ESSENTIAL TREMOR CHILDREN EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE

Essential Tremor is a progressive neurological disease characterized by involuntary, rhythmic muscle movements (oscillations). Unlike Parkinson's disease, it is an action tremor, meaning it becomes noticeable when a child uses their hands to write, eat, draw, or hold a position. It primarily affects the hands and arms, but can also impact the head (shaking 'yes-yes' or 'no-no'), voice, or balance. Symptoms worsen with stress, fatigue, fever, or low blood sugar.

> Our Mission: Empowering parents and children to navigate the educational system so that children with Essential Tremor (ET) can achieve their full academic potential. We aim to educate our school systems about Essential Tremor and work with legislators and educators on programs to inform principals, teachers, and school nurses.

HOW TO TAKE ACTION

Advancing Change with DSF

- Parents are encouraged to utilize resources such as the 'Stop ET Bullying' campaign.
- Enroll in the Essential Tremor Policy Network
- Share: Participate in our "ET Stories" campaign to put a public face on this condition.
- Donate: Support our cost-free school brochure distribution by visiting the DSF Donation Page

Visit **diannshaddoxfoundation.org/children-ed-intiative** to:

+ Sign up for the Essential Tremor Policy Network

+ Learn more about Stop ET Bullying

+ Access more information about children with Essential Tremor

+ Contact your members of Congress and State Lawmakers

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DIANN SHADDOX FOUNDATION
FOR ESSENTIAL TREMOR

EMPOWERING EVERY CLASSROOM: A GUIDE TO ESSENTIAL TREMOR IN CHILDREN

Strategic Steps to Teach Your School

- Schedule an Initial Meeting: Meet with the school principal, classroom teachers, and the school nurse before the school year starts.
- Present Medical Documentation: Share written materials and diagnostic paperwork from your pediatric neurologist to legitimize the condition.
- Identify Classroom Signs: Explain that a child's shaking is physical, not due to nervousness, behavioral issues, or lack of focus.
- Educate Against Bullying: Partner with teachers to foster classroom empathy and prevent teasing related to tremors.

Recommended Classroom Accommodations

Simple adjustments can radically change an ET student's academic experience without disrupting the rest of the class:

- **Writing & Assignments:**
  - Allow tablets, laptops, or speech-to-text software for assignments and tests.
  - Provide pre-printed class notes or outlines to minimize heavy copying tasks.
  - Provide rubber grips, weighted pens, or wide-barrel pencils to help steady the hand.
  - Public Speaking: Allow audio/video recorded assignments or small-group presentations instead of forcing a student to speak in front of a quiet, large room if their voice trembles.

- **Testing Conditions:**
  - Offer extended time on tests that require manual dexterity, like fill-in-the-bubble Scantrons.
  - Allow oral testing or alternative demonstrations of knowledge when fine motor skills are compromised.

- **Daily Activities:**
  - Use non-slip mats or two-handled cups in cafeterias or extra support in art class.
  - Focus grading criteria on the *content* of the student's work rather than the neatness of their handwriting or physical projects.
  - Practical Work: Pair the student with an assistant or peer during science labs and art classes.