

As a chiropractic neurologist, Dr. Mark Goldenberg had spent nearly two decades helping ease the pain of others.

But after years of assisting patients with their afflictions, Dr. Goldenberg was helpless to aid a close relative who was diagnosed with a learning disability years ago.

“I did my best to get answers,” Dr. Goldenberg said, “but no one had any for us.” That was when Dr. Goldenberg decided to delve into the inner workings of the brain in an attempt to find the root causes for learning disabilities in children and how best to provide lasting treatment.

“I’m surprised more professionals in this field do not investigate and find out what causes learning disabilities,” said the doctor, who has an office in New York City and Norwalk Ct.

“My main passion is working with learning disabled children,” he added. “You have to have the drive to do this. As a chiropractor, my philosophy from day one has been not to treat the symptom, but to get to the cause. I work to correct the body.”

Dr. Goldenberg said when a child is diagnosed as learning disabled, that child is usually medicated, which only masks the cause.

Today, doctors are noticing a dramatic increase in children affected by Attention Deficit Disorders, Dyslexia, Processing Problems and Learning Disabilities. Although medication has been successful in relieving some of the symptoms, yielding temporary improvements, long-term changes are rarely achieved.

“I want to know why, what’s happening in (the child’s) brain,” he said. “I want to find out the cause, not just deal with symptoms. I am not against medication; it allows individuals to function in society who otherwise might not be able to. But for long term, positive results, we go deeper than medication.”

That is done, according to Dr. Goldenberg, through a program titled **Unlimited Potential**, a unique physical and cognitive approach to provide learning-disabled children the best chance of achieving success based on the most current knowledge.

According to Dr. Goldenberg, youngsters in his program improve overall muscle tone, and coordination, are able to improve attention, focus better, they show increased coordination, improve math and language processing speeds on average by two grade levels, are less impulsive and are better able to perform coordinated activities at precisely the right time.

“Most parents tell me that no one explained to them why this is happening to their child,” Dr. Goldenberg said. “That’s a helpless feeling. That’s why we take the time to help parents better understand what is happening in their child’s brain to cause this disability.

“With this therapy, the parents have control. If they have their child do specific activities, their child’s brain will be stimulated, and it will grow stronger connections. We can offer parents control over how to treat own children.”

Many learning disabilities such as ADD, ADHD, processing problems, LD, PDD, Autistic tendencies, Autism, and Touretts, have closely related physical findings known as soft motor signs such as problems with balance, coordination, eye tracking, handwriting, and gross and fine motor control. Research has shown that the same areas of the nervous system that are responsible for these physical abilities are also responsible for and directly related to the child’s cognitive abilities.

According to Dr. Goldenberg, by addressing these physical problems through physical means we have been very successful in improving both cognitive and soft motor deficits.

Through Unlimited Potential, the doctor’s use nationally based tests for reading and math fluency to access brain processing speeds as well as accepted computer based testing to evaluate the child’s attention mechanism.

“We will use objective tests for planning and sequencing and for coordination. We will also use questionnaires that will reflect what you perceive. We will look for your feedback on psychological, social, and academic functioning. Finally, we will use standardized medical questionnaires to progressively grade the severity of ADD if it is present,” Dr. Goldenberg said. Treatment consists of a series of specific procedures and exercises that will stimulate specific areas therefore improving the brain’s function, Dr. Goldenberg said.

“The greatest source of stimulation to your child’s brain comes from spinal muscles and joints,” Dr. Goldenberg states in a overview provided to potential clients. “Dysfunction of the spine, which may cause restricted movement of muscles and joints, can block information going to your child’s brain on a constant basis. So evaluating and if necessary correcting this is especially important and one part of a multi faceted approach”

Dr. Goldenberg said that he employs a series of specific exercises that will stimulate specific areas of a child’s brain; therefore improving the brain’s function, hopefully on a long-term basis. The exercises that we have included cover a number of different areas. The exercises include mental and physical exercises performed simultaneously, breathing, eye exercises, strength, endurance, balance, and coordination exercises, fine motor activity, gross motor activity, auditory stimulation and visual stimulation.

Among the methods is the **Interactive Metronome**, which objectively measures an individual’s timing, rhythm, coordination, and capacity to plan actions. Based on this measurement, timing deficiencies and challenges in planning actions such as those commonly found in people with ADHD, poor coordination and other learning and processing problems can be identified. This measurement has been shown to correlate to academic performance and the ability to pay attention.

The process involves having the child tap his/her hands and feet in synchrony with a target sound. The program takes the child through app. thirteen different coordinated movements increasing repetitions as the child progresses.

The child's therapy will focus on two basic categories - one will be aimed at improving any sensory system deficits that we have found, the other will consist of 15 one-hour long sessions with the Interactive Metronome.

“While Interactive Metronome has been shown to have many benefits, I believe its greatest is in enhancing the ability of the brain to bind together sensory information received from both the right and left sides of the brain and between various sensory areas of the brain,” Dr. Goldenberg said as a speaker at a recent conference in Denver Colorado.

Dr. Goldenberg has spoken to various professional, non-professional, and parent groups on the subject of the brain and learning disabilities.

“Parents want to find something that produces positive results,” Dr. Goldenberg said, “and this therapy does that.”