

DORE/DDAT EXERCISE PROGRAM

JENNIFER STEPHENSON AND KEVIN WHELDALL

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Some children have difficulty with literacy and/or are clumsy and/or receive a label such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD or Asperger's syndrome.

PROPOSED SOLUTION/ INTERVENTION

The Dore Achievement Centres offer individual assessment and then a program of physical exercises to be performed twice daily. The exercises may involve performing different motor skills at the same time. The exercises are reviewed and updated during the treatment.

THE THEORETICAL RATIONALE – HOW DOES IT WORK?

Dore centres claim that these difficulties are caused by a condition they call Cerebellar Developmental Delay. They assert that this can be remediated by performing the prescribed exercises, which are claimed to create new neural pathways between the cerebellum and other parts of the brain. This is claimed to improve the automaticity of skill performance, which then improves the processing of information by the brain. Once this is achieved, children apparently perform better in all areas with improved academic, motor and social skills.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY? WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE FOR THEIR EFFICACY?

Although, along with personal anecdotes, there are several studies described on the Dore website, only one study has been through a peer-review process. This study claimed to show improvements in the

reading, comprehension, writing, balance, bead threading dexterity and eye movement control of students undergoing the Dore treatment. The methodology of this study has been severely criticised by other researchers for several reasons. Most of the participants did not, in fact, have significant reading problems. The control group did not receive a comparable treatment (such as an alternative exercise program), and flawed measures of reading were used. For these reasons this study cannot tell us whether or not the DDAT treatment had any effect. There have been no peer reviewed studies that examine the effect of the treatment on ADHD or Asperger's syndrome.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no scientific evidence that this exercise program (or any other exercise program) will result in improvement in reading or other academic or social skills. There is also no scientific evidence that the program is likely to be an effective treatment for ADHD or Asperger's syndrome.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The research literature firmly concludes that students with reading and related difficulties are most likely to benefit from intensive, systematic, skills-based instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

THE MUSEC VERDICT: NOT RECOMMENDED.

Key references may be found at:
http://www.musec.mq.edu.au/co_brief.aspx

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE
BUILDING X5A, MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109
PH: 9850 8691 FAX: 9850 8254



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