

WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?



Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability that affects reading, spelling, and writing. It is neurobiological in origin and exists on a continuum from mild to severe. Dyslexia is unrelated to intelligence, and with evidence-based instruction and support, **people with dyslexia can become successful readers and writers.**

COMMON SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA



YEARS 0-2

- Trouble with rhyming
- Difficulty learning letter names and sounds
- Struggles to remember phonics patterns
- Mispronounces words
- Difficulty remembering sequences (days, months, seasons)
- Poor retrieval of names for colours and objects



YEARS 3-5

- Problems with decoding unfamiliar words
- Guesses words rather than reading them
- Poor spelling
- Difficulty recalling spelling patterns
- Mixing up the sequence when retelling a story
- Difficulty remembering multiple instructions



YEARS 6-8

- Slow or effortful reading
- Poor spelling
- Difficulty organising written work
- Avoids reading and writing tasks
- Difficulty learning new vocabulary
- Reading progress behind peers



HIGH SCHOOL

- Written language skills less developed than reading comprehension
- Poor spelling and written expression
- Difficulty planning and structuring writing
- Difficulty learning an additional language
- Avoidance of reading and writing tasks



RED FLAGS AT ANY AGE

- Poor phonological awareness. Phonological awareness is the foundation to learn to read (decoding) and spell (encoding).
- High anxiety (sore tummies, aches and pains, headaches to full blown migraines)
- Poor working memory
- Poor Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN) – difficulty quickly naming familiar objects, colours, letters, or numbers.
- Oral language difficulties (speaking and/or understanding language).
- Mixing up the sequence when retelling a story
- Avoids reading at all costs
- Will often call an item 'a thing' or 'stuff' instead of its name or when searching for words they substitute by saying 'gate' instead of 'fence'
- Having poor spelling, like spelling the same word correctly and incorrectly in the same exercise
- Having trouble remembering how words are spelled or applying spelling rules in writing
- Having trouble remembering too many instructions. "Please get your hat, coat and shoes." and they come back with a hat
- Another sign is they are behind their peers in reading and they aren't accessing the same curriculum as their peers.



COMMON MYTHS ABOUT DYSLEXIA

- Dyslexia is not a visual problem.
- Colour lenses and coloured overlays are not evidence-based supports for dyslexia.
- Dyslexia is not caused by not reading to your child enough.
- Dyslexia is not reading words backwards.
- Dyslexia is not laziness.
- Dyslexia is not a behaviour issue, although some behaviours may result from the frustration and anxiety that can occur when a child's literacy needs are not being met.
- Dyslexia is unrelated to intelligence.
- Dyslexia is not anyone's fault.
- Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Around 1 in 5 people have dyslexia.
- Dyslexia often runs in families.
- Dyslexia occurs across all levels of intelligence.
- Dyslexia exists on a continuum from mild to severe.
- Early identification and evidence-based instruction matter.



LEARN MORE www.deb.co.nz

Evidence-based information about dyslexia, assessments, Structured Literacy, accommodations and support.



This fact sheet is intended as a guide only. Not all children with dyslexia will show all of these signs. If you have concerns about your child's literacy development, seek advice from an appropriately qualified professional.