



# The Boy Who Could Run But Not Walk: Real Hope for Children with Early Brain Damage

*Karen Pape M.D.*

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In the tradition of Oliver Sacks and Norman Doidge, Dr. Karen Pape, a respected neonatologist and clinical neuroscientist, demonstrates that neuroplasticity, the ability of the brain to change and heal itself, can transform children's lives, just as it has transformed the outlook for adults suffering from brain injuries like stroke or Alzheimer's. With profound implications for the nearly seventeen million children and adults worldwide living with cerebral palsy, *The Boy Who Could Run But Not Walk* demonstrates that cerebral palsy is not an incurable condition. The movement disorders are a physical habit that *can* be changed, with a lot of hard work. These stories of children's recovery and improvements are a revelation?surprising, inspiring and illuminating, offering real hope for some of the world's most vulnerable children. The significance of the title: *The Boy Who Could Run But Not Walk* demonstrates the power of unconscious assumptions in medicine and science. The boy had cerebral palsy affecting one side of his body and he learned to walk badly with poor balance, but he was also able to play in a competitive junior soccer league. Dr Pape explains that we walk and run with the same parts of the brain. This means that if the run is normal, then the brain has recovered. The explanation is simple. He learned to walk with a damaged, immature brain. He learned to play soccer with a recovered, more mature brain. Doctors are trained to look at the abnormal walk, not more competent, later learned skills. This book offers readers a new understanding of **how the baby brain grows** and recovers differently than an adult brain.

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