

What Is Dyslexia?



Family Literacy Resources

Pennsylvania Department
of Education

A Definition

“Dyslexia 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.”

Adopted by the IDA Board of Directors, Nov. 12, 2002.

This Definition is also used by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).

Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity

<http://www.dyslexia.yale.edu>

Understood

www.understood.org

Click “Reading Assist” – bottom left – to see and hear information.

Reading Rockets

www.readingrockets.org/atoz

International Dyslexia Association at www.ida.org

IDA Dyslexia Handbook: *What Every Family Should Know*

<http://ida.org/ida-dyslexia-handbook>

American Academy of Pediatrics Early Literacy Toolkit

<http://littoolkit.aap.org/Pages/home.aspx>

PA Branch of the International Dyslexia Association

(PBIDA) at www.pbida.org/

PaTTAN) PA Training & Technical Assistance Network

(PaTTAN) Dyslexia Pilot Program at

www.pattan.net/category/Projects/page/Dyslexia.html

Dyslexia and Early Literacy Intervention

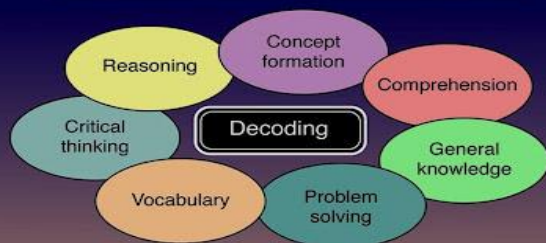


As parents of children with dyslexia,
we have seen firsthand that early
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Daphne Uliana and Diane Reott
Co-Founders

PA Dyslexia Literacy Coalition

Sea of Strengths Model of Dyslexia



FACTS ABOUT READING & DYSLEXIA



WORDS OF ADVICE FROM PARENTS TO PARENTS

Reading

- * Human brains are naturally wired to speak; they are not naturally wired to read and write.
- * The National Reading Panel has identified a large body of research recommending the explicit teaching of the alphabet and phonics as part of comprehensive reading instruction programs in kindergarten and 1st grade.
- * ...alphabetic knowledge in kindergarten is the single best predictor of reading success.
- * While strong word-reading skills don't fully equip students for advanced comprehension of texts beyond a third-grade level, they are absolutely necessary for it.
- * Kindergarten programs should be designed so that **all** children develop the prerequisite phonological, vocabulary, and early reading skills necessary for success in first grade.
- * Building in supports while learning the sound system and alphabetic principle is just like using training wheels when a child starts to ride a bike....Use them while needed and gradually take them away when the child is successful.
- * The development of reading skills serves as THE major foundational academic ability for all school-based learning

Dyslexia

- * 1 in 5 children have dyslexia.. Dyslexia is the most common learning disability, affecting about 80% of children with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD).
- * Dyslexia is a continuum disorder. Severity varies from mild to severe from poor spelling to total inability to read.
- * Research has shown that dyslexia occurs in children of all levels of intelligence. Even very bright children can have difficulty with phonological processing.
- * Dyslexia occurs with equal frequency in boys and girls.
- * Dyslexia can be inherited and often runs in families.
- * Dyslexia appears in all cultures with written language.

The Good News about Early Literacy Intervention

- * We can, using tests currently available, identify students who are likely to struggle with reading starting in preschool or kindergarten.
- * ...the research suggests that phonics knowledge should be presented explicitly and in an orderly progression. Such instruction in the early grades may actually prevent reading failure....
- * If kids are at risk, we can address it with 30 minutes of intervention a day in kindergarten. By the time the children are 8 or 9, it takes at least two hours a day of special training. The is key: finding those at risk early.
- * If strong interventions are provided to "at risk" students as early as kindergarten and first grade, the overall percentage of students who continue to struggle with basic reading skills can be reduced to under 5%.
- * Recent research has found that quality instruction in literacy skills in kindergarten may prevent future behavior problems.
- * Most academic problems can be avoided if children have "learned to read" by third grade so they can then "read to learn" in 3rd grade and beyond.

The Bad News about "Waiting to Fail"

- * Reading difficulties are the most common cause of academic failure and underachievement.
- * Reading skill serves as the major foundational skill for all school-based learning, and without it, the chances for academic and occupational success are limited.
- * By the end of first grade, we begin to notice substantial decreases in children's self-esteem and motivation to learn to read if they have not been able to master reading skills and keep up with their age-mates.
- * ...students who have difficulty with reading may find problem behavior as an effective means of escaping or

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- * Our children could not learn 'how' to read, and we didn't know if they would ever learn how to read. We hear from parents every day that their children enter Kindergarten and 1st grade happy and ready to learn but by the age of 6 and 7 they are depressed and feel stupid and inadequate, blaming themselves for not having the 'ability' to learn 'how' to read.
- * We experienced this with our children as we watched their self-esteem decline but with good intervention our children are reading, they are happy and in a good place in their lives in spite of their disabilities.
- * We believe it is critical that ALL children are provided with early and intensive reading instruction so they can achieve grade level success. But more importantly it's about giving them ALL a chance to define themselves by their strengths and not their weaknesses.

Daphne Uliana and Diane Reott

