

**DEVELOPMENTAL AND BEHAVIOURAL PEDIATRICS**
**POOR SCHOLASTIC PERFORMANCE  
AND SCHOOL REFUSAL**

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**Abstract:** Poor scholastic performance in children may result from a multitude of causes like intellectual disability, neurodevelopmental disorders and socio-cultural factors. It is important to identify the underlying reason(s) for a child's poor scholastic performance through a multidisciplinary evaluation. The treatment approach should address the specific cause(s) and may involve remedial education, counselling, medication, or socio cultural accommodations. Early intervention and a comprehensive treatment plan are crucial to help the child perform to their full potential.

School refusal is a complex issue that requires an individualised approach for each child. It is a heterogeneous, dimensional construct. Each child with school refusal is unique and presents with their own set of challenges. To effectively address school refusal, it is crucial to identify the precipitating factors, perpetuating factors, as well as underlying causes which can span across various domains. Identifying the best fit between the child and the school is an important aspect to be considered. The school re-entry process requires a collaborative team approach involving the psychiatrist/ paediatrician, the child, the family and the school. "Whole school interventions" are the need of the hour to improve the overall school retention rates.

**Keywords:** Poor scholastic performance, School refusal, Child, Learning disabilities.

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**Points to Remember**

- *When approaching children with poor scholastic performance, a comprehensive assessment is needed to identify the exact causes, which can include psychosocial factors like family issues, as well as biological factors like learning disorders.*
- *Specific learning disabilities are disorders in the neural processes that affect a person's ability to speak, listen, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations.*
- *The goal is to provide individualised, multisensory support that plays to the student's strengths while addressing their specific learning needs, in order to improve academic performance.*
- *School refusal is characterized by a child's extreme distress and difficulty attending school and is distinct from truancy. Such children are usually aware of their absence and try to persuade parents to let them stay home, rather than concealing their absence.*
- *Early intervention is key to prevent long-term negative impacts on the child's social, emotional, and educational development.*

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