Student Improves Vision & Coordination through Options Center

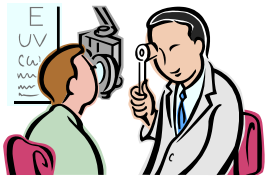
M.2 Gross Motor Processing – Moving the whole body such as walking & running

Danny had been labeled clumsy and was living with the stigma of being a kid who ran into walls and other objects -- even other kids -- when playing or running. The problem was in his vision, which in turn affected his spatial awareness.

But through classes at Options Center, Danny has learned to use his visual skills to get him where he needs to go, without walking into walls along the way.

Danny had been treated for vision difficulties even before entering kindergarten. One eye was much weaker than the other and he relied too much on the other eye, according to Options Center's Director Helen Cox.

Danny had trouble focusing, staying on task and concentrating, said his mother Barb.



Danny's optometrist, Dr. Jeffrey Henline, used patching to strengthen the weak eye which improved his vision.

But once his vision improved, Danny still didn't know how to use the weak eye and Dr. Henline eventually referred the family to Options for more help.

At Options, "I worked with his overall coordination and running into walls. That was probably the first thing the family noticed improvement in," according to Helen. Teachers noticed too, said Barb, and began commenting to her about Danny's improvements.

Danny did Brain Gym®, a series of exercises designed to balance the function of the left and right halves of the brain. One of the first exercises Helen taught was the Cross Crawl, which crosses the mid-line of the body and brain, integrating the left and right hemispheres of the brain to increase communication between both sides. He also learned Balance Buttons, the

Rocker and the Energizer, which when used in combination can help the student know where s/he is in space and be able to find his/her center of gravity. Positive Points and Hook-ups were also used in class to help Danny relax, stay focused and create positive attitudes about himself and learning.

At first, said Barb, Danny couldn't follow the movements because he lacked spatial awareness and body coordination. But, by the end, Danny had mastered the techniques, according to Barb.

In addition, Danny began taking the recommended supplements. They helped to calm Danny without the side effects of Ritalin.

He was also taught to create visual pictures in association with spelling words and math. These internal visual images helped Danny comprehend information easier as well as increase his short and long term memory. Danny felt immediate success when he could remember his spelling words for the week after just one class. Danny commented that the class was "fun" and helped him "a lot."

"He was a different child after just half an hour," said Barb. "Danny had a whole different outlook on learning." Without the vision and spatial problems, and with a boost in self-confidence as well, Danny is able to "slow down enough to see where he's going," Barb said. It also helps that he can now see better as he moves along.

Classes in vision therapy at Options aided the process of Danny's improvement by further developing the integration of his body and mind, said Barb. Barb did the vision and Brain Gym® exercises at home with Danny which made the integrations come about faster.

Once she noticed how Danny benefited from the exercises at Options, she continued them even after the classes ended. All in all, Danny has improved greatly she said.

In a full vision screening this summer, "Danny tested completely normal," Barb said with a smile. His vision has maintained a steady improvement

since this summer and appears to be getting better all the time. He also has more whole body integration, an increased attention span and ability to concentrate. No more is there a "tug-of-war" to get Danny to do his homework, she noted.

There are still some problem areas, Barb said, and Danny has occasional minor setbacks; nevertheless, she and his teachers have seen a vast improvement.

Barb was "really impressed with the evaluation" Options gave at the skills assessment. It was "right on," she said, showing a "good grasp of what his weaknesses and strengths are" and answered a lot of the family's questions about why Danny did certain things. The evaluation gave Barb and her husband "a better grip on how to deal with Danny."

Barb credits the compassion of the staff as much as the program itself.

"I think Helen is very good with kids," said Barb. "She has a great deal of patience and Danny really liked her a lot. She seemed to really care a lot about him. She always seemed to be looking for ways to help him, going the extra distance to do whatever she could for him."

If you would like to communicate with Options, please feel free to email - options@mtco.com.

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