

WHAT IS DYSPLEXIA?

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

Source: International Dyslexia Association

WHAT ARE SOME EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF DYSPLEXIA?

- **SPEAKING:** Child uses a smaller vocabulary and simpler sentences than others of the same age.
- **LISTENING:** Child has difficulty understanding directions and obtaining information.
- **MEMORY:** Child has difficulty in accurately imitating sentences and retelling stories.
- **PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS:** Child shows little appreciation of rhymes or other similarities involving the sounds of words.
- **LITERACY:** Child shows little interest in books, stories, letters, and games with words or sounds.

• **FAMILY:** Parent or older sibling had difficulty learning to read.

Source: Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children (National Research Council, 1998).

INTERVENTION RESOURCES

1. 0-3 years of age: Child Find 908-964-5303
2. 3-21 years of age: Contact the Child Study Team in your local school district
3. Statewide Parent Advocacy Network: 973-642-8100
4. International Dyslexia Association: www.interdys.org

WHAT CAN PARENTS AND EARLY EDUCATORS DO FOR A CHILD WHO IS AT RISK FOR READING DIFFICULTIES?

- Stimulate language use by conversing frequently with the child
- Ask questions that require more than a "yes" or "no" answer
- Extend vocabulary by introducing new words and their meanings on a daily basis
- Deepen comprehension skills by reading aloud and discussing what was read
- Stimulate phonological awareness through language play: rhyming games, songs and nursery rhymes
- Help children learn to identify letters, print them and know how they sound
- Seek evaluations and early intervention from qualified professionals

FACTS ABOUT DYSPLEXIA

- Reading disabilities occur almost as often in boys as in girls, and in all ethnic and socioeconomic groups
- Many dyslexics are of average or above-average intelligence
- Studies show that brain activity during reading can often differ for dyslexic and non-dyslexic individuals
- Among special education students with learning disabilities, 70-80% have difficulty with reading, often in conjunction with math disabilities or attention deficits
- The reading skills of most students with reading disabilities improve steadily over time, but catching up to classmates usually requires a great deal of additional instruction and practice that is highly structured and intensive

EARLY LITERACY INTERVENTION: WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



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WHICH OF THESE PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP A READING DISABILITY BY THIRD GRADE?

- Although most children learn to read successfully, a substantial proportion (estimates vary from 7% to 17%) have difficulty that is severe enough to leave them at least a year behind their classmates by third grade.
- Children who do not read adequately by third grade rarely ever catch up to their peers.
- Several warning signs of future reading disabilities can be identified in preschool and kindergarten children by alert parents, preschool educators, and other trained professionals.
- Providing early intervention to children who appear to be at risk for dyslexia is recommended as a way to prevent reading disabilities or lessen their severity.

Source: Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children (National Research Council, 1998)

Read more at www.ida-dyslexia.org

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