

March 25, 2011

## Sensory Integration

### Medical Watch

Dina Bair  
WGN News

A new diagnosis that's helping drive kids forward. No longer misdiagnosed, the proper label puts kids on the path to success.

From the time he was a baby, Ryder was just different.

Jamie Tiplitsky, Ryder's Mom: "When Ryder was born he never met the milestones that other kids were meeting. So we would be in mom and tot classes and I would come home and think something is just a little bit off."

Early video shows him struggling to use his limbs together. Even in therapy, he just couldn't keep up.

Angelica Barraca, Occupational Therapist, Pathways Center: "And he came in not exploring a lot, a little bit frozen. You looked in his eyes and he definitely had wonderful ideas floating around, he just wasn't able to engage those ideas because processing all this was just too overwhelming at times."

Ryder's mother wasn't overwhelmed, just inspired to get him help.

Jamie Tiplitsky: "Pretty much everybody around me said, 'Just wait, don't compare.' I just kind of felt in my gut that something was a little bit off."

"We saw pediatric neurologists and a developmental pediatrician and they did say there's probably something going on, but they thought it was all muscular. We did x-rays, muscle biopsies to see if there was something wrong with his body. He favored one side so they thought maybe **cerebral palsy**."

Other children are diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or learning disabilities. They get medication but they don't get better.

Angelica Barraca : "The goal would be to make sure that this child is being the best that they can possibly be. And then the great benefit is that maybe later on increase anxiety is avoided. And medication is then avoided."

Through proper therapy Ryder gets better every day. Diagnosed with sensory integration dysfunction, also called sensory processing disorder, Ryder had difficulty with his surroundings and his own body. Not anymore.

Angelica Barraca: "By doing it he's learning and the more he learns, the more he does, but we had to break through that first step of him doing."

"He's happy, he's smart and funny, he's able to go to regular school. He's got friends, he's incredibly charming. We're just so grateful that his personality has finally come out and everybody else can see what we've seen from the beginning with Ryder."

Patients at Pathways come in as early as infancy and can get therapy through adulthood. It's better to start young, but any help can make a positive difference.

**To learn more about Pathways and sensory integration (SI) therapy, check out: [www.pathwaysawareness.org](http://www.pathwaysawareness.org)**

**A checklist for parents to bring to a doctor/pediatrician with concerns: <http://pathwaysawareness.org/for-parents/sensory-integration/what-to-do-next> These checklists are tailored to the child's age - (1-3 months, 4-6 months, 7-9 months, up to 6+ years)**

**A national directory of qualified SI therapists: <http://pathwaysawareness.org/resources/find-a-pediatric-therapist>**

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