

Do you Have Reading Problems?

Introduction

Acquiring a good education is key to an adult's potential earnings, lifestyle, happiness, independence, and 'success' in life. Exposure to words happens when we speak, read, spell, write, and do math. However, if you are an adult that has always had problems reading, you know how that can affect your life. You may have suffered years of verbal abuse from classmates. You may have learned to hide your reading difficulty from others. You may have had frustration and anxiety attending an adult education class or tutoring. You may recognize there is a problem but don't know how to get help to 'fix' it. Reading the basic information below will help you to address this if it is a problem for you.

What is Dyslexia?

There are many different causes for reading problems. One of them is *Dyslexia*. Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Children and adults with dyslexia have difficulty with specific language skills, particularly reading. They usually experience problems with other language skills such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words. Dyslexia affects people throughout their lives. It can make it difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical classroom, and in its most severe forms, it will qualify a student for

accommodations or extra support services.

What Causes Dyslexia & Reading Problems?

The main reasons for reading problems are:

- Ineffective reading instruction
- Auditory perception difficulties
- Visual perception difficulties
- Language processing difficulties

Characteristics of Dyslexia

You may have any or all of the following characteristics:

- Inaccurate and inefficient single word recognition
- Inability to identify a word by sounding out the individual letters and blending them together
- Sound/symbol confusion
- Problems distinguishing, identifying, or separating the sounds in spoken words
- Slow, inaccurate text reading
- High frequency of errors in oral reading
 - omitting sounds
 - adding sounds
 - substituting sounds
 - reversing or mis-sequencing letters within words when reading or writing (b/d, frist/first, on/no)
- Directionality problems with letters
- Difficulty with written expression

- Difficulty building ideas and images
- Slow, inaccurate text reading resulting in poor fluency
- Problems understanding or remembering new concepts
- Problems with comprehension, more than word recognition
- Poor visual memory for words in print (inability to image words)
- Poor auditory memory for retaining sounds/symbols, words, and concepts

Children and adults who do not learn to read through an intensive phonics program often have one or more of the following symptoms:

- Below grade level reading achievement
- Slow reading
- Poor comprehension
- Fatigue after reading only for a short while
- Poor spelling skills
- Lack of enjoyment in reading

Dyslexia occurs on a continuum from mild to severe and is often hereditary. There is no cure for dyslexia.

The exact causes of dyslexia are unclear; however, studies of brain imagery have shown differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. It is not due to a lack of intelligence. People with dyslexia can learn if taught with the proper methods.

What Can Be Done?

Individuals with dyslexia need

individualized programs to learn to read, write, and spell. Traditional educational programs are not always effective for people with dyslexia.

Program Content: Individuals with dyslexia require a structured language program. Direct instruction in the code of written language (the letter-sound system) is critical. This code must be taught bit by bit, in a sequential, cumulative way. There must be systematic teaching of the rules governing written language. This approach is structured or systematic language instruction.

Program Delivery: Individuals with dyslexia require multisensory delivery of language content. Instruction that is multisensory employs all pathways of learning -- at the same time, seeing, hearing, touching, writing, and speaking. A teacher or therapist specifically trained in an intervention which research has proven to be effective for dyslexic individuals can deliver such instruction.

For More Help

If you think you might have a reading disability or dyslexia, contact your teacher or guidance counselor for more information.

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