The "F-words" in Action - Clare DCD Sports Group
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OVERVIEW
The need for a sports group for children with Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD) in Clare was identified in late 2014 by a parent, because her child’s attempts to participate in established local sports activities groups were unsuccessful.

INTRODUCTION
DCD is a life-long motor skills disorder which impacts on a person’s ability to perform everyday tasks including dressing, writing and playing sports.

The need for a group for children with similar abilities and needs, to practice motor skills in a safe and secure environment and to meet other similar children was recognised. The parent, Occupational Therapist (Clare Children’s Services) and Disability Officer (Clare Sports Partnership) worked together to establish this group.

PROCEDURE
*On-going Feedback - children & parents *Core members meet bi-annually
*Between parents, coach & services *Needs-led basis
*Children with DCD (aged 8-14) - Clare Children’s Services & Primary Care
*Reception Model of Support
*Coach & 2 volunteers
*DCD Training provided - Cognitive Orientation to Occupational Performance (CO-OP) approach

Function
* Sports games
  *Burren walk – children had to plan trip, problem solve around potential anxieties e.g. getting lost
  *Opportunity to learn new skills e.g. cooking and pottery

Future
* The group provides an opportunity for children to experience and gain many abilities which will have a positive impact on their future life: friendships, skills, confidence and fun.
* One of the volunteers is a former client of the OT who has DCD. He is a role model for both the children and parents in the group.

Function
* Activities => Child & Parent and Child & Sibling
  * Parent Support Group =>coffee and a chat, information sharing, even nights out!

Fitness
Children with DCD are not as fit as other children (Rivilis et al., 2011). Sports activities have a fitness element to help improve their cardiovascular fitness. Good physical fitness is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Fun
* On-going feedback is sought from the children.
  * The coach is very skilful in transforming core stability exercises into more enjoyable

OUTCOMES
Children and parents were asked what they enjoyed about the group.

* Learning new skills
* Playing games and getting out for an hour or two
* Seeing my child being happy to join in...inclusion...meeting other mothers!
* I made new friends and liked a lot of the activities

Two participants gained sufficient confidence to join their local teams: soccer club and running club respectively, after completing the first block of 6 sessions.

CONCLUSION
The formation and functioning of this group is line with current best practice guidelines (Camden et al., 2015) which highlight the necessity to focus on the wide-ranging challenges for children with DCD and their families. It also emphasises the benefits of families and services collaborating together to offer evidence-based services promoting function, inspiring participation and preventing secondary issues.

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REFERENCES