

Diagnostic Symptoms of Dyslexia

(Reading Disability)

Introduction

Many parents may not understand the specific symptoms in reading, math, spelling or writing that may signify a serious learning disability. This ***Parent Teacher Conference Handout*** provides parents with the symptoms that may reflect a serious learning disability in the area of reading.

Definition

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and / or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

Diagnostic Symptoms

According to The International Dyslexia Association (2005), diagnostic symptoms of dyslexia vary based on age and grade level of the child. Listed below are the diagnostic symptoms of dyslexia for preschoolers to adults (Pierangelo & Giuliani, 2006, International Dyslexia Association, 2005, Spafford & Grosser, 2005, Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006, Lerner, 2005):

- may have trouble learning the alphabet, rhyming words, or connecting letters to their sounds
- may make many mistakes when reading aloud, and repeat and pause often
- may not understand what he or she reads
- may have real trouble with spelling
- may learn language late and have a limited vocabulary
- may have trouble remembering the sounds that letters make or hearing slight differences between words
- may have trouble understanding jokes, comic strips, and sarcasm
- may have trouble following directions
- may mispronounce words or use a wrong word that sounds similar
- may have trouble organizing what he or she wants to say or not be able to think of the word he or she needs for writing or conversation
- may not follow the social rules of conversation, such as taking turns
- may stand too close to the listener
- may confuse math symbols and misread numbers
- may not be able to retell a story in order (what happened first, second, third)
- may not know where to begin a task or how to go on from there

Further Key Points

Dyslexia is a brain-based type of learning disability that specifically impairs a person's ability to read (Pierangelo & Giuliani, 2006b). These individuals typically read at levels significantly lower than expected despite having normal intelligence. Although the disorder varies from person to person, common characteristics among people with dyslexia are difficulties with phonological processing (the manipulation of sounds) and/or rapid visual-verbal responding (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Strokes, 2005a).