

## Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that affects the ability to read and spell. About 60 per cent of children with dyslexia also have trouble with the sounds that make up words. Dyslexia can also cause difficulties with basic maths (especially the order of numbers and multiplication tables), general literacy skills, word interpretations and perception, organisational skills, short term memory, sequencing and processing information. Children with dyslexia, however, are often very creative and able in certain areas of the curriculum, such as art, design, technology, computing, drama and lateral thinking. Dyslexia is a complex neurological disorder and affects about ten per cent of the population. It tends to affect boys more than girls and often runs in families. It is believed to have a genetic cause.

If a child has several of these indications, further investigation should be made. The child may be dyslexic, or there may be other reasons. This is not a checklist.

### 1. Persisting factors.

There are many persisting factors in dyslexia, which can appear from an early age. They will still be noticeable when the dyslexic child leaves school.

These include:

- Obvious 'good' and 'bad' days, for no apparent reason,
- Confusion between directional words, e.g. up/down, in/out,
- Difficulty with sequence, e.g. coloured bead sequence, later with days of the week or numbers,
- A family history of dyslexia/reading difficulties.

### Pre-school.

- Has persistent jumbled phrases, e.g. 'cobbler's club' for 'toddler's club'
- Use of substitute words e.g. 'lampshade' for 'lamppost'.
- Inability to remember the label for known objects, e.g. 'table, chair'.
- Difficulty learning nursery rhymes and rhyming words, e.g. 'cat, mat, sat'.
- Later than expected speech development.

Pre-school non-language indicators.

- May have walked early but did not crawl - was a 'bottom shuffler' or 'tummy wriggler'.
- Persistent difficulties in getting dressed efficiently and putting shoes on the correct feet.
- Enjoys being read to but shows no interest in letters or words.
- Is often accused of not listening or paying attention.
- Excessive tripping, bumping into things and falling over.
- Difficulty with catching, kicking or throwing a ball; with hopping and/or skipping.
- Difficulty with clapping a simple rhythm.

### 3. Primary school age.

- Has particular difficulty with reading and spelling.
- Puts letters and figures the wrong way round.
- Has difficulty remembering tables, alphabet, formulae etc.
- Leaves letters out of words or puts them in the wrong order.
- Still occasionally confuses 'b' and 'd' and words such as 'no/on'.
- Still needs to use fingers or marks on paper to make simple calculations.
- Poor concentration.
- Has problems understanding what he/she has read.
- Takes longer than average to do written work.
- Problems processing language at speed.

Primary school age non-language indicators:

- Has difficulty with tying shoe laces, tie, dressing.
- Has difficulty telling left from right, order of days of the week, months of the year etc.
- Surprises you because in other ways he/she is bright and alert.
- Has a poor sense of direction and still confuses left and right.
- Lacks confidence and has a poor self image.

#### Advice and Support:

The British Dyslexia Association:

Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre – Ideas to help you support your child.

[http://www.bdaelearning.org.uk/pluginfile.php/438/mod\\_resource/content/0/How\\_to\\_support\\_your\\_child\\_at\\_home.pdf](http://www.bdaelearning.org.uk/pluginfile.php/438/mod_resource/content/0/How_to_support_your_child_at_home.pdf)

Supporting Children with Dyslexia. Strategies for schools. (East Sussex)

[https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/specialneeds/dyslexia/Documents/dyslexia\\_teacher\\_s.pdf](https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/specialneeds/dyslexia/Documents/dyslexia_teacher_s.pdf)

Supporting Children with Dyslexia Strategies for Parents/Carers (East Sussex)

<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/54B2A47C-2E7D-4786-AC3D-2E0A4C3FBFB9/0/Howtohelpyourchild.pdf>

#### Phonics – Essential skill for children in acquiring literacy skills.

Learning to discriminate the individual sounds which make up language and to recognise the individual letters and blends of letters which relate to these sounds is an essential first step in learning to read.

- Teach Your Monster to Read: <http://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/> a series of free, fun games to practise the first stages of reading.
- Focus on Phonics: <http://www.focusonphonics.co.uk/>
- Pure Sounds: <http://www.focusonphonics.co.uk/sound.htm>
- Synthetic phonics: KS1. Parents can purchase this software at a discount at participating schools: [Phonics shark software](#)
- Dandelion Launchers: phonics reading series for beginner readers: <http://www.crossboweducation.com/Phonic-books-dandelion-launchers.htm>
- Phonics4free: <http://www.phonics4free.org>

## Literacy Programmes.

There are a number of programmes specifically developed to help the dyslexic learner with reading and spelling.

- DIY Readers' Support Pack For Parents- sound to letter links and early sound blending. <http://www.dyslexiaactionshop.co.uk/diypack.html>
- Beat Dyslexia: a recently updated multisensory dyslexia programme. <http://www.thedyslexiaactionshop.co.uk/beat-dyslexia-book-1.html>
- Toe by Toe: Reading. <http://www.toe-by-toe.co.uk/>
- Launch the Lifeboat to Read and Spell. <http://www.robinswood.co.uk/back-catalogue/lifeboat-read-and-spell-scheme/>
- Alpha to Omega – Reading and Spelling. <http://www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.co.uk/Secondary/EnglishAndMedia/11-14/AlphaToOmega/AlphaToOmega.aspx>

## Programs using a computer.

### Literacy.

Programs designed to make learning fun:

- [Nessy](#): Learning: Reading and Spelling.
- [Wordshark](#): Reading and Spelling.
- [Touch type read and Spell](#): Touch-Typing.  
A multi-sensory computer based learning course.

### Writing Composition.

[Write-on-line Home User](#): a writing tool suitable for children aged 9+.

### Numeracy.

'Prepare your child for success with maths', by Sarah Wedderburn.  
An e-book full of fun and everyday ideas for parents and carers to help children develop maths as a life-skill.  
Available from Amazon in a Kindle edition.

**Numbershark** software. Using games to reinforce learning.  
<http://www.wordshark.co.uk/numbershark/numbershark-home-use.aspx>

### Mindmapping.

Mindmapping is a way of organising information in a graphic, pictorial way which can be effective for the dyslexic learner's more visual style of processing information.  
A useful technique for structuring written work and exams answers.

Kidspiration (for younger children), and Inspirations (for older children).  
A visual way to explore and understand words, numbers and concepts.  
<http://www.inspiration.com/Kidspiration>

### Memory.

Difficulties with short term and working memory are a common feature of dyslexia. Games such as Lucid Research's [Memory Booster](#) and Nintendo's [Brain Booster](#) may be helpful.

### **Games to support reading.**

There are numerous games available to support reading, spelling and memory. These include:

- [Trugs](#): Teach Reading Using Games.
- [SWAP](#): Reading.
- [Stile Dyslexia](#):
- Magnetic Reading Arc and other alphabet resources.  
[http://www.crossboweducation.com/the%20alphabet.htm#Magnetic\\_Rainbow\\_Arc](http://www.crossboweducation.com/the%20alphabet.htm#Magnetic_Rainbow_Arc)

### **Excellent Free Resource Websites.**

Free IT resources and games are available from:

- <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/literacy/index.htm>
- <http://www.dyslexia-parents.com/>