



School Services

# School Guide for Students with Conversion Disorder

## What is Conversion Disorder?

Conversion Disorder is when a person suddenly has a physical illness that cannot be explained. The illness usually occurs after a traumatic event. The following is a list of possible symptoms students may experience:

- Unable to use an arm or leg
- Loss of sight, mild to severe
- Unable to speak/change in tone of voice
- Unable to hear, mild to severe
- Falling down
- Problems swallowing
- Numbness
- Trembling

With treatment, these symptoms usually go away in about two weeks. The symptoms are not life threatening, but can cause students problems with day to day activities.

## How Can Conversion Disorder affect School Performance?

Children with Conversion Disorder are encouraged to attend school unless they are hospitalized. Students, who have not received treatment, may not be able to continue daily activities. If the student is not able to function school may be affected in these areas:

- Poor attendance
- Falling grades
- Withdrawn from other students
- Not able to participate in class activities
- Visiting the school nurse more often
- Poor attention/concentration

## How Can Schools assist students with Conversion Disorder?

### Academic

- Provide assistance for the student under a 504 plan or add accommodations to the student's current IEP.
- Reduce student's work load, emphasize quality vs. quantity, while the student is transitioning back to school.
- Create a plan with the student's family and outside medical team to continue school work while student is in treatment.

- Give student extra time to complete assignments while they are in treatment and during the initial transition back to school.
- Provide student with a hard copy of any notes, student may be missing pieces of instruction due to absences or emotional state.
- Break down any long reading assignments because student's attention and concentration may decrease as they deal with underline emotional problems.

### **Social/ Emotional**

- Allow student to sit in the front of the room, close to the door in case they need to leave for support during class.
- Provide student with counseling at school
- Allow student to pick a support person at school if any problems arise and his/her therapist is not available.
- Encourage student to participate in extracurricular activities and other school functions
- Have the student reintegrate back to school slowly if they have been out for a long period of time.

### **Physical**

- Children with Conversion Disorder are expected to be a part of the daily school routine with support as needed.

### **School Services Department**

Children's Health

Children's Medical Center

Dallas Campus: 214-456-7733

Plano Campus: 469-303-4670