child needs extra support. A critical question to ask is: “Why is my child struggling?” More often than not, fundamental developmental delays are driving the academic, attentional, or behavioral struggles. Without pursuing *why* a child is struggling in the first place, the child is placed in the never-ending position of being supported throughout school and life by others, leading to eroded self-esteem and increased behavioral issues.

As an educator who builds the child from the inside out, beginning with the most fundamental aspects of human development, I assess the child as a whole, determining where the breakdown in typical development is occurring. My goal is to address deficits developmentally, starting with the most basic elements, so thinking and learning become more efficient. When brain and body work harmoniously, my clients work smarter, not harder, blossoming in all areas of life’s learning.

My primary tool is the Masgutova Neuro-Sensory-Motor Reflex Integration (MNRI) method. MNRI is a comprehensive set of science-based programs targeting the resilience of the neurological system using noninvasive touch-based techniques. Basic infant motor reflex schemes (sitting, crawling, walking, etc.) are linked with communication and cognitive learning. A child who is stuck in automatic and immature movement patterns or responses, rather than evolving into advancing mature motor patterns, is also trapped in the parts of the brain that are associated with more primitive, infant-stereotypical behavior. This affects

the child’s sense of emotional and psychological security and cognitive (brain) development. Integrating retained primitive infant reflexes frees a child’s body and emotional being and allows him to access higher centers of brain function.

I also address emotional, behavioral, and attentional issues using MNRI’s reflex integration techniques as well as supplemental MNRI programs. The MNRI method effectively addresses poor orientation in space, poor boundaries manifesting as aggression or victimization, bladder or bowel control issues, auditory and visual processing, and auditory and tactile hypersensitivity. As these problems resolve, brain function becomes more organized, building new, efficient pathways in executive functions, leading to academic improvement. MNRI lays the neurological building blocks for a solid foundation of successful learning.

In addition to MNRI, I use the New-Heights Lindamood Visual Perceptual Thinking Skills program to develop the child’s executive management system. Once a child has begun to incorporate essential executive thinking skills into his life, I segue into English or Hebrew academic content. I meld proven academic approaches such as Lindamood-Bell programs, Orton-Gillingham, Brain Gym, and Rabbi Kiwack’s *kriah* method into a customized program for each child that reinforces and increases executive and academic gains.

In my nearly 30 years as an educator, I have been privileged to observe my students gain unsurpassed feelings of intrinsic worth and inner power while persevering at tasks they previously could not attempt. By asking the deeper “why” question, we open the door to change the course of a child’s life from one of meltdowns, frustration, and reliance on others, to one of empowerment, growth, self-respect, and independence. Providing intervention at the root level leads to improved fruits of your labor.

I partner with parents and teachers

to ensure consistent reinforcement of methods and material at home and in school. Prior to seeing academic improvement, parents often notice fundamental changes in their child such as increased awareness of himself and his environment, taking more risks, and choosing more specific language when communicating. My goal is to facilitate your child’s independence and increasing self-reliance, since there is no resource room in life. Honoring your child’s progress encourages him to own his successes, an essential impetus to reach out of his comfort zone to advance further on the road of life and academic learning.

I’m often asked how long the process will take. There is no typical time frame, as each child has his own distinctive neurological profile. Life stressors, which are different for each individual, may interfere with the brain’s ability to calmly create and establish new pathways of learning. The extent of parental involvement with the child during sessions and with his home program also affects the rate at which a child progresses.

The greatest gift you can give your child is a solid foundation in the skills and knowledge he needs to grow into a responsible, confident, and self-sufficient adult. Your child is the most significant investment you will ever make. Each child must be nurtured – gradually, lovingly, with the child himself an active participant. I welcome the opportunity to join you on your journey to help your child succeed in school, in social settings, and in life.

The author thanks Esther Gittel Edelson for contributing her literary expertise to this article. ■

Adeena Pelberg is a Baltimore-based professional specializing in educational coaching and executive function strategic intervention. She invites the opportunity to work with you, enabling your child’s unique growth and expansion in his journey toward independence. To schedule a free half-hour phone consultation or an evaluation for your child, please contact Mrs. Pelberg at 410-493-6219 or adeena.pelberg@gmail.com.