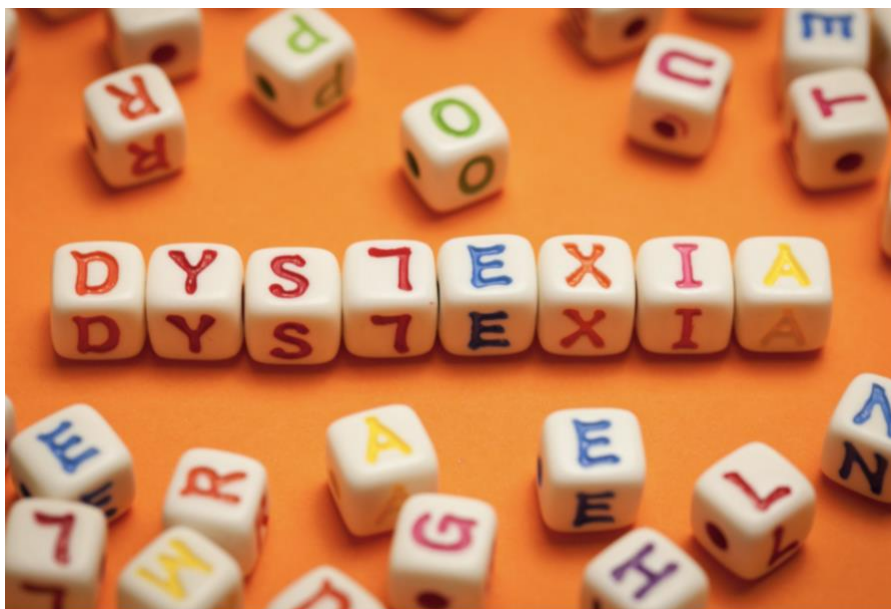




7 SIGNS YOUR CHILD MAY HAVE DYSLEXIA

A PARENTS' GUIDE TO EARLY RECOGNITION



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Dyslexia affects approximately 1 in 5 individuals, making it one of the most common learning differences. Early identification and appropriate remediation can make a tremendous difference in your child's academic journey and self-confidence. This guide will help you recognize the key warning signs and take appropriate next steps.

SIGN #1: DIFFICULTY WITH PHONEMIC AWARENESS

What to look for:

- Struggles to identify rhyming words
- Has trouble breaking words into individual sounds
- Difficulty blending sounds to make words
- Cannot easily identify the first or last sound in a word

Example: Your child might struggle to recognize that "cat" and "bat" rhyme, or have difficulty hearing that "dog" starts with the "d" sound.

SIGN #2: CHALLENGES WITH LETTER RECOGNITION AND FORMATION

What to look for:

- Frequently reverses letters (b/d, p/q)
- Writes letters backwards or upside down
- Struggles to remember letter names or sounds
- Has difficulty forming letters consistently

Important note: Letter reversals are normal until age 7-8, but persistent reversals beyond this age may indicate dyslexia.

SIGN #3: READING STRUGGLES THAT PERSIST OVER TIME

What to look for:

- Reading level significantly behind peers
- Avoids reading activities
- Loses place while reading frequently
- Guesses at words rather than sounding them out
- Reading is slow and laborious, even with familiar text

Red flag: If your child is still struggling with basic reading skills, don't wait. Consider screening your child for dyslexia or consider a full diagnostic evaluation.

SIGN #4: SPELLING DIFFICULTIES

What to look for:

- Spells the same word differently each time
- Spelling doesn't improve despite practice
- Uses creative but incorrect spelling attempts
- Struggles with common sight words

Example: Your child might spell "because" as "becuz," "bekaws," or "becas" - all different attempts at the same word.

SIGN #5: TROUBLE WITH WORD RETRIEVAL

What to look for:

- Frequently uses vague words like "thing" or "stuff"
- Has difficulty finding the right word in conversation
- May describe objects instead of naming them
- Knows the answer but struggles to express it

In the classroom: Your child might say "the thing you write with" instead of "pencil" or struggle to recall vocabulary words they studied.

SIGN #6: FAMILY HISTORY OF READING DIFFICULTIES

What to consider:

- Parents, siblings, or extended family members with dyslexia
- Family members who struggled in school
- Relatives who avoided reading or had academic challenges
- Late readers in the family

Important: Dyslexia has a strong genetic component - if it runs in your family, be especially watchful for signs.

SIGN #7: DISCREPANCY BETWEEN INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

What to look for:

- Your child seems bright and capable in conversation
- Strong problem-solving skills in non-reading activities
- Good memory for stories read aloud to them
- Academic performance doesn't match their apparent intelligence
- Excels in areas that don't require reading

Key insight: Children with dyslexia often have average or above-average intelligence but struggle specifically with reading, writing, and/or math related tasks.

AGE-SPECIFIC WARNING SIGNS

Preschool (Ages 3-5)

- Late to start talking
- Difficulty learning nursery rhymes
- Trouble recognizing letters in their name
- Cannot clap out syllables in words

Elementary School (Ages 6-9)

- Slow to learn letter-sound connections
- Reading significantly below grade level
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches before reading
- Difficulty following multi-step directions

Middle/High School (Ages 10+)

- Avoids reading assignments
- Takes much longer to complete homework
- Difficulty with foreign languages
- Poor performance on timed tests
- Slow, laborious reading

WHAT DYSLEXIA IS NOT

- X A sign of low intelligence** - Many brilliant people have dyslexia
- X Caused by laziness** - Children with dyslexia often work twice as hard
- X Something they'll outgrow** - It's a lifelong learning difference
- X The result of poor teaching** - It's neurological, not educational
- X Seeing letters backwards** - This is a common misconception

DYSLEXIA STRENGTHS TO CELEBRATE

Children with dyslexia often excel in:

- **Creative thinking** and problem-solving
- **Visual-spatial skills** and 3D thinking
- **Big-picture thinking** and connecting concepts
- **Verbal communication** and storytelling
- **Entrepreneurial thinking** and innovation

NEXT STEPS: WHAT TO DO IF YOU NOTICE THESE SIGNS

1. Document Your Observations

Keep a journal of specific examples and when they occur.

2. Talk to Your Child's Teacher

Share your concerns and ask about classroom observations.

3. Request a School Evaluation

You have the right to request testing through your school district.

4. Consider Private Testing

If the school evaluation isn't available or comprehensive enough, consider a private comprehensive evaluation.


5. Seek Support Resources

Connect with organizations like The International Dyslexia Association, The Reading League, Dyslexia Canada, Literacy for Life Reading Clinic.

6. Focus on Strengths


Celebrate what your child does well while addressing challenges.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR PARENTS

 **Early intervention is key** - The sooner dyslexia is identified, the more effective interventions can be

 **Your child's worth isn't defined by reading ability** - Many successful people have dyslexia

 **Different doesn't mean less capable** - Your child may just learn differently

 **Dyslexia therapy works** - With proper support, children with dyslexia can become successful readers. A study conducted at Carnegie Mellon University demonstrated that you can **permanently rewire** the brain of a dyslexic reader to read like that of a non-dyslexic reader. The brain imaging scans showed activation of the previously hypoactivated regions of the brain after only 100 dyslexia therapy sessions! **Gabrieli, J. D. E. (2009).** Dyslexia: A new synergy between education and cognitive neuroscience. *Science*, 325(5938), 280–283. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1171999>

 **You are your child's best advocate** - Trust your instincts and keep pushing for support

RED FLAG CHECKLIST

Consider immediate evaluation if your child:

- [] Is reading 1+ years below grade level after age 6
- [] Shows 3 or more signs from this guide
- [] Has a family history of dyslexia or difficulty in school
- [] Expresses frustration or anxiety about reading, writing, or math
- [] Avoids reading and writing activities entirely
- [] Shows significant discrepancy between verbal and reading/writing abilities

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER SUPPORT

- **www.literacyforlifereading.com**
- **International Dyslexia Association:** dyslexiaida.org
- **Learning Disabilities Association:** ldaamerica.org
- **Understood.org:** Comprehensive resource for learning differences
- **Your state's Department of Education:** Special education resources

 **CONTACT LITERACY FOR LIFE READING CLINIC, INC.**

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Empowering readers, one child at a time

This guide is for informational purposes only and does not replace a professional evaluation. If you have concerns about your child's reading development, contact us for a comprehensive evaluation and personalized recommendations.

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