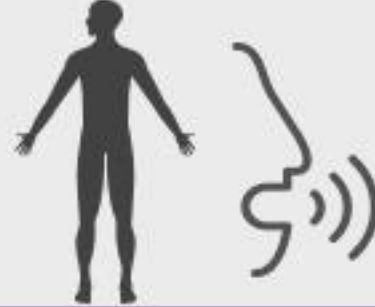


# From sensory & motor neurons to behavior

## Understanding Owen



Owen's **motor neurons** connected differently during development. This means the typical motor planning functions of the brain are disrupted.

**coordination** for speech and movement is affected. The speed of Owen's body doesn't match his thoughts.

**executive functions** are affected by this. Organizing, shifting attention, sustaining focus, and maintaining emotional stability are harder.



**frustration** shows frequently. Owen has more going on "inside" than other children and acts with more impulsivity and emotional intensity. He has heightened senses and prioritizes his body/mind comfort over relationships.

**sitting still** requires muscle attention and endurance. Owen fidgets to cope. At times, he flops down and rolls around. These behaviors contribute to the ADHD label.

**sense of space** is affected. He has trouble sensing where his body is and misjudges pressure, so he bumps other people, pulls on their limbs, touches or shoves things into their faces, etc. Standing/walking in line is troublesome.



**structure** Supports that help Owen organize tasks will help him compensate for weaker skills. Some skills will grow stronger with time, but \*DCD doesn't disappear and some deficits grow more obvious over time (e.g. executive functioning in later grades).

**intelligence - 2e** Many children with DCD like Owen are twice-exceptional (gifted and learning disabled). Owen is a bright & creative child. Positive attention from adults with patience and support will draw out natural strengths and help him grow other skills at a pace he can sustain.

It takes a village to raise a child and this is especially true for some kids more than others! They are all worth it, and Owen adds a spark everywhere he goes.

\*DCD: Developmental Coordination Disorder/Dyspraxia

Created by Owen's mom, Brianne Kirkpatrick, 2016

