

# A Parent's Guide to Dyslexia

Livingston ISD



# *A Brief Description*

Dyslexia is a brain-based condition that makes it extremely difficult to read, write, and spell in your native language—despite at least average intelligence.



# Dyslexia as defined in the Texas Education Code:

(1) "Dyslexia" means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and sociocultural opportunity.

(2) 'Related Disorders' includes disorders similar to or related to dyslexia, such as developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability."



- Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological 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.

**-International Dyslexia Association**

Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.





# Dyslexia is NOT

- *Simply a problem of letter/word reversals (b/d, was/saw)*
- *Caused by poverty or limited educational opportunity*
- *Caused by developmental delay or speech/hearing impairments*
- *Caused by learning a second language*
- *Cause by left-handedness*
- *Caused by ADD/ADHD*
- *Caused by visual perception problems*
- *A condition that will be outgrown (dyslexia persists)*



# Common Risk Factors Associated with Dyslexia

If the following behaviors are unexpected for an individual's age, educational level, or cognitive abilities, they may be risk factors associated with dyslexia. A student with dyslexia usually exhibits several of these behaviors that persist over time and interfere with his/her learning. A family history of dyslexia may be present; in fact, recent studies reveal that the whole spectrum of reading disabilities is strongly determined by genetic predispositions (inherited aptitudes) (Olson, Keenan, Byrne, & Samuelsson, 2014).



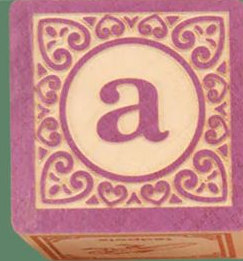
# Preschool:

- *Delay in learning to talk*
- *Difficulty with rhyming*
- *Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti”, “mawn lower” for “lawn mower”)*
- *Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants*
- *Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)*
- *Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name*
- *Aversion to print (e.g., doesn’t enjoy following along if book is read aloud)*



# Kindergarten and First Grade

- *Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts (syllables) (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)*
- *Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/)*
- *Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds*
- *Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)*
- *Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)*





# Second Grade and Third Grade

- *Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:*
  - *Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., "to," "said," "been")*
  - *Difficulty decoding single words*
  - *Difficulty recalling the correct sounds for letters and letter patterns in reading*
  - *Difficulty connecting speech sounds with appropriate letter or letter combinations and omitting letters in words for spelling (e.g., "after" spelled "eftr")*
  - *Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)*
  - *Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics*
  - *Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words*
  - *Difficulty with written expression*



# *Fourth Grade through Sixth Grade*

- *Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:*
  - *Difficulty reading aloud (e.g., fear of reading aloud in front of classmates)*
  - *Avoidance of reading (e.g., particularly for pleasure) Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)*
  - *Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics*
  - *Acquisition of less vocabulary due to reduced independent reading*
  - *Use of less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell than more appropriate words (e.g., “big” instead of “enormous”)*
  - *Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension*

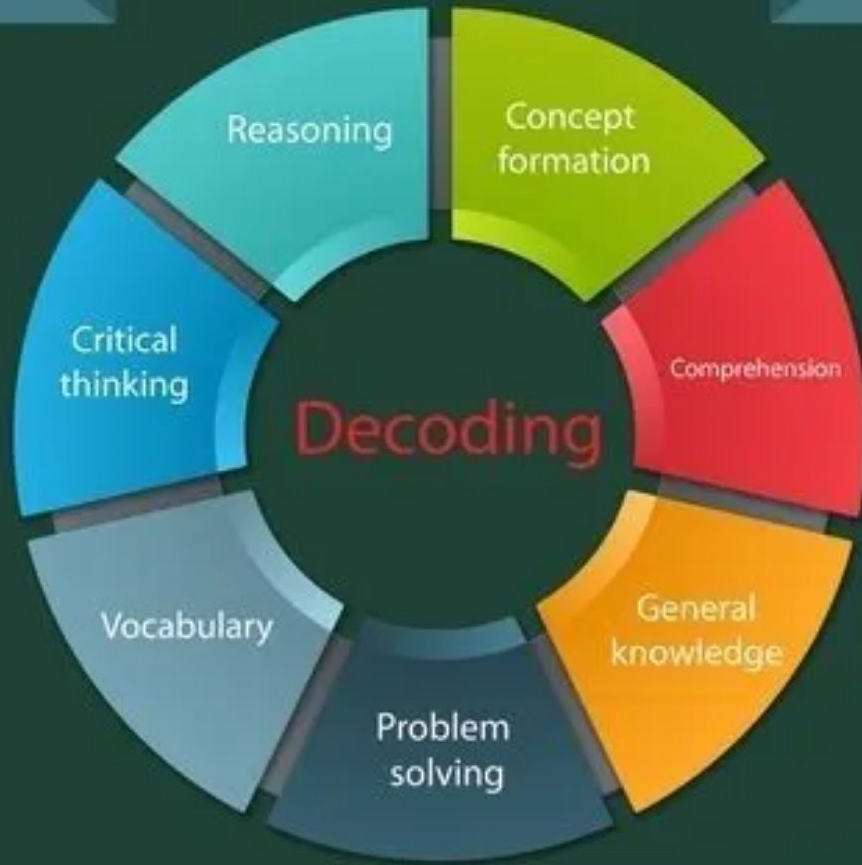


# Middle School and High School

- *Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:*
  - *Difficulty with the volume of reading and written work*
  - *Frustration with the amount of time required and energy expended for reading*
  - *Difficulty reading fluently (e.g. reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)*
  - *Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics*
  - *Difficulty with written assignments*
  - *Tendency to avoid reading (particularly for pleasure)*
  - *Difficulty with a foreign language*



## Sea of Strengths Model of Dyslexia



# What Makes Dyslexia Unexpected?

*A weakness in decoding, surrounded by a sea of strengths.*



# *Strengths that sometimes make the reading disorder of dyslexia so unexpected compared to the person's abilities:*

- Good at understanding new concepts; very intuitive ability to learn orally*
- Exhibits curiosity; always asking "why?"*
- Has great imagination and creativity/artists, designers,*
- Often very good at athletics*
- Has surprising maturity*
- Excellent comprehension of stories read or told to him/her*
- A large oral vocabulary*
- Enjoys solving puzzles and building models. Good 3D visualization and mechanical skills*



# Dyslexia Screening

*The dyslexia screener is administered to all kindergarten and first-grade students to determine which students are at risk for dyslexia, reading difficulties and/or a related disorder.*

## **Kindergarten**

Screened after spring break, but before May  
TX-KEA Dyslexia Screener is used to screen all kindergarten students.

## **First Grade**

Screened on or before January 31st  
TPRI is a TEA approved instrument used to assess first grade students



# Skills Addressed in the Annual Dyslexia Screener

## Kindergarten

Letter Sound Knowledge or Letter Naming Fluency  
Phonological Awareness

## First Grade

Word Reading Accuracy or Fluency  
Phonological Awareness



# 7th Grade

- *TEC, §28.006(c-1) requires each school district to administer at the beginning of the seventh grade a reading instrument adopted by the commissioner to each student whose performance on the grade 6 STAAR reading assessment did not demonstrate reading proficiency.*
- *LISD 7th grade students who did not meet satisfactory performance on the 6th grade STAAR Reading assessment will be administered a TEA approved assessment during the first six weeks of school.*





# *LISD Process for Annual Dyslexia Screening*



- Students complete grade appropriate screening (Kindergarten-TX-KEA, 1st Grade- TPRI) administered by the students' classroom teacher or appropriate trained staff member
- *Dyslexia teacher and educational diagnostician review screener data*
- *If a student is identified as "at risk," the classroom teacher is asked to complete an additional screening information packet to gather additional data*
- *Dyslexia teacher, diagnostician, Rti specialist, and/or other district staff review the additional information provided by the classroom teacher and screener to determine if a full assessment is needed*

# *LISD Screening Process (cont.)*



- If dyslexia assessment is warranted, the parent is contacted and the following information is reviewed with the parent:
  - *Parent letter*
  - *TX-KEA or TPRI report*
  - *Special education referral*
  - *Notice of evaluation*
  - *Consent to evaluate*
- *Parents of students not identified as “at risk” and who do not require further evaluation will be provided the following information:*
  - *Parent letter*
  - *TX-KEA or TPRI report*

# *LISD follows a tiered process for students who demonstrate deficits in reading.*

- Preventative programs: strong first instruction in phonics, writing, spelling, language arts, and literature-based reading.
- Response-to-intervention (RtI) Committee- parents, teachers, counselor, and administrators meet to review student data and recommend research-based interventions.
- Interventions: targeted interventions are tailored to address student weaknesses. Data is collected which indicated student's response or lack of to the targeted intervention. Interventions include, but are not limited to small group sessions in the classroom, tutoring by outside tutors, pull out interventions from district specialists, and summer school program.



# Cont.

- Testing: if the student is not responding to the intervention, he/she may be referred by Rti committee for formal testing. However, at ANY time a student may be referred for formal testing by the student's teacher, and/or parent. Students are not required to complete the Rti process before being formally evaluated.
- Parents: a parent may request verbally or in writing to classroom teacher, Rti teacher, campus principal, campus diagnostician, or director of special education a formal evaluation at any time.





# *Dyslexia Instruction*



- In accordance with 19 TAC 74.28(c), Livingston ISD has purchased the *Reading By Design* program to meet the needs of students with dyslexia or related disorders that incorporates all the components of instruction and instructional approaches as outlined in *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 Update*.
- Dyslexia services are individualized based on the student's needs and information from individual assessments.

# *Dyslexia Instruction*

- Student frequency, duration, and location of services to be provided are determined by the ARD committee or Section 504 committee
- Progress monitoring will be done according to the *Reading By Design* program and will address the areas of:
  - Fluency
  - *Rate and accuracy*
  - *Words in isolation.*



# *Possible Supports for Students with Dyslexia*

- Note-taking assistance
- Additional time on class assignments and tests
- *Oral reading of directions or written material*
- Word banks
- Audiobooks
- Reduced/shortened assignments (e.g., chunking assignments into manageable units, fewer items given on a classroom test or homework assignment without eliminating concepts, or student planner to assist with assignments.)
- Text to speech
- Speech to Text
- Electronic Spellers
- Electronic dictionaries
- Alternative test location that provides a quiet environment and reduces distractions





# *As a parent, what can I do at home to assist my child?*

- Establish good study habits for the child. Consider a regular study schedule and a quiet study environment to address possible attention interference. Monitor to verify work is progressing or is completed.
- Consider establishing a system of reinforcers, either tangible or intangible, to encourage the child to be more successful in reading. Student can participate in these choices.
- Listen to your child's feelings.
- Encourage child to discuss and talk about his/her feelings.





# Cont.

- Reward effort and not just the “product” of school.
- Stress improvement and not just the grades.
- Encourage the child to succeed in other areas such as talents in athletics, the arts, mechanics, volunteer work, and community service.
- Help the child to set realistic goals.
- Access the Talking Books Program:

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html>



*(The Other Sixteen Hours: The Social and Emotional Problems of Dyslexia. The Orton Emeritus Series, The International Dyslexia Association, Baltimore, MD, 1997)*

# *To learn more about dyslexia and service agencies, contact:*

*The International Dyslexia Association 40 York Road, 4th Floor Baltimore, MD 21204 (410) 296-0232 <https://dyslexiaida.org> Learning Disabilities*

*Association of Texas (LDAT) P.O. Box 831392 Richardson, TX 75083-1392 [www.ldatx.org](http://www.ldatx.org)*

*2021 Dyslexia Handbook*

*<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/texas-dyslexia-handbook-2021.pdf>*

*For additional information regarding the Dyslexia Program in LISD contact Special Services 936-328-2320*

