

Impact Report 2020



Messages From the Chair and Executive Director

Dyslexia Canada's primary mission is to give hope to the estimated 750,000 Canadian school children who struggle with dyslexia. There is much to do, but during 2020, we made headway on this very challenging issue.

The third annual Mark it Read for Dyslexia campaign grew substantially, continuing to spread awareness. Our Community Connections program and our project with Probono Students Canada is helping parents navigate their journey. Dyslexia Canada also received national charitable status which assisted in our first fundraising campaign.

In 2021, Dyslexia Canada will continue our awareness campaigns as well as programs to assist children and parents. In addition, we will champion two major projects:

1. To encourage all provinces and territories to revise their language arts curriculum to reflect the science of reading.
2. To work with a Canadian university to establish a dyslexia research centre.

I wish to give a very special thanks to our board, volunteers and team members for your wonderful contribution. We would never have accomplished what we did without your participation and enthusiasm. We wish to recognize and thank our Founding Partner, IG Wealth Management for their ongoing financial and moral support. Also, thank you to our community for your generous donations and ongoing interest.

Together with your help, I am confident Dyslexia Canada will continue to move forward with our objective to ensure all Canadian children with dyslexia receive a meaningful and equitable education.

2020 has been a year like no other. We started the year with much optimism for change. The Ontario Human Rights Commission's public inquiry into the Right to Read was in full swing and we were proud to provide testimony and support. The hopefulness was cut short by the global pandemic which saw already vulnerable children and families struggle to manage online school, in addition to navigating all of the obstacles placed in front of a child with dyslexia in a regular classroom like accommodations and Individual Education Plans.

If there was a silver lining to the pandemic, it would be the creativity, resiliency and strength shown by our community. We saw online remediation become a reality and the development of online teacher training, screeners and tools gain traction. Classroom technology is becoming normalized and parents, teachers and children are connecting in unique and novel ways. We were proud to contribute to this growing collection of online resources by increasing our e-newsletters, launching a series of webinars and launching an online peer-to-peer mentoring program for parents.

We ended our year much the way we started – with hope for change. We successfully obtained charitable status, we more than doubled our fundraising efforts and saw our annual Mark it Read campaign become a platform for hundreds of schools, families and children to raise awareness.

Finally, as we go into 2021, I would like to thank all of the volunteers, champions and advocates that continue to help us move our mandate forward even through all of the uncertainty of 2020.



Keith Gray

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Founder and Chair
.....

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Gray".



Christine Staley

.....
Executive Director
.....

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Staley".



Who We Are

Dyslexia Canada is committed to ensuring that every child in Canada with dyslexia gets a fair and equitable education.

Dyslexia Canada was formed in 2016 as a way to ensure that there was a national voice and forum to advocate for all Canadian children with dyslexia. By partnering with professional organizations, experts and advocates, Dyslexia Canada strives to drive systemic change by engaging and educating the public and establishing legislation specific to recognizing and remediating dyslexia.

What We Believe

The education system in Canada must recognize and educate the 15 - 20% of children in the classroom with the invisible reading barrier called dyslexia. These children are the crisis in the classroom today and the face of adult illiteracy tomorrow. They need our help.

Children with dyslexia can learn to read if they are identified early and are provided with a structured, evidence-based approach to reading. Far too many children with dyslexia are not receiving the help they need and deserve and we at Dyslexia Canada, intend to change that.

Our Mission is to Champion:

- The adoption and use of the word dyslexia by all relevant stakeholders, including educators, administrators, legislators, medical professionals, caregivers and children.
- Compulsory screening for dyslexia in kindergarten, no later than the end of grade one.
- Immediate and mandatory provision of evidence-based interventions to all Canadian children with dyslexia.
- Mandatory training for all educators in dyslexia awareness, identification and interventions.
- The provision of resources and support to caregivers, children and teachers impacted by dyslexia.

We're Working to Advance:

- The transfer of knowledge, research and information among relevant professionals, stakeholders and the general public.
- The provision of education and training to relevant professionals.
- The distribution of educational tools, aids and assistive technology.
- Resources for caregivers on the application of relevant policies and procedures, case law and legislation.
- Partnerships with like-minded organizations.
- Canadian-based research.
- Legislative change.
- A strong organizational financial foundation through grants, sponsorships and fundraising.

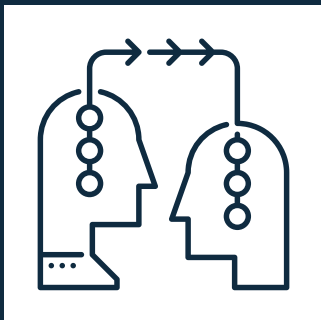
What We're Advocating For...



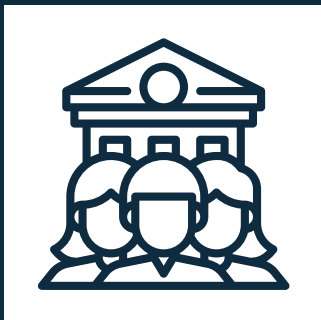
Recognition of dyslexia and a universally used science-based, neurobiological definition.



Compulsory assessment for dyslexia in kindergarten no later than the end of grade 1.



Mandatory training for primary educators in dyslexia-specific interventions.



Immediate and mandatory provision of evidence-based, dyslexia-specific interventions that are explicit, systematic and cumulative to all Canadian children with dyslexia.

**Our
Impact**



Advocacy

Our Impact

ProBono Students Canada:

In 2020, Dyslexia Canada partnered with ProBono Students Canada to develop plain language resources for families which will assist them in navigating the laws, policies and procedures of the education system. Guides will be made available online in 2021.



**6 law schools
involved**



6 provinces



**14 law
students/lawyers**



Our Impact

Human Rights Commission

Together with our partners, Decoding Dyslexia Ontario, and the International Dyslexia Association Ontario Branch, we supported the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Right to Read public inquiry into human rights issues that affect students with reading disabilities, including dyslexia in Ontario's public education system.

Representatives of Dyslexia Canada attended four town halls, spoke at two, provided a written statement of support, conducted two media interviews and reviewed and provided feedback on an educator survey. Further, the three above groups worked together as part of a panel on October 29th at the Microsoft Dyslexia DecodEd series to discuss the inquiry and its impact.

Dyslexia Canada worked with two other provinces to successfully meet with their respective provincial Human Rights Commissions – resulting in the Human Rights Commission of Saskatchewan launching an investigation of their own.

As a result, Dyslexia Canada has helped launch a Provincial Human Rights Roundtable which brings together organizations and stakeholders from five provinces to share best practices, templates, tools and resources. Additional provinces will be included in 2021.



Our Impact



Awareness

Our Impact

Mark it Read

In October 2020, Dyslexia Canada ran the third annual Mark it Read campaign for International Dyslexia Awareness Month. We did this with the proud support of the founding sponsor, IG Wealth Management.

Each year across Canada and all over the world, monuments and buildings are lit up red, schools and workplaces wear red, and cities and towns sign proclamations to officially declare the month of October as Dyslexia Awareness Month.



65 lightings



21 schools
involvement



70 contest
entries



19 proclamations &
acknowledgements



58K donations
raised



3 events



50 media
stories



Our Impact

Communications

Throughout 2020, Dyslexia Canada invested in developing our communications, specifically focusing on providing the community with essential information and resources. During the year, there was significant growth on many social platforms.



5 newsletters distributed



1456 newsletter subscribers



1050 video views



10 video uploads



360 followers



1702 followers



167 followers



1200 followers



23,000 website users



88% increased traffic (YoY)

**Our
Impact**

A young child with light brown hair is sitting in a bright yellow armchair. The child is wearing large white headphones and is focused on a silver laptop computer held in their lap. The child is wearing a green t-shirt and brown shorts. The background shows a bookshelf with various books and a white storage bin. The lighting is warm and natural, suggesting an indoor setting near a window.

Resources

Our Impact

Community Connections

The McGraw Family Foundation generously provided support for a first-of-its-kind peer-to-peer program for parents and caregivers across the country. The program was piloted in 2020 with a small group of volunteers and parents. A full launch will come in 2021.

Community Connections is Dyslexia Canada's free online platform where parents and caregivers of children with dyslexia can connect with one another to offer support and guidance. Parents and caregivers can sign up to become peers or volunteer supporters through the website.



8 volunteers



12 parents



8 connections



Our Impact

Sharing Stories Podcast

In the summer of 2020, the first-ever Dyslexia Canada podcast was released; Sharing Stories - Book reviews by kids for kids. Season 1 of the show featured host Howard Green who interviewed guests about their reading journeys and their experiences with dyslexia. With the success of season 1, season 2 will be released in 2021.



5 guests



4 episodes



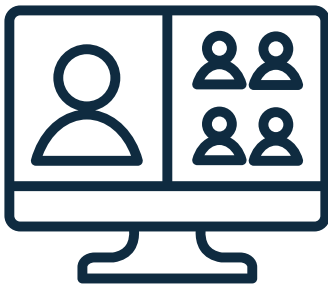
325 downloads



Our Impact

Webinars

Dyslexia Canada launched the first-ever series of free online webinars during 2020 which explored topics on reading support, assistive technology, disability tax credits, and more. The live webinars were recorded and have been made available on-demand on Dyslexia Canada's website. The second series of online webinars will be announced during spring 2021.



4 webinars




8 speakers



416 registrants

Free Webinar



Dyslexia Canada

Using Assistive Technology to Create an Inclusive Classroom

[Register now](#)

September 28, 2020 3pm - 4pm ET

Speaker:
Rob Power
Assistant Professor, Education &
Past-President International Association



Free Webinar



Dyslexia Canada

Supporting Reading at Home

[Register now](#)

October 13, 2020 2pm - 3pm ET

Speakers:
Corey Zylstra
CEO and Founder
Reach learning Centre



Rachel Breau
Manager
Centre for Equitable Library Access



Our Impact

Audiobooks

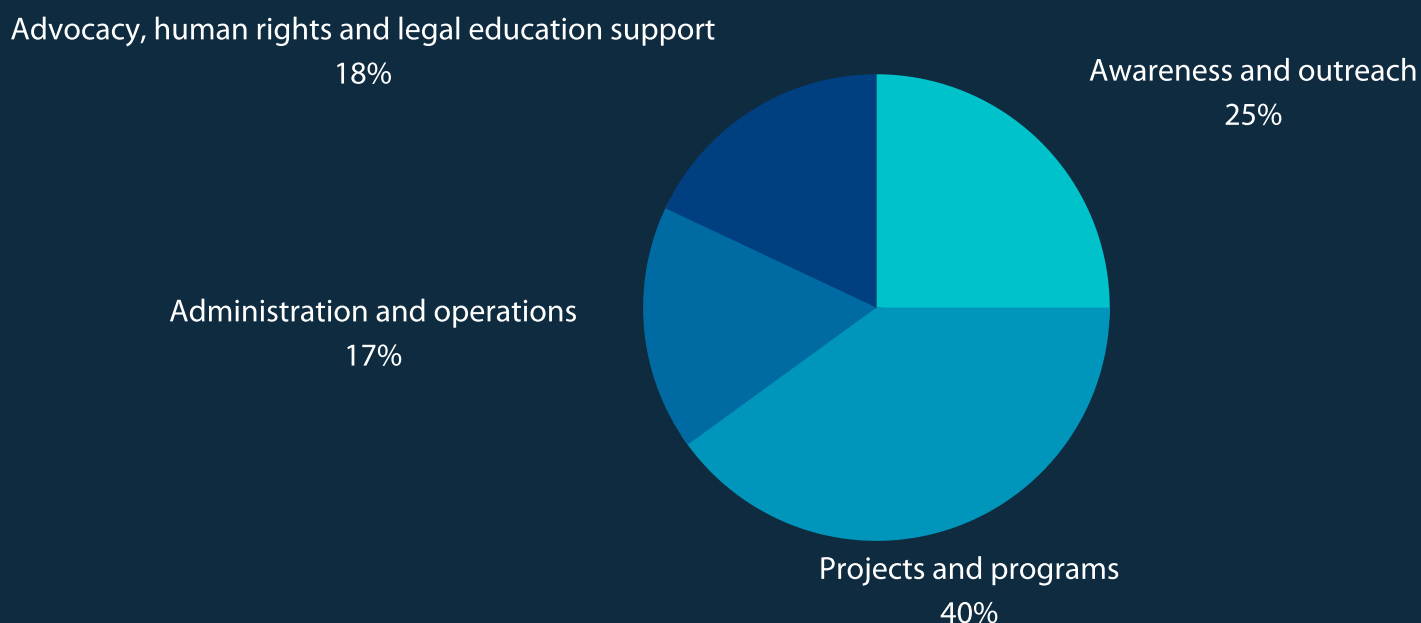
Dyslexia Canada partnered with Kobo and the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) to enable the production of eleven new audiobooks from the Forest of Reading program, a national reading program adopted by schools across Canada. In particular, a focus was put on ensuring that all books in the grade 3 – 6 category had audiobook options as this category had the fewest available. The objective was to see that children with print disabilities were not left out or left behind, and could meaningfully engage with their teachers and peers about the books in the program. Six English titles and five French titles were released in March.



Finances

Dyslexia Canada's income is generated through corporate sponsorship and personal donations. We have been privileged to have the support of many organizations and individuals in 2020.

Dyslexia Canada was granted official charitable status in September 2020. As an official charity, we were able to raise donations to double our revenue. In 2020, we created an online portal to collect and manage donations as well as establishing an employee deduction program.



We would like to specifically thank our Founding Sponsor, IG Wealth Management for their ongoing commitment in 2020, but also their increased contribution to include a matching program. The matching program was leveraged successfully to meet our overall fundraising goals.

In 2021, with your help, we can do more but we need your support. By providing a donation, big or small, you can be part of the effort to ensure that all students in Canada receive a fair and equitable access to education.

Our Partners

We would like to thank our many partners and supporters. Without their generosity, we would not be able to continue to grow, support and advocate for our community.



McGraw Family Foundation

If you would like to find out more on how to get involved as a partner, click [here](#).

Our Board

Keith Gray

Stuart Bruce

Sandra Jack-Malik

Valdine Bjornson

Brian Medeiros

Corey Zylstra

Rachel Engler-Stringer

Sharon Gurney

Raffaella Profiti

Pina Lamb

Joe Hitchings



Thank You

Dyslexia Canada is thankful for the generous support from our donors, partners, volunteers and community members. We appreciate the ongoing commitment and contributions that allow us to continue to ensure that every child in Canada with dyslexia gets a fair and equitable education.

www.dyslexiacanada.org

info@dyslexiacanada.org

Charitable Registration Number 775679095RR0001

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