

Talking Matters

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Helping your child to reach their potential



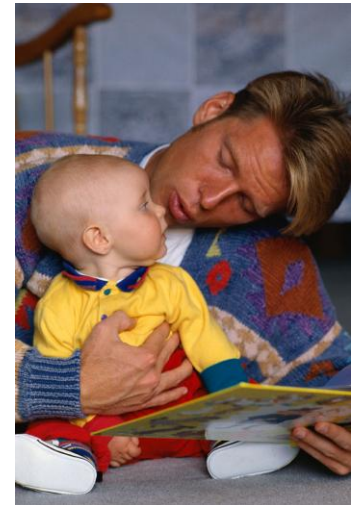
Explaining dyslexia

Children who are diagnosed as ‘dyslexic’ often don’t receive the speech pathology support that would be beneficial to them due to confusion about what dyslexia is.

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that is thought to be based in the ‘wiring’ of the brain and is passed down in families. Children are often considered dyslexic if they are not fluent readers and spellers and yet appear to be of at least average intelligence and their reading and writing difficulties cannot be explained by other learning difficulties or disability. Children who have not been properly taught to read, cannot be considered dyslexic.

Key points about Dyslexia

- The word “dyslexic” is used to describe children who are having difficulties learning to read.
- Dyslexia is most often a language based difficulty.
- Studies have shown from 5 to 10% of children have dyslexia.
- It interferes with understanding and learning to use language
- Difficulties are experienced with processing sounds in words, with reading, spelling and writing.
- A person who is dyslexic has difficulty with learning to read and spell that is not caused by
 - Hearing or vision impairments
 - Lack of or ineffective reading instruction
 - A general intellectual deficit.
- Researchers have found that a gene on chromosome #6 is involved. This gene is dominant which is why it runs in families.



Therefore the assistance of a speech pathologist in assessing and working with dyslexic children is vital.

There is still much research needed in the area in order to gain clearer answers, but what we do know from the research is:

- Early intervention when children are experiencing difficulties with reading, spelling and writing, or have a family history of dyslexia is vital.
- Children need to have sound phonological awareness (hearing the sounds) before having phonics instruction (matching sounds to letter symbols).
- Children who are dyslexic require explicit phonological and phonemic awareness instruction, which is an area of speciality for speech pathologists.

What should you do?

1. If you have a family history of ‘Dyslexia’, help your child to start right by developing their phonological awareness. Talk to your Talking Matters Speech Pathologist about the programs such as “Ready to Read” and “Succeeding with reading” available from our office. *Prevention is better than cure.*
2. If your child is struggling with developing their reading, spelling or writing, seek professional support from your Talking Matters Speech Pathologist. Speech Pathologists are reading, spelling and writing experts.