

Chiropractic for the Mind of a Child

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Author's note: Many of our patients are unaware of the benefits of chiropractic care for children. There is also a lack of understanding of the potential benefit of the chiropractic adjustment on brain function. An extensive case series involving developmentally delayed children brings these two aspects of chiropractic care together. Drs. Cuthbert and Barras are to be congratulated for their excellent paper. Please feel free to use the following patient-education article for bulletin board displays, as a front-desk flyer, and/or as a lay-lecture handout.

Chiropractic care is best known for helping active adults overcome back pain, neck pain and headaches. While drug-free pain relief is a valuable service, the chiropractic adjustment offers additional benefits your patients may not be aware of. These benefits may include improved mental function, [as suggested by a recent study published in JMPT](#).¹

The study involved 157 children between 6 and 13 years of age with various forms of developmental delay. Their problems included poor memory, dyslexia, attention deficit, and hyperactivity. A battery of eight psychological tests was administered before and after chiropractic care. These tests measured various aspects of memory, orientation in space and time, visual and auditory perception, and muscular coordination.

Individually tailored chiropractic care lasted from five days to 18 months. The most common problems were misalignment or abnormal motion (subluxation) of the vertebrae of the neck or the bones of the skull. In addition to gentle adjustments for the correction of these subluxations, reflex techniques were used to improve coordination of the eyes (technically referred to as "binocular fusion"). Chiropractic techniques for improved function of the neck muscles were also brought into play.

After all treatment was completed, the psychological tests were repeated. As a group, the children improved on all eight tests and 20 areas of cognitive function. For example, on one of the memory tests, 82 percent of the children improved. According to the study, "their ability to concentrate, maintain focus and attention, and control impulsivity and their performance at home and school improved."

These encouraging results are part of a growing body of literature on the benefits of chiropractic care for developmentally delayed children.²⁻⁸ These benefits have long been available, regardless of ability to pay, at the [nonprofit Kentuckiana Children's Center](#) in Louisville, Ky.⁹ At this center, founded in 1957, doctors of chiropractic work cooperatively with medical doctors, dentists, nutritionists, speech therapists, counselors, educators and other professionals to help children overcome their developmental challenges.

The future of our society depends in large measure on what we do to develop the mind of the child today. Cooperation between the helping professions in the interest of health in general and children's mental development in particular will hopefully be the norm someday soon.

References

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APRIL 2010