

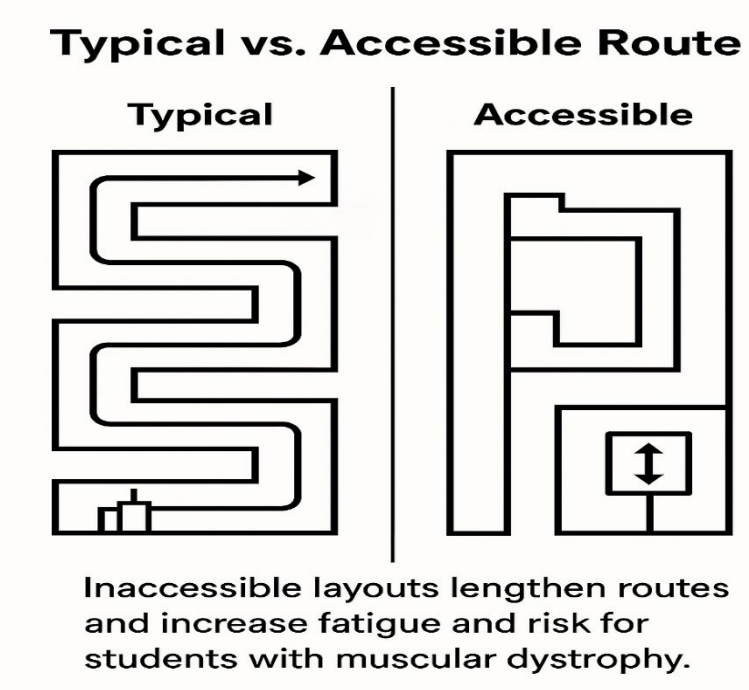
Interclass Transitions for Muscular Dystrophy Students: Impacts & Solutions

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Muscular Dystrophy Background

Muscular dystrophy is a condition that is described as genetic neuromuscular disease that leads to progressive destruction of muscle fibers, which causes weakness and loss of independent mobility and the end result is the use of a wheelchair or other mobility supports.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) that causes boys to be unable to walk in late childhood or early adolescence is one of the most common forms of muscular dystrophy in school-age boys and which directly disrupt the mobility in schools. This implies that activities that are commonly done daily like walking long corridors, climbing stairs and carting books become steep or even impossible as the muscles lose their power; as it is especially the case in the routine fast school life.



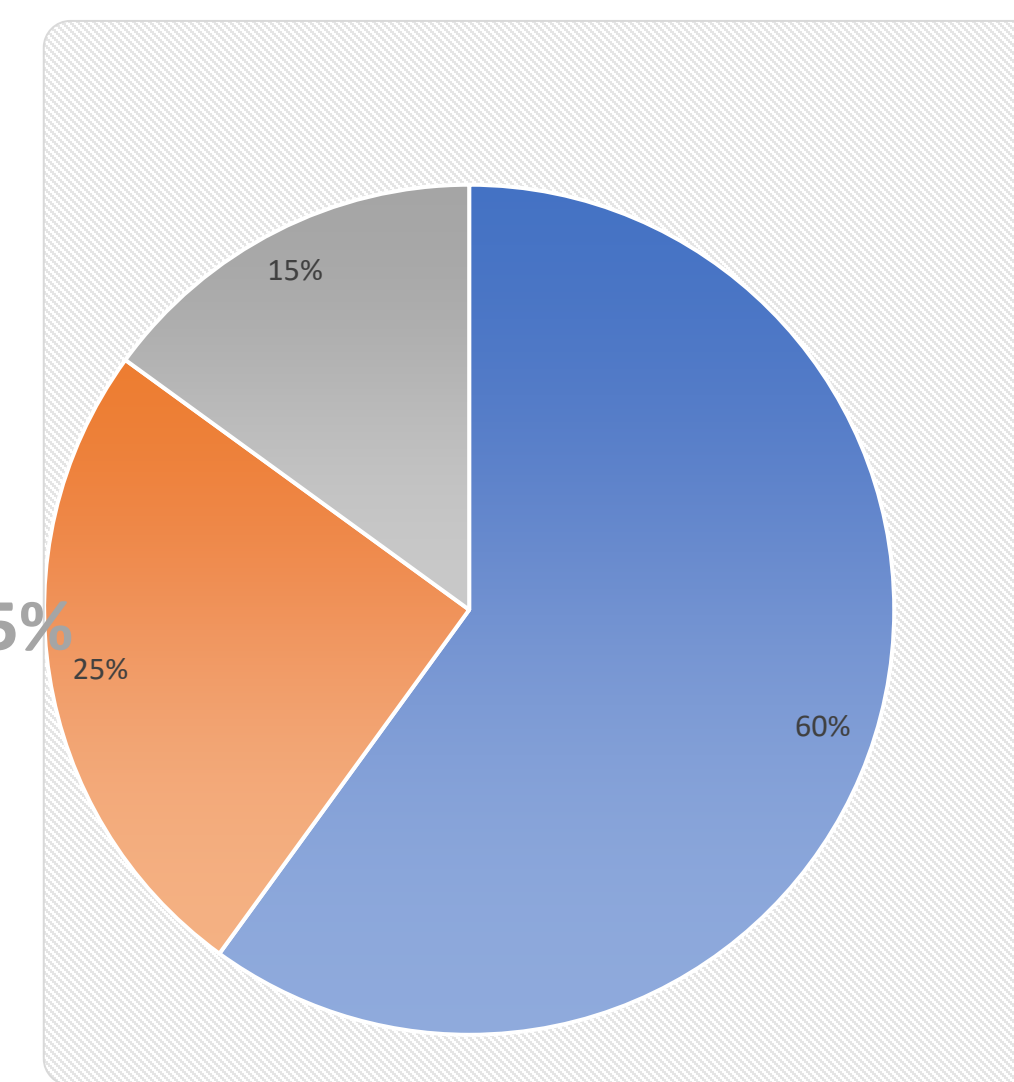
Layouts that are inaccessible extend the path and make the process more fatigued and dangerous to the muscular dystrophic students.

Academic Impact

- The pace of walking is slow, mobility aids are used, and accessory routes are used, which usually lower real instructional time and results in habitual lateness or premature class exits.
- The teachers and administrators can react to this by making schedules simpler, lightening course loads, or grouping classes together in a single space, which have the unintended effect of restricting access to higher-level classes, electives, and extracurricular education.
- With time, recurrent delays in movements and missed schooling may have an influence on the academic development and lead to the decrease of expectations, despite a potential normal level of intellectual abilities.

KEY

In Class Learning-60%
Transition between classes-25%
Rest and fatigue management- 15%



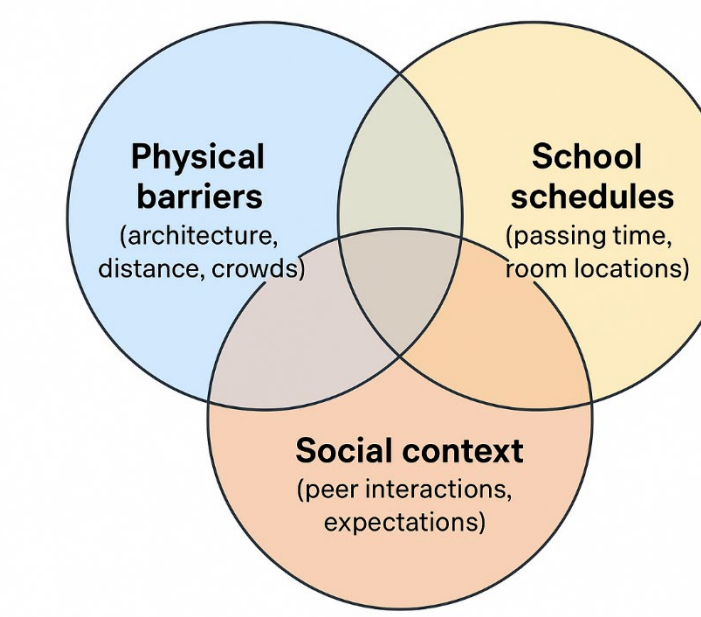
The mobility needs may eat up a major part of school time, causing lack of time and energy to study.

Social & Emotional Impact

- Hallways with numerous people running through them cause higher risks of falling, running into people, and unexpected injuries, particularly concerning students with weaker gait or wheelchairs and walkers.
- Raising their hands to use elevators alone, skipping classes, or using alternative ways to go to school may make students feel like they are not the same as their peers and they will not have spontaneous social lives.
- The resulting consequences of avoiding clubs, sports, field trips, and other school events, which involve additional movement, are few friends, social isolation, and poor quality of life.

Long-Term Consequences

- The trend of impediment to movement and involvement in school could build anticipations regarding college, occupation, and independent living in that it might wear off students who would in any case be scholarly enough to explore opportunities.
- Conversely, with convenient environments and high anticipations, confidence, self-advocacy and realistic higher education and work planning may be fostered and have required mobility supports.



These obstacles are a result of the interaction of physical, social, time pressure, and design. context, not only from the impairment itself.

Environmental & Schedule Changes

- Install and repair ramps, lifts, automatic doors, enlarged door frames, accessible bathrooms, and furniture design that ensures easy access of wheelchairs between classes.
- Make aisles free of debris and plan paths which are as short as possible, and which do not require steep ramps or stairs.
- Group key school classes in areas with easy access or on the same level to minimize the transitions and the number of them.
- Give additional time to pass, allow graceful exit of classes few minutes earlier or schedule times of arrival so that there is less congestion and dangerous situations.

Technology, Policy, and Curriculum

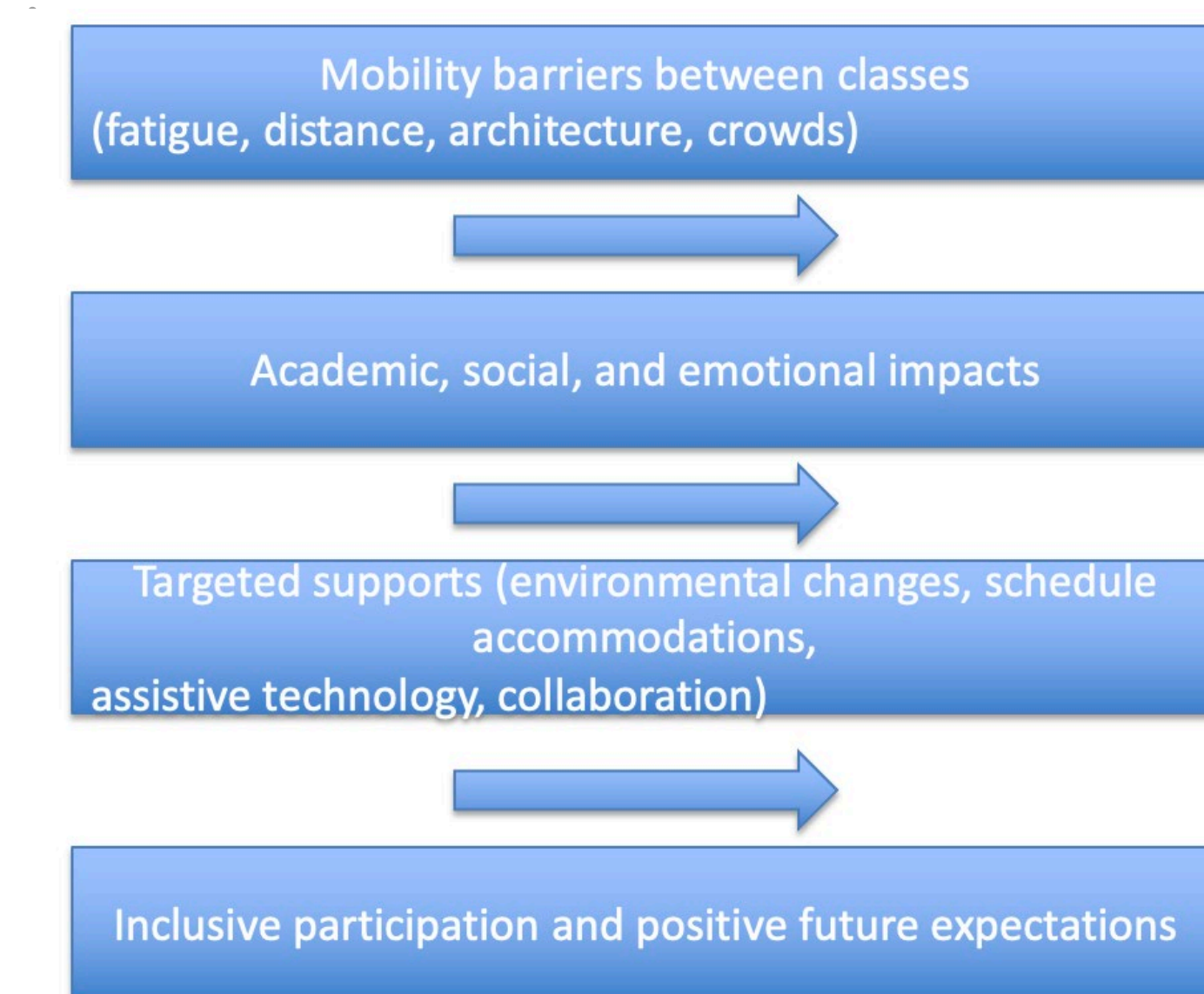
- Only allow more time on tests and assignments, use of alternatives to handwriting (typewriting, oral answers) and provision of digital notes and material resources such that academic demands are not compromised through academic fatigue.
- Light weight laptops or tablets, speech to text, and digital textbooks can be implemented to assist in reducing the weight of materials being carried about as well as, assist in accessing content at various locations.
- Post the resources of the classes of shares online in the learning management systems or the learning devices because when information fails to pass between periods of rest or slow learning, they can be corrected in future.
- These accommodations should be incorporated in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans and should be standardized, written, and not low expectations based.

Collaboration & Societal Paradigm

- Use social model of disability: do not think of disability as an individual medical condition, but as the result of an impairment of interaction with the environment and with institutional forces.
- Get to know that inaccessible stairs, rigid passing time and congested aisles actively foster the barriers to participation and equity concerns of the students with muscular dystrophy.
- Assemble a cross-disciplinary team consisting of health professionals (neurologists, physiatrists, physical and occupational therapists), teachers and administrators to develop safe mobility, energy-conservation, and written accommodations with specific focus on the issue of class-to-class transition.

Student, Family, & whole School Voice

- Create effective family-school interactions; parents and caregivers tend to be knowledgeable about the patterns of fatigue and mobility daily and can help to modify the support as the condition progresses.
- Hold regular meetings with the students especially in adolescence to check the path that the hallway takes, the time of passing, location of the classrooms and access to extra curriculum and encourage the students to advocate themselves with leaving early or utilize other paths.
- Take action early in meetings, field trips, events and sports performances by organizing easy transportation methods, seating and access modes and transforming that which would have appeared as omissions to places of inclusion and leadership into inclusion.



Based on evidence, it can be modified that most of the barriers are not an inevitable result of muscular dystrophy, but rather features of the school environment that can be altered.

Conclusion

- The primary and complex impediment to interclass mobility among muscular dystrophic students is the relative weakness of muscles, fatigue, school structure, restrictive time schedules, and social conditions.
- These obstacles would not only affect the access of students to classrooms but also affect the time of teaching, safety, relationships with peers, emotional status and long-term education pathways.
- These barriers can be greatly eliminated through environmental changes, accommodations of schedules, curricular and technological accommodations and collaborative planning to facilitate meaningful participation.
- The issue of mobility between classes is hence a major move towards ensuring that the schools are inclusive such that, learners with muscular dystrophy can learn converse and flourish just like their counterparts.

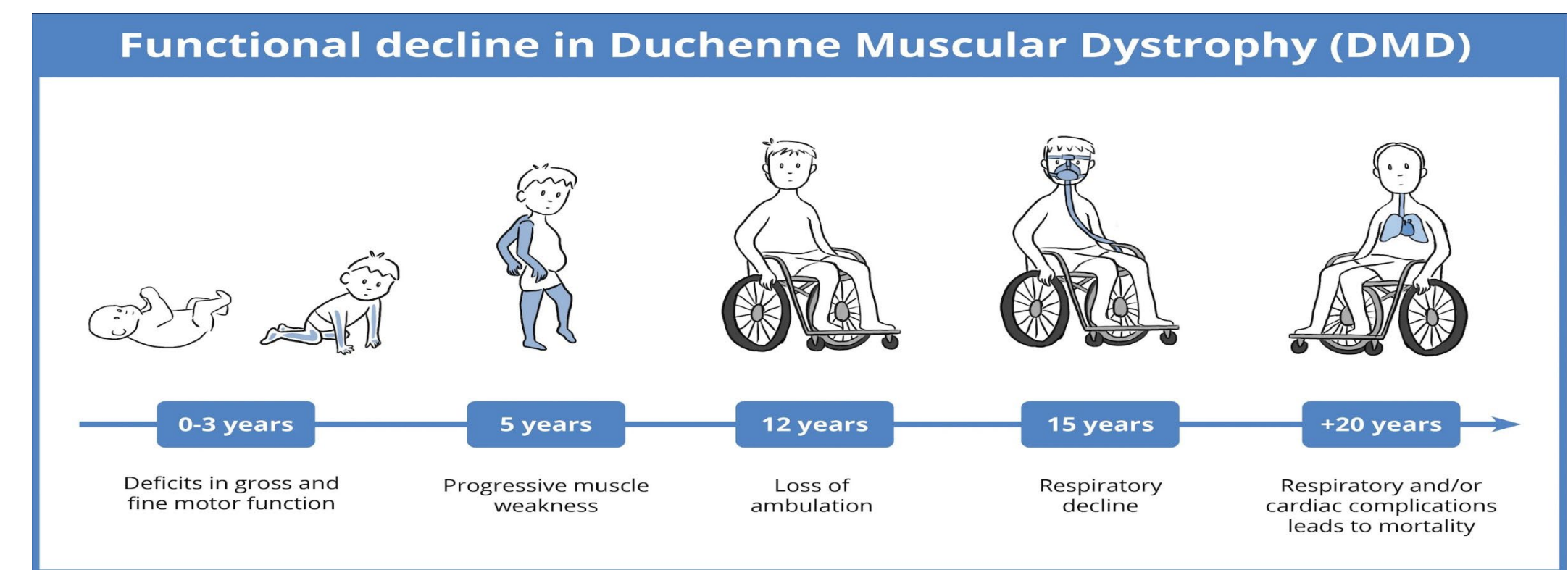
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Getting Between Classes

- Muscular dystrophic students are frequently required to walk across different classrooms several times over the course of the day, and within the strict passing timeframes, which presupposes brisk walking and effortless ascending the staircases.
- The impossibility of access to schools with long corridors, increased stories, heavy manual doors, small doorways, and even stairs are significant impediments to timely and safe transitions.
- To students who walk at a slow pace, have braces, walkers, or wheelchairs, it may not be possible to make it to the next class on time without assistance or schedule adjustments.

