

Dyslexia

© 2018

Definition of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty which is characterised by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition, poor spelling and decoding abilities. It's a syndrome of many varied reading and non reading symptoms. Dyslexia is a neurological condition, so children are born with the condition, however problems only become apparent when the child begins to use language and starts to read and write.

There is no cure for dyslexia; however appropriate intervention can have a positive impact.

Effects on Developmental Areas

Social and Emotional

- May feel unable to do the same things as other children
- Low self esteem
- May have a delay in social skill development
- May be easily distracted and have poor concentration

Motor and Physical Development

- May have delays in gross or fine motor skill development e.g. development of scissor skills or puzzles and physical activities such as climbing, running or simply bring able to stand on one foot.

Language and Communication Development

- May have delayed speech
- May have problems with pronunciation
- May have difficulty with rhyming words and learning rhymes

Cognitive

- May have difficulty in understanding verbal directions
- May have difficulty in classification and sequencing
- May have difficulty learning shapes, colours and how to write their own name
- May have poor short term memory or self-organisational skills
- May have inconsistent development. For example, they may be highly skilled in some areas of development but have surprising difficulty in other areas.

Dyslexia Inclusion Strategies

Firstly it is important that if parents are concerned that their child has dyslexia, a diagnosis is made. Each child diagnosed with **Dyslexia** will be different and individual. It is important to gain information from the parents as to what characteristics of **Dyslexia** their child displays. It is important to work closely with the parents as well as any additional support specialists e.g. therapists who may be involved with the child. It is also important to gain an understanding from the parent as to what is the most important aspect of their child attending your service. What is it that parents hope to gain from using your service? The following inclusion strategies are just some examples which may be applied to support the inclusion process. This list is only the start and it is dependant on a variety of factors such as environment, length of time child is in care, child's interest, likes, dislikes and skills already achieved. The strategies are divided into developmental areas however some strategies overlap and assist in a variety of developmental areas. Encourage staff to ask parents about the strategies they use.

Social Development

- Ensure a positive, 'can do' ethos is promoted in your setting. Use strategies such as building on strengths, breaking challenges into small achievable steps and encouraging positive self talk (e.g. "I can do it", "If I try hard I can get there.")
- Create a supportive environment where children know it is ok to ask for help without being embarrassed.
- Use activities that require sharing, turn taking and small groups, allowing the child to participate at own level.
- Value and acknowledge child's efforts.
- Provide activities that require two children to work together.
- Ensure emphasis is placed on the child's strengths and positive characteristics.

Physical Development

- Plan gross motor and fine motor activities in areas of child's interests e.g. art, home corner.
- Provide activities that require some problem solving in order for the child to achieve e.g. memory games, how many things are the same games.
- Provide finger plays to encourage the use of both hands in a controlled manner as well as developing fine motor skills.
- Plan for fine motor developmental tasks with adaptive equipment such as a non slip mat under the drawing paper, thick crayons or thick-handled paint brushes that are easy to grasp.

Language

- Utilise the use of large clear pictures to reinforce what you are saying.
- Para-phrase back what the child has said.
- Label areas in the room with words and pictures.
- Use sequencing cards to support children's learning of how to predict what comes next and associate events.
- Provide puppets/pictures as an extra prop when using finger plays and songs.
- Reduce the amount of instructions in one statement to allow time for the child to gain an understanding of what is been said e.g. "Hold the puppet up high" rather than "hold the puppet up high and wave it around so that all the children can see it." Once child understands to "hold the puppet up high" you can then add "Good, now all the children can see it".
- Speak slowly and ensure the child is sitting directly in front of the teacher during group sessions.
- Ascertain from parents words that are familiar with the child e.g. family words that represent aspects of child life and use these in your program.

Cognitive

- Have a clear structure and routine to the day.
- Encourage use of a bright easily recognisable bag for child to be able to recognise his hook/locker.
- Plan experiences that are relevant to the child's world.
- Gain information from parents about child's likes, interests and dislikes and incorporate these in your program.
- Break tasks down to smaller steps e.g. placing one puzzle piece in at a time rather than expecting the puzzle to be completed.
- Allow the child time to complete tasks and practice skills at own pace.
- Acknowledge level of achievement e.g. "you have placed that piece in the puzzle, well done" rather than just "Good boy".

Reference

Aspen Reference Group (1997) *Caregiver Education Guide for Children with Developmental Disabilities*. Aspen Publication

Beaty J & Poatt L, (2007) *Early Literacy in Pre school and Kindergarten*. Merrill Prentice Hall

Branelly Kylie, (2000) *Ideas for inclusion & Programming Tips. Book 1*. CARATA

Chandler, C, Morton, M. & Smith, S. (2006) *Including Children with Early Signs of Dyslexia in the Foundation Stage*. Featherstone Education Limited: London

Drifte, C. & Vize, A. (2010) *A Practical Guide to Supporting Children with Dyslexia*. Teaching Solutions: Albert Park, Australia

Disclaimer

Inclusion Works! provides information to Children's Services upon request. The information provided is obtained from a number of sources e.g. library, other services, resource books and Internet. The information provided is not intended to, nor does it, constitute medical or other advice. Persons access this information assume full responsibility for its usage. Acknowledgement of source of information is required if passed onto a third person.