

Dyslexia Parent Workshop

A warm welcome to you all

30 January 2023
9.30-10.15/30am
With Karen Ayres





Dyslexia Parent Workshop



This workshop has been designed to help parents understand dyslexia: the positives, the difficulties and what helps. After the workshop, you may even wish to use aspects of it to help explain dyslexia to your child.

The first step on the journey is to understand dyslexia and rediscover the self belief and determination to succeed.



About dyslexia



About dyslexia

Dyslexia is a neurological difference and can have a significant impact during education, in the workplace and in everyday life. As each person is unique, so is everyone's experience of dyslexia. It can range from mild to severe, and it can co-occur with other learning difficulties. It usually runs in families and is a life-long condition.

It is important to remember that there are positives to thinking differently. Many dyslexic people show strengths in areas such as reasoning and in visual and creative fields.

What is dyslexia?



[What is dyslexia?](https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia/about-dyslexia/what-is-dyslexia)

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Dyslexia is a learning difficulty which primarily affects reading and writing skills. However, it does not only affect these skills. Dyslexia is actually about information processing. Dyslexic people may have difficulty processing and remembering information they see and hear, which can affect learning and the acquisition of literacy skills. Dyslexia can also impact on other areas such as organisational skills.

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Signs of Dyslexia



Signs of dyslexia

There is a misconception that dyslexia just affects the ability to read and write. If this were true, it would be much easier to identify. In fact dyslexia can have an affect on areas such as coordination, organisation and memory.

Each person with dyslexia will experience the condition in a way that is unique to them and as such, each will have their own set of abilities and difficulties.

However, if you know what to look for, there common signs that can help you to identify whether the difficulties being experienced could be indicative of dyslexia and would suggest that further investigation could be beneficial.



Signs of dyslexia (Primary school age)

If a child appears to be struggling with spelling, reading, writing or numeracy, how do you know whether these difficulties are potential indications of dyslexia?

There are some obvious signs such as a 'spiky' profile which means that a child has areas of strong ability alongside areas of weakness. You may also have other family members with similar weaknesses. Remember that not all dyslexic children will display the same weaknesses and abilities



General signs to look for are:

- Speed of processing: slow spoken and/or written language
- Poor concentration
- Difficulty following instructions
- Forgetting words

Written work



- Poor standard of written work compared with oral ability
- Produces messy work with many crossings out and words tried several times, e.g. wippe, wype, wiep, wipe
- Confused by letters which look similar, particularly b/d, p/g, p/q, n/u, m/w
- Poor handwriting with many 'reversals' and badly formed letters
- Spells a word several different ways in one piece of writing
- Makes anagrams of words, e.g. tired for tried, bread for beard
- Produces badly set-out written work, doesn't stay close to the margin
- Poor pencil grip
- Produces phonetic and bizarre spelling: not age/ability appropriate
- Uses unusual sequencing of letters or words

Reading

- Slow reading progress
- Finds it difficult to blend letters together
- Has difficulty in establishing syllable division or knowing the beginnings and endings of words
- Unusual pronunciation of words
- No expression in reading, and poor comprehension
- Hesitant and laboured reading, especially when reading aloud
- Misses out words when reading, or adds extra words
- Fails to recognise familiar words
- Loses the point of a story being read or written
- Has difficulty in picking out the most important points from a passage





Numeracy

- Confusion with place value e.g. units, tens, hundreds
- Confused by symbols such as + and x signs
- Difficulty remembering anything in a sequential order, e.g. tables, days of the week, the alphabet



Time

- Has difficulty learning to tell the time
- Poor time keeping
- Poor personal organisation
- Difficulty remembering what day of the week it is, their birth date, seasons of the year, months of the year
- Difficulty with concepts – yesterday, today, tomorrow



Skills

- Poor motor skills, leading to weaknesses in speed, control and accuracy of the pencil
- Memory difficulties e.g. for daily routines, self-organisation, rote learning
- Confused by the difference between left and right, up and down, east and west
- Indeterminate hand preference
- Performs unevenly from day to day



Behaviour

- Uses work avoidance tactics, such as sharpening pencils and looking for books
- Seems 'dreamy', does not seem to listen
- Easily distracted
- Is the class clown or is disruptive or withdrawn
- Is excessively tired due to amount of concentration and effort required

A cluster of these indicators alongside areas of ability may suggest dyslexia and further investigation may be required.

About Dyslexia- Things to Consider



Things to consider

Dyslexia is a neurological difference and can have significant educational implications. It usually runs in families and is a life-long condition.

The first symptom noticed is usually a literacy difficulty. However, features of dyslexia also include memory and information processing skills and these will be considered when assessing for dyslexia. A psychologist or specialist dyslexia teacher will ask for information about the following factors which may influence the diagnosis of dyslexia. A checklist or screening test will not take these factors into account.



Birth history

Were there any problems before, during or after birth e.g. a premature birth?

Family history

Are others in the family dyslexic? There is usually a genetic factor in developmental dyslexia, although other family members may have varying symptoms and severity.

Educational history

Are there any factors such as school attendance which need to be considered? Has school put in place support for other Special Educational Needs? To what extent has it helped?



General health

Have there been any long illnesses resulting in school absence? Could there be any undiagnosed conditions, e.g. mild epilepsy or petit mal, which may look like inattention and gaps in learning? A physical injury or a stroke may indicate acquired dyslexia.





Vision

Does the child/adult lose their place when reading or reverse letters or words? Do they appear to be sensitive to light or describe blurring text or moving letters? A vision test in school is not sufficient to identify visual difficulties associated with visual stress. If visual difficulties are suspected, a full sight test must be carried out by an optometrist.



Hearing

Has hearing been checked? As a young child, did they have 'glue ear'?

which may have hindered auditory perception of sounds in words?



Speech and Language



Speech and language

Have there been delays or deficits in speech and language development? This includes pronunciation of words, vocabulary development, complexity of spoken language and understanding of language heard. Your GP may suggest a referral to a speech and language therapist.

For more information visit www.afasic.org.uk

Is English the first language at home? If not, this could have implications for test results, even for visual/spatial aspects of cognitive ability for which oral instructions are given.

PLAY and LEARN with **nessy.com** !



Nessy offers an innovative approach to learning that is ideal for children with dyslexia.

SUMMARY

Individuals with dyslexia benefit from a supportive environment combined with an individualised, multisensory program of learning, structured into small steps.

The Nesy Reading and Spelling program has been designed to include all of these strategies for success.

A Learner's Perspective...

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

Coloured overlays



How can you help?

Schoolwork



- Work closely with your child's school. Communication with the teacher is key, share any updates related to reading/writing or spelling that you may have noticed at home.
- Use technology. With tablets, smartphones, and computers, you'll have a lot of helpful tools as your child gets older. Online dictionaries, spell-check, and text-to-speech software can make a big difference in your child's progress, as long as the assignment allows for their use.
- Keep schoolwork organized. Staying organized is hard when you have dyslexia. Help your child break big tasks into smaller chunks. Then, work together on a system to keep track of schoolwork. For example, you might use different-coloured folders for class notes versus homework, or a giant calendar to keep track of due dates. For older children, reminders and alarms on smartphones, tablets, and computers can play a role, too.

What else can you do to help?

Read. A lot. There are all kinds of ways to support your child's reading. Try some of these ideas:

- Listen to audio books and have your child read along with them.
- Make sure they spend some time reading alone, both quietly and aloud.
- Re-read their favorite books. It may be a little boring for you, but it help them learn.
- Take turns reading books aloud together.
- Talk about the stories you read together and ask questions like, "What do you think happens next?"
- Use schoolbooks, but you can also branch out into graphic novels and comic books, too. Reading things your child is interested in or excited about can be motivating.



Dyscalculia

What is Dyscalculia?

Dyscalculia is a specific and persistent difficulty in understanding numbers which can lead to a diverse range of difficulties with mathematics. It will be unexpected in relation to age, level of education and experience and occurs across all ages and abilities.





Mathematics difficulties are best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and they have many causal factors.

Dyscalculia falls at one end of the spectrum and will be distinguishable from other maths issues due to the severity of difficulties with number sense, including subitising, symbolic and non-symbolic magnitude comparison, and ordering. It can occur singly but often co-occurs with other specific learning difficulties, mathematics anxiety and medical conditions.



About dyscalculia

About 6% of people have dyscalculia. Studies into the causes of dyscalculia are about 30 years behind research into dyslexia. However, it is thought that the lack of number sense that is often common to people with dyscalculia is connected to the function of the left intraparietal sulcus which deals with numbers, and the front lobe, which deals with reasoning. It can therefore be hereditary but also connected to certain developmental conditions like Foetal Alcohol Syndrome.



Dyscalculia and Dyslexia



An estimated 25% of people have maths learning difficulties which can be caused either by other neurodiverse conditions such as dyslexia or external issues such as a traumatic learning experience related to maths or school absence etc. **60% of individuals with dyslexia will have difficulties with maths.**



How does dyslexia affect maths learning?

People with dyslexia tend to have poor working memory, speed of processing and rapid retrieval of information from long term memory. These weaknesses will also affect maths learning.

60% of learners with dyslexia have maths learning difficulties. They may develop gaps in their learning because of the hierarchical nature of maths, the lack of firm foundation skills can affect the learning of new skills.



They may have specific difficulties with certain areas of maths such as fractions and decimals, long division and multiplication, multiplication tables, money and time but not with number skills.

Misunderstand some of the mathematical terms and language.

Difficulties with sequencing and following procedures.

They forget previously mastered procedures very quickly.



How to identify dyscalculia and maths learning difficulties

Characteristics of people with maths learning difficulties which can also be found in learners with dyscalculia include:-

- Difficulties understanding some maths concepts such as fractions and percentages.
- Difficulties with sequencing and pattern spotting.
- Difficulties with short term, working and long term memory.
- Difficulties remembering how to do a calculation or follow a procedure.

- Difficulties with mathematical language and word problems.
- Difficulties with automatic retrieval of information such as times tables.
- Immature strategies such as finger counting.
- Slow processing and information retrieval.
- Over reliance of rote learning even if they don't understand what they are doing.
- Unable to explain what they are doing.
- Maths anxiety.



- Learners with dyscalculia can have some or all of the above but also have difficulties with number sense including comparing the values of numbers.

Next steps



If you suspect that your child may be dyslexic then you should discuss your concerns with your child's teacher, or the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)- me.

A teacher should consult the school's SENCo to discuss the next steps and appropriate support.

The SEND Code of Practice states that if a teacher suspects that a learner has special educational needs (SEN) then they must inform the child's parents and include them in discussions about what is the best support for their child. They must also tell parents about any special educational provision that is made for their child.



It is advised that appropriate support is put in place as soon as a need is identified. A Diagnostic Assessment is not needed in order for SEN Support to be provided. However, dyslexia can only be formally identified through a Diagnostic Assessment.

To find out more about assessments visit the [BDA Diagnostic Assessment](#) webpage.

More information

[Understanding and supporting neurodiversity: Support strategies for parents and carers, BDA 2018](#)