



Pupils with Physical Disabilities

Somatic Dysfunctions



Somatic Dysfunctions



Classroom-based tips (focus on instructional methods)

1. **Inform the class about the presence of a pupil with somatic dysfunctions through age-appropriate means** such as a project, discussion, parental participation, storytelling, or the involvement of the child himself/herself.
2. **Provide activities promoting acceptance and support in order to avoid marginalisation**, for instance, discussions on various types of disabilities, and specifically on somatic dysfunctions.
3. **Encourage the pupil to participate in all activities, without going beyond his/her limits;** be supportive encourage pupils to ask for help when needed.
4. **Use appropriate assistive technology in all classroom activities and evaluation.**
5. **Provide support and encourage pupils' self-confidence by anticipating difficulties and developing strategies.**
6. **Provide a specific set of teaching materials** for example in digital form so that pupils with somatic dysfunctions do not have to carry heavy books in and out of school.
7. **Provide copies of teachers' notes or recorded lectures**, as well as digital notes for pupils using technology.
8. **Provide pupils with extra time for written evaluations or for other activities**, which may require longer for them to achieve.
9. **Differentiate learning processes and materials according to specific somatic dysfunctions of the pupil**, such as differentiation by task or by pace.
10. **Provide options for adapted physical activities after consulting with the pupil's physiotherapist.**

[Reference: <http://www.eupd.ro/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Curriculum.pdf>]



School-based practical tips (focus on instructional methods)

Class Divisions / Arrangements

Ensure that school services are generally accessible for disabled pupils, including access to materials, catalogues, books, and equipment.

[Reference: <http://www.eupd.ro/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Curriculum.pdf>]

Community

1. Arrange meetings between the parents and the staff and other professionals working with the pupils such as the physiotherapist, so as to learn as much as possible about the diagnosis, the pupil's current level of ability and possible needs during the course of the school year.
2. **Design a school project in order to increase the level of awareness of the teachers, pupils and parents of what somatic dysfunctions are**, and how to support pupils with somatic dysfunctions.
3. **Ensure that school services are generally accessible for disabled pupils**, including access to materials, catalogues, books, and equipment.
[Reference: <http://www.eupd.ro/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Curriculum.pdf>]
4. **Find and have available contact details of local and national associations for somatic dysfunctions for further information and support.**
5. **Find and have available contact details of local and national associations for somatic dysfunctions for further information and support.**

Curricular Adaptations

1. **Discuss with the parents about the pupil's programme in school and other kinds of interventions** that may be needed together with ways to facilitate development and improvement.
2. **Facilitate family support and confidence in parenting a child with somatic dysfunctions.**
3. Make the physical education class and sports activities in school accessible for pupils with somatic dysfunctions.

Discipline

Monitor the safety of pupils during their curricular and extra-curricular activities during their classes, breaks and other types of activities.

Parents / Parents' Associations

1. **Discuss with the parents about the pupil's programme in school and other kinds of interventions** that may be needed together with ways to facilitate development and improvement.
2. **Facilitate family support and confidence in parenting a child with somatic dysfunctions.**
3. Arrange meetings between the parents and the staff and other professionals working with the pupils such as the physiotherapist, so as to learn as much as possible about the

diagnosis, the pupil's current level of ability and possible needs during the course of the school year.

4. **Design a school project in order to increase the level of awareness of the teachers, pupils and parents of what somatic dysfunctions are**, and how to support pupils with somatic dysfunctions.

Safety

1. Monitor the safety of pupils during their curricular and extra-curricular activities during their classes, breaks and other types of activities.
2. Make the physical education class and sports activities in school accessible for pupils with somatic dysfunctions.
3. Make sure that, in case of emergency, the evacuation plan allows disabled pupils to get out of the building safely.
[Reference: <http://www.eupd.ro/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Curriculum.pdf>]

School Breaks

Monitor the safety of pupils during their curricular and extra-curricular activities during their classes, breaks and other types of activities.

Student Council

1. Arrange meetings between the parents and the staff and other professionals working with the pupils such as the physiotherapist, so as to learn as much as possible about the diagnosis, the pupil's current level of ability and possible needs during the course of the school year.
2. **Design a school project in order to increase the level of awareness of the teachers, pupils and parents of what somatic dysfunctions are**, and how to support pupils with somatic dysfunctions.

School Purchases

Equip the building of the school with accessibility and safety adaptations such as elevator, ramps and special desks.

Pupil Support

1. Make provisions for psychological and emotional support for pupils with somatic dysfunctions.
2. **Find and have available contact details of local and national associations for somatic dysfunctions for further information and support.**

Teacher Professional Development

Provide training for teachers that have pupils with somatic dysfunctions in their classrooms. Inform teachers about pupils' profiles and needs during and after school activities to be aware of issues like needing more time to rest, having involuntary movements, fatigue, and needing greater effort needed for some activities.

[Reference: <http://www.eupd.ro/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Curriculum.pdf>]

Technology

Make arrangements for assistive technology assessment and provision.

Supportive Literature

Definition: "Somatic dysfunction can be defined as 'impaired or altered function of related components of the somatic (body framework) system: skeletal, arthrodiar and myofascial structures and their related vascular, lymphatic and neural elements' (Educational Council on Osteopathic Principles, 2009)". Somatic dysfunction could also be the result of a neurophysiological phenomenon, i.e. peripheral or central sensitisation. (**Leon Chaitow, Ruth Jones**, *Chronic Pelvic Pain and Dysfunction: Practical Physical Medicine*, Elsevier Health Sciences, 2012)

"Somatic dysfunction is not tissue damage, which the body must heal. Rather, somatic dysfunction is a disorder of the body's programming for length, tension, joint surface apposition affecting mobility, tissue fluid flow efficiency, and neurological balance. [...] Four criteria are used to diagnose somatic dysfunction: tissue texture abnormalities, static or positional asymmetry, restriction of motion, and tenderness." (Marc Micozzi, *Fundamentals of Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, Saunders Elsevier, 2010, p. 244)

Symptoms

"Somatic dysfunction modifies normal reflex activities and may produce dysfunctional states whose symptoms must be differentiated as to whether they are functional (somatic dysfunction) or pathological." (Michael Kuchera, William Kuchera, *Osteopathic Considerations in systemic dysfunction*, Greyden Press, LLC, Dayton, Ohio, 1994)

"In summary, a somatic dysfunction can lead to one of the following two disturbances:

- 1) joint motion restriction [...]
- 2) disturbance in the neuroreflexive feedback mechanisms.

This may manifest itself as

- a) localised, segmental irritation such as long or short muscles of the back, connective tissues and skin.
- b) peripheral segmental irritation (peripheral muscles, segmentally related dermatomes." Hans-Dieter Neumann, *Introduction to Manual Medicine*, Springer, 2013

Websites and EU Reports

American Academy of Osteopathy, Somatic Dysfunction and Emotional Well-being: An Osteopathic Approach to Mental Health, 2016 -

<http://files.academyofosteopathy.org/convo/2016/AAOConvo2016ProgramLO-RES.pdf>

Asociatia Osteore - <http://www.osteore.ro/asociatia-osteore/prezentare/>

EU Accessibility Act - [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/571382/IPOL_IDA\(2016\)571382_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/571382/IPOL_IDA(2016)571382_EN.pdf)

References

Chaitow, Leon, Jones, Ruth (2012), Chronic Pelvic Pain and Dysfunction: Practical Physical Medicine, Elsevier Health Sciences

Kuchera, Michael, Kuchera (1994), William Osteopathic Considerations in systemic dysfunction, Greyden Press, LLC, Dayton, Ohio

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<http://www.eupd.ro/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Curriculum.pdf>

<http://forum.portal.edu.ro/index.php?act=Attach&type=post&id=2166579>