

A.I.P.P.S. approach to ADHD: an intervention model
alternative/complementary to the session and to the drugs

Sport practise as intervention setting: Lodetti - AIPPS model and
its
practical applications

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**A.I.P.P.S. APPROACH TO ADHD:
AN INTERVENTION MODEL ALTERNATIVE/COMPLEMENTARY
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Problems with ADHD children:

- difficulty in keeping attention: although filtering the information is not a problem for them, the major difficulty is the quantity, the duration and maintenance of the attention.
- difficulty in impulse control:
- difficulty in waiting their own turn.
- difficulty in delaying the gratification
- problems with disruptive behaviour: these children are more active, both when awake and asleep, and they over-respond to stimuli.
- difficulty in using the rule-governed behaviour



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Models and treatments for ADHD

We lean towards a multi-factorial model (Pennington 2005) and the presence of several deficits that cannot explain singularly the variability of behaviour and cognitive difficulties of these children

Considering two models together:

- **neuropsychological** model (Barkley) that brings back the difficulties to two kind of deficit: an inhibition deficit and an executive functions deficit: they involve the prefrontal, dorsal neostriatal and caudate circuit.
- **motivational** model (Sonuga-Barke), that brings back the difficulties to the gratification delaying ability (“Delay aversion” DAV): it involves the anterior cingulate and orbitofrontal cortex, ventral striatum and accumbens circuit.

Considering this multi-factoriality we need multi-modal treatments that consider both cognitive and motivational aspects.



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A.I.P.P.S. approach: the birth of the “sport game room”

Within the above mentioned problems related to ADHD, A.I.P.P.S. detected in the practice of sport a possible work setting since sport can modify some behaviour and attention difficulties these children have, acting as a multi-modal context in which the cognitive, problem solving, motivational-attributinal and relational aspects can be handled by a clinical sport psychologist in order to intervene on the difficulties that he observes looking at the children



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Sport context characteristics supporting the behaviour regulation

Each sport has a strong rules context: if you want to participate you must follow them, otherwise the game cannot exist.

Sport is highly motivating for every child: within the growing process in which a child needs to play to express himself and to experiment with his body and his relationships, playing evolves into sport.

It acts as a codified play, regulated by precise interactions and rules

Practicing a sport a child is introduced in a group of peers: to be part of the group means share the practice, its rituals, techniques, strategies and follow its rules: if you don't follow them you are 'out'.



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The birth of the sport game room

Starting from the analysis of these elements, that can be appropriately read, used and evaluated through psychological clinical skills, and from the goal reached in Carlo's case,

in Milan in January 2006, from the collaboration between A.I.P.P.S. and the Crotti Graphology School, the Sport game room, was created, conceived and directed by Dr. Lodetti



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Sport game room

It's aimed at children between 4 and 7 years old.

It uses a sport setting and clinical psychological instruments to detect behaviour, attention and relationship difficulties in children of this age

It is focused on reading the behaviour and the movement in this context and also on the drawing and graphic symbol reading

It structures the sport and game practice, introducing corrections through the handling of the way of communicating and the getting in touch with other people, the handling of game rules and role playing techniques in order to intervene on the observed difficulties using the sport context itself as auto-corrective.



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How the game room operates

Through this methodology the game room is really a clinical laboratory of intervention on the first ADHD symptoms detected in pre-school age and it's a prevention and monitoring place for children of this age.

In the game room children start with fencing, with all its involvements as dealing with the fight and aggressiveness, observing rules, respect and relationship with peers, attention times, technique learning, problem solving and causal attribution.

Moreover children can express themselves through drawing which at this age, together with playing, is the preferred way of communication and knowing their inner world.



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First case: Carlo

Carlo is 6 years old and he has a middle degree ADHD

The purpose of the work done with him through fencing is focused on rules acceptance and on the increase of attention times.

The work has been done through the intervention methodology of the transactional Analysis with role playing techniques, dramatizing, positive reinforcements, redistribution of the defence mechanisms through fencing

Reached goals:

- attendance times in the gym have increased and the attention raised from 10 minutes to 1 hour.
- better ability to interact with peers (less aggressive behaviour)
- higher ability in follow the rules and accept frustration



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Second case: Luciano

Luciano is 4 and half years old and he has ADHD and DOP symptoms.

During the intervention the primary goals consist in letting the environment get familiar for him, making him accept the rules and reduce his aggressive behaviour towards the playmates and the objects.

Reinforcements have been used within a behaviour 'contract'.

Goals reached: although he didn't attend continuously the game room, a reduction in motor hyperactivity and a higher effort to pay attention has been noticed.

Regarding the rules acceptance, through the use of material reinforcements a form of contractual skill and the ability in obeying the rules if they were put with coherence and firmness emerged; he remained not manageable in unstructured situations



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Conclusion

Sport Game Room operates from 8 years in Milan and its neighbourhood

We have good results and they are objectively tracked thank to the reading of children draws (“graphic signum”).

The beginning draws are compared with final draws .

We can read a maturity of body model, more self-confidence in relationship with other children and with adults, more self-confidence into their own .



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Conclusion

Sport Game Room is also a great instrument to prevent dyslexia and bad writing.

Into the Sport Game Room we make a lot of exercises for thin movement and for the coordination between eye and hand.

Children begin more self confident in these movements that will be important when they'll approach writing and reading.



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Thanks for your attention

