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Persistence of primitive reflexes and motor delays in preschool children

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Objective: Persistence of primitive reflexes can disturb natural development and involve difficulties in social and educational children's life. They can also impact on psychomotor development. Mature responses in a child's psychomotor progress can only occur if the central nervous system itself has reached maturity. The process consist the transition made from brain stem reflex response to cortically controlled response. This study defines the occurrence of primitive reflexes in healthy 4–6 years old children and analyzes the impact of survived primitive reflexes on psychomotor development.

Methods: The study involved 35 participants' aged 4–6 years healthy preschool children. In the examination there were used primitive reflexes tests by Sally Goddard for children and motor proficiency test (MOT 4–6 test) in 18 tasks.

Results: Over a half 65% preschool children had survived the primitive reflexes on the trace level. Eleven percent of examined children had no retained primitive reflexes. According to the psychomotor ability, 9% of the children were in the category of altered development, 29% in delayed development, 59% in normal and 3% in very good development. The greater the severity of the reflex, the motor efficiency was lower ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Primitive reflexes integration therapy should be introduced in children's with low psychomotor skills. Primitive reflexes routinely tested which can contribute to improved early psychomotor development in children with needs, thus preventing many difficulties which children can encounter within their social and school life.

Biography

PhD candidate in Department of Physiotherapy in Wrocław Medical University, Poland. Practitioner as a therapist Bobath Therapy in Neurological Dysfunction as well as Developmental Movement Programme INPP. Her main research interest is persistence of primitive reflexes and coexistence of developmental and postural disorders. Author and co-author the publications in this area. Lecturer on national and international conferences.

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