



Dyslexia Awareness

Agenda

- Overview of the Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook
- Myths and Facts
- Resources



Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook

- This handbook was created by the Dyslexia and Education Task Force through H.B.2008 (2017)
- The Dyslexia and Education Task Force includes 21 members.



Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook

- The purpose of the Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook: A Guide to Early Literacy Development and Reading Struggles is to provide guidance to educators, students, families, and community members about dyslexia, early literacy development, and the best practices for identification, intervention, and support through accommodations and assistive technology for students who have reading difficulties.



Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook

- **Goals:**

- Build an understanding of dyslexia and related difficulties with written language;
- Demonstrate how to identify and remediate students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties; and
- Inform both educators and families in best practices to support students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties.



Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook - Chapters

1. Introduction
2. What is Dyslexia?
3. What is the Science of Reading?
4. What is Effective Reading Instruction?
5. Using Data to Determine Student's Needs
6. Evaluations and Formal Assessments for Dyslexia
7. How is Data Used to Differentiate Instruction?
8. What About Special Situations?
9. How can Students with Dyslexia be Supported?



Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook - Chapters

10. What Resources are Available?

11. Where can I learn more?

Appendices:

- Assembling a Battery for Dyslexia Screener Assessments
- Characteristic Profile of Dyslexia
- Components of Structured Literacy Intervention Checklist
- Sample Lesson Plan
- Quick Guide to Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction
- Nationally Recognized Certifications for Educators of Dyslexia Instruction
- Knowledge and Practice Standards Self-Study Checklist



Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook - Chapters

Citations

Glossary

Acronyms and Abbreviations



IDEA 34 CFR §300.8

- Definition of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) under the IDEA:
- SLD means a disorder in one or more of the basic processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations.
 - Disorders include conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, **dyslexia**, and developmental aphasia.
 - Disorders **not** included. SLD does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.



USDE/OSERS

- In October 2015, U.S. Department of Education issued a Dear Colleague guidance letter to ensure a high-quality education for children with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD).
- The guidance letter states, there is nothing in IDEA that would prohibit the use of the term dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia in IDEA evaluation eligibility, determinations of IEP documents.
- <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-dyslexia-10-2015.pdf>



What is Dyslexia?

- Dyslexia is a specific learning disability (SLD) 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 the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

International Dyslexia Association



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Oklahoma does not recognize dyslexia
- **FACT:** Oklahoma recognizes dyslexia as a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation. A letter dated January 17, 2014 from the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) identified that Oklahoma “has ensured that policies and procedures are in place to ensure that all children suspected of having a disability, including dyslexia, are identified, located, and evaluated to determine whether they are in need of special education and related services.”

MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Dyslexia is rare.
- **FACT:** The National Center for Learning Disabilities projects that one in five (or 15-20% of any given population) has a specific learning disability. Of students identified with specific learning disabilities, 70-80% have deficits in reading. The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) further notes that the most common type of reading, writing, and/or spelling disability is dyslexia. These numbers quickly dispel the myth that dyslexia is rare.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Dyslexia is a general “catch-all” term.
- **FACT:** Dyslexia is a specific term for a learning disability that is neurological in origin and is specific to print language. The research-based definition of dyslexia, recognized by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) and supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), provides clear delineation of the characteristics of dyslexia.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** If given enough time, children will outgrow dyslexia.
- **FACT:** Dyslexia is neurological in origin and is a lifelong learning disability. There is no evidence that supports the idea that dyslexia can be outgrown. There is, however, strong evidence that children with reading problems show a continued persistent deficit, rather than merely learning to read, later than their peers (Francis, et.al, 1996). Evidence indicates that without early effective intervention and reading instruction, children with dyslexia continue to experience reading problems into adolescence and adulthood (Shaywitz, 2003).



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Writing letters and words backwards are the most prominent signs of dyslexia.
- **FACT:** Writing letters and words backwards may occur in any child prior to 2nd grade or the age of eight or nine. Dyslexia does not cause children to see letters, numbers, and words backwards or inverted. However, some children with dyslexia may confuse letters, misread words, or have difficulty forming letters as a result of the lack of phonological skills (Moats, 1999).



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Children who are read to nightly, become good readers.
- **FACT:** Simply being read to will not help a child sound out the unknown word. Reading with a child is not enough to ensure a child becomes a successful reader. However it does promote growth in vocabulary and background knowledge.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Dyslexia cannot be diagnosed until 3rd grade.
- **FACT:** Early intervention is critical to the success of a student with dyslexia. Assessments of phonemic awareness; letter knowledge and speed of naming; and sound-symbol association can be completed as early as kindergarten. Success, or lack thereof, in these specific skill areas often predicts reading ability in the first and second grades. Research has shown it takes four times as long to intervene in fourth grade as it does in late kindergarten (Lyon & Fletcher, 2001)



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** If students with dyslexia would just try harder, they would succeed.
- **FACT:** Dyslexia is the result of a neurological difference beyond the control of the student. Motivation is not usually the primary problem associated with reading difficulties but may become a secondary problem due to repeated stress and failure in academic areas relating to reading.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Dyslexia is a medical condition and can only be diagnosed by a medical professional.
- **FACT:** While dyslexia is a medical condition when it significantly impacts the student's achievement, it becomes an educational issue as well. The school multidisciplinary team determines what tests and assessments are necessary to complete a thorough evaluation.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** There is a test to determine if an individual has dyslexia.
- **FACT:** There is no single test for dyslexia. A comprehensive evaluation consisting of multiple assessments is critical to support the conclusion of dyslexia. Areas of assessment may include: phonological processing, oral language, alphabet knowledge, decoding, word recognition, reading fluency, reading comprehension, spelling, written expression, and cognitive functioning, and are determined by the multidisciplinary team.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Dyslexia is a visual problem and vision therapy and/or colored overlays will help.
- **FACT:** Dyslexia is not a problem with the eyes and so is not the cause of people seeing things backwards. Many children reverse their letters when learning to write regardless of whether or not they have dyslexia. For more information, see this [joint statement](#) from American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus and the American Association of Certified Orthoptists.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** An individual with dyslexia will never learn to read.
- **FACT:** This is simply not true. The earlier children who struggle are identified and provided systematic, explicit, and intense instruction, the less severe their problems are likely to be (Torgesen, 2002). With the provision of intensive instruction, even older children with dyslexia can become accurate, albeit slow readers (Torgesen et al., 2001)



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Retaining children with dyslexia will improve their academic struggles with reading.
- **FACT:** According to several institutions (i.e., U.S. Department of Education, American Federation of Teachers, National Association of School Psychologists), there is little benefit to retaining students with dyslexia. Retention does not necessarily improve a child's academic struggles in reading. It is not recommended that a child repeat another year of the same instruction.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Smart children do not have dyslexia/ all students with dyslexia are above average.
- **FACT:** Dyslexia is not a sign of low intelligence. It occurs in varying backgrounds and intelligence levels. With systematic, explicit, and intense instruction and support in reading, many children with dyslexia go on to higher education and are very successful in their careers. Students with above average IQ may mask their dyslexia with their talents; in turn, their giftedness may mask their dyslexia. Students may also look like an average student with good grades masking both their giftedness and their struggles.



MYTH/FACT

- **MYTH:** Dyslexia only affects people who speak English.
- **FACT:** Dyslexia appears in all cultures and languages in the world with written language, including those that do not use an alphabetic script such as Korean and Hebrew. In English, the primary difficulty is the accurate decoding of unknown words. Inconsistent orthographies such as German or Italian, dyslexia appears more often as a problem with fluent reading – readers may be accurate, but very slow (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005).

Buyer Beware

- There are no silver bullets or cures. In your research, you may come across programs that claim the ability to help every student with reading. Be wary of programs or techniques that rely on approaches that have not been shown to be effective. These include:
- Things that don't include practice with reading in a systematic, explicit, multisensory phonetic method (some examples include colored lenses, overlays, vision therapy, spinal or cranial realignment therapy, crawling therapy, cognitive improvement therapy, midline crossover exercise therapy, diet related claims).



Buyer Beware

- Tutoring chains, ad hoc tutors, nannies, or volunteers who are not properly trained to work with children who have specific instructional needs. Individuals who effectively remediate reading difficulties use evidence-based practices in reading and language development. They have had specific training and coaching in evidence-based practices.
- Therapies that do not include actual practice reading with the student. Therapies designed to improve eye coordination, near and far focus, depth perception, etc. may improve students' use of their eyes while reading, but they are not a replacement for teaching the necessary components for reading.



Buyer Beware

- Programs that guarantee an outcome. Read the fine print. Many programs that guarantee results do not apply when the student has an identified reading disorder or disability. If a disability is identified during the tutoring, the guarantee may be disregarded. It is very difficult to know what will work for each child and how long it will take for interventions to begin to close the gap. Programs that require very large sums of money upfront before the therapy begins should be a red flag. Proceed with caution if the claims seem too good to be true.



Resources

- Bookshare (Bookshare.org)
- BrightSolutions.US (<https://www.dys-add.com/>)
- Decoding Dyslexia (<http://decodingdyslexiaok.org>)
- Dyslexia Training Institute (<http://www.dyslexiatraininginstitute.org>)
- International Dyslexia Association (<https://dyslexiaida.org>)
- Kansas Missouri Branch (www.ksmo.dyslexiaida.org)
- Upper Midwest Branch (<https://umw.dyslexiaida.org/>)

Resources

- Learning Ally (<https://learningally.org/>)
- LETRS Training (<https://sde.ok.gov/reading-and-literacy>)
- Lindamood-Bell Learning Centers (<http://www.lindamoodbell.com>)
- National Center for Learning Disabilities (<http://www.ncld.org/archives/reports-and-studies/idea-parent-guide-2>)
- National Center for Improving Literacy (<https://improvingliteracy.org/>)



Resources

- Neuhaus Education Center (<http://neuhaus.org/resources/>)
- Reading Rockets (www.readingrockets.org)
- RTI (<https://www.rti4success.org>)
- Slingerland Institute for Literacy (<http://slingerland.org/Home>)
- The Reading League :<https://www.thereadingleague.org/>)
- Understood (<https://www.understood.org/en>)
- University of Michigan (<http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/>)
- Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity (<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/>)



Contact Information

Oklahoma State Department of Education
Office of Special Education Services (OSDE-SES)
2500 N. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
(405) 521-3351
<https://sde.ok.gov>



Rate This Session

Please provide feedback on this session on your Whova app!

It should take you no more than 1-2 minutes!

Thank you!

We appreciate your time to respond!

Have a great day!

