

# Dyslexia

The word 'dyslexia' comes from the Greek, meaning 'difficulty with words'. Dyslexia frequently co-occurs with related Specific Learning Difficulties (or SpLDs), affecting the way information is learned and processed. Specific Learning Difficulties are neurological (rather than psychological), usually run in families and occur independently of intelligence. They can have significant impact on education and learning and on the acquisition of literacy skills.

Dyslexia is a hidden disability thought to affect around 10% of the population, 4% severely. It is the most common of the SpLDs and causes problems with spelling, relating sounds to written symbols, writing things down.

Dyslexia affects: the way information is processed, stored and retrieved; memory; speed of processing; time perception; organisation and sequencing. Some may also have difficulty with navigating a route; left and right; compass directions; acquiring basic maths skills.

Where dyslexia is unidentified and unsupported during a child's early school years, a child may experience emotional distress and loss of self esteem; this can also lead to behavioural issues. Due to poor literacy attainment, a child may seem to be of below average intelligence and may generally find life confusing and worrying.

However dyslexia can confer considerable strengths and many people with dyslexia have strong creative and visual talents and are notable in the arts, design, engineering and IT fields. They can have excellent innovative, big picture and lateral thinking skills, intuitive problem solving abilities and strong determination. A significant number of leading entrepreneurs are dyslexic.

## The signs

- Late speech development and continuing immaturities in articulation and syntax
- frequent reversal of letters and numerals
- distorted or blurred word shapes when reading
- difficulties in identifying sounds within words and blending sounds into words
- difficulty relating the sounds in language to the written symbols
- may mix up letters within words and words within sentences while reading
- difficulty in associating and remembering printed symbols and their spoken equivalent
- problems with spelling words correctly when writing
- under-developed hand-eye preferences and directional sense
- jumbled letter sequences in spelling or in word attack skills in reading
- sequencing problems e.g. days of the week
- poor concentration
- poor coordination
- poor handwriting
- Slower speed of writing
- reluctance to write
- low level of motivation
- Low self esteem and self image
- secondary emotional problems due to learning failure and poor school progress.

## What can parents do?

Talk to the class teacher about your concerns and see whether they will assess your child's difficulties.

Contact one of the organisations on the

second page of this sheet for further advice.

- read to your child to improve their listening skills and increase their interest
- encourage your child to join in with reading certain words
- discuss the storyline and content
- make reading a relaxed and fun activity
- help your child practice cursive (joined up) handwriting rather than printed writing
- use a sharp, standard HB pencil – with a grip where necessary
- develop a homework routine
- break homework down into manageable chunks
- encourage the use of drawing if that is their strength
- let them use the home computer to develop confidence and skills
- watch out for other signs of stress e.g. bed wetting
- buy slip on shoes until they can tie their own laces
- teach them to button up shirts/blouses from the bottom up
- for older children buy them audio versions of literature books they are studying or take them to the theatre.

## Some hints for the classroom

Ideally, provide special tuition, perhaps by withdrawing the child from the regular class for brief, intensive regular sessions. Where this is not possible, individual help should be given daily within the classroom setting.

Many books, videos and other learning materials have been produced to help the student who has dyslexia and teachers

responsible for maximising their learning opportunities.

Below are listed a few basic guidelines.

- create a climate where reading is an enjoyable, relaxing and valued occupation
- reading, writing, spelling and maths skills should be thoroughly taught – leave nothing to chance
- read with him every day as he follows the words with you
- skills should be taught in context rather than in isolation
- guided reading and writing are particularly beneficial
- employ systematic teaching of phonic knowledge and word-building, unless contraindicated by speech or auditory problems
- teach correct letter formation and cursive handwriting alongside the reading activities
- use finger-tracing and other multi-sensory approaches to aid assimilation and retention
- surround the child with stimulating reading material
- give abundant encouragement and praise as new skills are mastered
- be careful to select material to match the child's current ability and interest level
- revise and review previously taught skills or concepts at frequent intervals
- teach touch typing as an alternative to handwriting.

# Dyslexia

## Useful Contacts

### British Dyslexia Association

has information for anyone with an interest in dyslexia, run conferences and training. Their website lists local dyslexia associations. Their website talks and can change colour. There is a 'Moodle' section for parents, educators, employers, individuals to access on line information and training.

Website: [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)

Helpline: 0845 251 9002

Email: [helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk)

### Dyslexia Action (formerly Dyslexia Institute)

Largest UK charity for specialist assessment and teaching of dyslexic people and the supply of teacher training courses. Achieves this through their 27 centres around the country.

Website: [www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

Tel: 01784 222300

### Contact a Family

UK wide advice on all aspects of caring for a child with any special need, disability or rare disorder; national SEN help line; downloadable fact sheets and publications; Connected magazine; local support groups and parent reps; campaigns and research etc.

Website: [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

Tel: 0808 808 3555

Email: [info@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:info@cafamily.org.uk)

They also run a separate site Making Contact where you can share your experiences, get advice or local support from other parents with children with the same condition.

[www.makingcontact.org.uk](http://www.makingcontact.org.uk)

### Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre Surrey

Provides assessment and one-to-one teaching for dyslexics of all ages (tuition at the Centre, home or school). Also provides training to teachers.

Website: [www.arkellcentre.org.uk](http://www.arkellcentre.org.uk)

Tel: 01252 792 400

### The 3D Centre for Specific Learning Halifax

Diagnostic assessments and tuition for children with dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia and training courses for teachers and school staff.

Website: [www.the3dcentre.co.uk](http://www.the3dcentre.co.uk)

Tel: 01422 365 500

### CReStED (The Council for the Registration of

Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils) provides a register of schools approved for their SpLD (dyslexia) provision (all schools have met agreed criteria for dyslexia-friendly education and are visited regularly). Parents can search for schools online or phone for a free copy of list.

Website: [www.crested.org.uk](http://www.crested.org.uk)

Tel: 0845 601 5013

Email: [admin@crested.org.uk](mailto:admin@crested.org.uk)

## Reading

See the Cambian information sheet 'Books – where to find them' for a list of specialist publishers with a huge range of books.

## Internet Sites

[www.beingdyslexic.co.uk](http://www.beingdyslexic.co.uk) is a website for information, advice, support and products relating to dyslexia.

[www.dyslexic.com](http://www.dyslexic.com) has information and specialist products for people with dyslexia.

[www.fiveminutebox.com](http://www.fiveminutebox.com) is a multi-sensory system for teaching early literacy and numeracy skills and early recognition of difficulties.

[www.penfriend.biz](http://www.penfriend.biz) offers different computer products to increase reading and writing skills: offers word prediction, better spelling, grammar, thesaurus, dictionaries, speech feedback, screen reading, on-screen keyboard.

### The National Literacy Trust

at [www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)

### The National Literacy Association at

[www.nla.org.uk](http://www.nla.org.uk)

For adults the **British Dyslexia Association** has an adult checklist, which can be found at:

[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/adults-and-business/i-think-i-might-be-dyslexic.html](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/adults-and-business/i-think-i-might-be-dyslexic.html)

**Acknowledgement:** We would like to thank the **British Dyslexia Association** for their help in giving advice for and checking the content of this information sheet.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Cambian has provided the details in this document in good faith and for information only and has not verified details provided by third parties. Nothing in this document implies any recommendation or endorsement of any course of action or service and you must ensure that anything you proceed with is appropriate for your requirements. Cambian accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage you sustain by taking action or dealing with third parties as set out in this document.

All the information sheets are checked and amended annually. Please ensure you have the current version.



Cambian is the largest provider of specialist residential education and care for young people with Autism, Asperger Syndrome and other associated complex needs in the United Kingdom. Cambian is trusted by hundreds of parents and over 70 Local Education Authorities. [www.cambianguroup.com](http://www.cambianguroup.com)

© CAMBIAN/Dyslexia  
CAM611 Date of preparation 22/10/18