

Choose Rhythmic Movement Training

by Sonia Story

As parents of children with challenges—such as autism, ADD/ADHD, dyslexia, developmental delay and sensory disorders—we continually seek solutions. We want tangible, noticeable results in better health, easier learning, and greater emotional well-being. Something we can do with our children that is effective, healthy, and enjoyable—Rhythmic Movement Training (RMT) – offers movement instead of medication.

What is RMT?

It is a system of simple movements that create profound and often surprising changes in the brain and body. It's developer, Swedish psychiatrist Harald Blomberg, MD, says that RMT establishes new neural connections, and helps connect areas of the brain for optimal functioning. He should know. Motivated by his own challenges from childhood polio, Dr. Blomberg spent years studying rhythmic movements with movement therapist Kerstin Linde. Dr. Blomberg saw how rhythmic movement helped people of all ages with balance, learning, development, and emotional, physical and mental health.

When Dr. Blomberg began teaching these movements to his psychiatric patients, he was astounded by improvements he saw. He even had patients recovering from schizophrenia and protracted psychosis. In spite of criticism from fellow psychiatrists who routinely prescribed drugs, he continued using movement in his practice and learned movements for reflex integration as well.

What are RMT's Benefits?

Dr. Blomberg has a 20-year track record of success in Sweden helping children and adults overcome ADHD and other learning challenges through RMT. According to Blomberg, RMT affects the brain/body system by:

- Establishing links from the brainstem and cerebellum to higher brain centers for impulse control, thinking, and emotional balance
- Increasing nerve nets for faster processing of sensory input
- Balancing neurotransmitter output
- Enhancing coordination between the sensory, motor and nervous systems
- Increasing attention
- Uplifting mood and enhancing health, posture and stamina

Example:

Dr. Blomberg shares the story of a boy who used RMT to overcome severe ADHD. *“One of my patients had been on medication for six years since he was diagnosed with ADHD at age six. In spite of the medication his symptoms only got worse. He had severe temper tantrums, severe attention problems, impulsivity, etc. He attended school in a special class with seven students and five adults. After eight months of doing RMT, he joined a regular class and after 18 months he functioned perfectly. Recently he went back to the child psychiatric clinic to get his diagnosis cancelled. The diagnostic tests established he no longer had ADHD.”*

Note: Dr. Blomberg also acknowledges the importance of diet and nutrition in overcoming ADHD and in this boy's case he also recommended nutritional oils and supplements to support the process.

Developmental Delays and Stress

Dr. Blomberg believes that one cause of delays is stress in utero and infancy. Stress can disrupt the automatic rhythmic and reflexive baby movements. Among their many “jobs,” infant rhythmic and reflex movements facilitate the growth of brain and nerve networks, develop the sensory systems, and train the body for coordinated balance and movement—all basic building blocks for later learning skills.

Disruption in the rhythmic and reflex system can cause persistent challenges for the growing child. Dr. Blomberg states that if the disruptions are severe enough, the brain is unable to mature properly, causing conditions like ADHD, dyslexia and developmental delays.

Unfortunately for today's children, baby movements can become disrupted in many ways, including: C-Sections; sonograms; electromagnetic pollution; illness; injury; vaccines; environmental toxins; and restricted movement from time spent in plastic carriers, car seats, walkers and swings.

How Does RMT Work?

RMT involves reflex integration and rhythmic movement exercises. Some are experienced passively by the child, others require active participation. A very basic example is

“Passive Rhythmic Stimulation from the Feet” — With the child lying on his back, hold the feet or ankles and rock his body back and forth along the head-to-toe midline. This experience is often quite calming for the child and can be both diagnostic and therapeutic. A lack of flow along the whole length of the body can indicate muscle tension due to under-developed spinal and neck reflexes. The movement helps to mature neural pathways and reflexes.

A Movement Program involves learning various activities through classes or private sessions, and applying them at home on a regular basis. In general, parents do the exercises with their children three to five days a week for 10 to 30 minutes, depending on the severity of the challenges. Consistency on the part of parents and children is necessary for a period of six to eighteen months to obtain solid improvement.

Worth the Effort

Most parents find that doing RMT is a joyful way to connect with their children. Seeing children blossom into youngsters who are able to focus, learn, get along with others, take on challenges, and enjoy everyday life is well worth the investment in time.

For More Information

Dr. Blomberg's method is now available in the United States. Movement practitioners, OTs, and parents are reporting tremendous gains in their children and clients. To learn more, or to find a RMT practitioner, visit the Rhythmic Movement Training International website at www.rhythmicmovement.com. For information about Dr. Blomberg, visit www.haraldblomberg.com.

*Sonia Story is an RMT practitioner and Director of **Move Play Thrive** in Kingston, WA. Join her for one of her trainings. (See Upcoming Events) You can reach Sonia at 360.535.9991, or by email: sonia@moveplaythrive.com.*