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Persistent Primitive Reflex and Developmental Delay in the School-Aged Child

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Highlights

- Primitive reflexes include Moro, rooting, palmar grasp, asymmetric tonic neck reflex, spinal Galant, tonic labyrinthine reflex, Landau, and symmetric tonic neck reflex and should naturally inhibit during the first years of life.

- There is a growing body of evidence-based research suggesting an association between persistent primitive reflexes and neurodevelopmental delays in the school-aged child such as learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder, sensory processing disorder, and dyslexia.
- Clinicians should be aware of this association and be prepared to provide targeted developmental surveillance at every well-child visit along with the periodic administration of standardized developmental screening tools to promote early detection and intervention.

Abstract

Primitive reflexes are an integral part of a newborn's survival mechanism and will naturally integrate during the first years of life as more mature postural reflexes emerge. A persistent primitive reflex can interfere with the development of motor skills, cognitive processing, and emotional regulation. Research suggests an association between persistent primitive reflexes and neurodevelopmental delays such

as learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and processing disorders. Developmental surveillance and screening support early recognition and guide intervention. More research is needed regarding the usefulness of reflex integration techniques for improving motor, cognitive, and emotional functioning and better overall quality of life.

Keywords

[inhibited primitive reflexes](#) •

[neurodevelopmental delay](#) •

[persistent primitive reflexes](#) •

[primitive reflexes](#) •

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