ForeWord Reviews

EDUCATION

Challenging Kids, Challenged Teachers: Teaching Students with Tourette's, Bipolar Disorder, Executive Dysfunction, OCD, ADHD, and More
Leslie Packer
Sheryl Pruit
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Abnormalities rooted in the frontal lobe of the brain can affect learning, behavior, and motor functioning for children, leading to challenges in the classroom as well as in the home. Experts have come to believe that students with one neurological condition often have one or more other conditions, which can lead to confusing symptoms and diagnoses. “To capture the idea of multiple diagnoses, think of blowing bubbles using a bubble wand,” the authors write. “The bubbles may come out one at a time, but usually there is some amount of overlap with other bubbles (or in this case, disorders.)”

Leslie E. Packer and Sheryl K. Pruitt have put together a comprehensive look at the many neurological conditions that may impact a child’s academics, conduct, and social relationships. The authors are educators and parents of challenged children. Through their extensive research, education, and life experiences, they have put together a solid description of each condition and practical suggestions for dealing with children who have them.

These conditions include Tourette’s syndrome, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disability, Asperger’s syndrome, anxiety disorders, depression, executive dysfunction, sensory processing disorder, bipolar disorder, and others.

The authors contend that when a child has a neurological disorder, it requires that parents and educators work together to provide the child with the best environment for them to succeed and even thrive. Challenging Kids, Challenged Teachers offers strategies that can help busy teachers handle these challenging children in the classroom.

The book is intended primarily for educators and parents, but also for other professionals who work with children with neurological disorders. As parents, the authors understand how neurologically impaired children are often misdiagnosed and misunderstood. As professionals, they know that teaching these children and keeping order in the classroom is often difficult. Packer and Pruitt share their knowledge with tolerant and helpful support for everyone involved.

They offer practical suggestions to improve social skills and peer relationships and tips for how to get homework done and improve collaboration between home and school.

Leslie E. Packer, Ph.D., is a psychologist in New York and the author of the award-winning Web sites, Tourette Syndrome “Plus” (www.tourettesyndrome.net) and SchoolBehavior.com. Sheryl K. Pruitt, M.ED., ET/P, is an educational consultant and therapist. She co-authored the books Teaching the Tiger and Tigers, Too, which address neurologically impaired children.

A comprehensive resource guide, appendix, glossary of terms and acronyms, and index, along with an accompanying CD-ROM of charts, checklists, surveys, and reporting forms are included. While Challenging Kids, Challenged Teachers is filled with complex information, it will be easily understood by lay readers. It is an important resource for parents and professionals alike.

Penny Hastings