



What is



Dyslexia?



Dyslexia
Canada



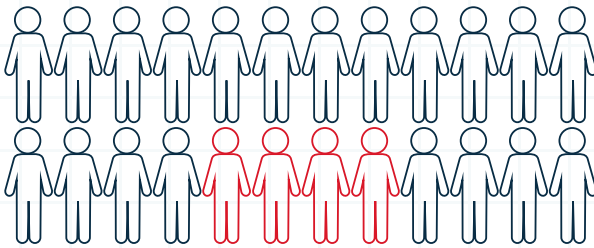
Dyslexia is a neurologically-based condition that affects:

- Word-level reading accuracy
- Reading fluency
- Spelling



Dyslexia is the most common cause of reading difficulties estimated to impact:

- 10 - 20% of the population, which is approximately 750,000 children in Canada or
- 2 to 4 children in every Canadian classroom



With proper intervention and support, individuals with dyslexia can learn to read well.



What causes **Dyslexia**?

Genetic factors: Dyslexia often runs in families. A child who has a parent or sibling who experienced difficulty learning to read is at increased risk.

Brain differences: Studies have shown that people with dyslexia have differences in the way their brains process language compared to those without dyslexia. For example, they may have difficulty recognizing sounds and connecting them to letters or words.

Dyslexia is NOT caused by:

Intelligence: Dyslexia is not related to intelligence; many highly intelligent and successful people have struggled to read due to dyslexia.

Laziness: Dyslexia is not a result of laziness or a lack of motivation to learn, though children with dyslexia can become very frustrated and disengaged with learning.

Parenting: Dyslexia is not caused by poor parenting or not reading enough to children at home.

Vision issues: Dyslexia is not a problem with vision. It is a myth that people with dyslexia see letters backward. Visual therapies and aids such as coloured overlays, special glasses or fonts are not evidence-based treatments for dyslexia.



Common Signs of **Dyslexia** in Young Children

Preschool

- Difficulty with rhyming.
- Difficulty recognizing when words start with the same sound like the words “bug” and “ball”.
- Difficulty with speech, such as mispronouncing words.
- Trouble remembering sequences like the alphabet or the days of the week.

Kindergarten to grade two:




- Difficulty learning letter names and sounds.
- Difficulty with sounding out new words and recognizing common words.
- Tendency to guess at or substitute words when reading.
- Difficulty with spelling.
- Often becomes frustrated with or tries to avoid tasks that require reading and writing.

These signs alone do not necessarily mean a child has dyslexia, however, if you notice persistent difficulty with these skills, don't “wait and see” if the child will catch up. Intervention is most effective when it starts in kindergarten.



Common Signs of **Dyslexia** in Older Children and Adults

- Reads slowly and confuses or skips common words.
 - Difficulty decoding and correctly pronouncing unfamiliar words like the names of people or places.
 - Difficulty with writing, including spelling, grammar, and organizing thoughts.
 - Avoidance of tasks or pursuits that require reading and writing.
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If an individual continues to struggle with these skills, it's important to consider a formal assessment by a psychologist.

Dyslexia Canada can help you advocate for your child to receive an assessment through their school or help you find a psychologist in your community who can conduct an assessment.

Other names for **Dyslexia**

In Canada, more general terms like “learning disability” or “specific learning disorder” are often used in the education system. However, if the challenges are primarily with word reading and spelling, “dyslexia” is an equivalent and appropriate term.

The term “dyslexia” is widely used in, reading research. Using the term dyslexia can make it easier to find information about how to provide effective reading instruction and intervention.



The Right to Read

Every child in Canada has the right to education. Receiving effective reading instruction at school is a fundamental part of that right. However, many provinces and schools across the country continue to use outdated-ineffective approaches to reading instruction, as noted by the Ontario Human Rights Commission in their 2022 Right to Read Inquiry Report:

“Despite decades of multi-disciplinary research on what is most effective for teaching students early reading skills... Ontario is systematically failing students with reading disabilities and many other students.” – OHRC 2022

Currently, over 1/3 of all young adults in Canada are leaving public education without having attained the level of literacy necessary to participate fully in the modern economy. These young people are at increased risk for lifelong negative outcomes, including unemployment, poverty, homelessness, issues with addiction and mental health, and incarceration.

Dyslexia Canada is committed to advocating for systemic changes to public education to end historical inequities and ensure that every child can realize their Right to Read.

When schools implement evidence-based instruction, screening, and intervention, reading difficulties can be prevented for over 95% of all children.



How can you help your child?

1. Make sure your child receives evidence-based reading instruction, screening & intervention.

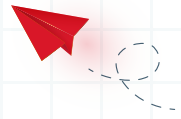
We can help you ask the right questions to understand if your child is receiving the instruction they need to succeed at school. If your child's school is not providing evidence-based instruction, we can provide support and guidance on the next steps.

2. Support their mental health.

Struggling with early reading can erode confidence and self-esteem.

Some things you can do at home to help include:

- Help your child learn about dyslexia so that they can understand that the challenges they are experiencing are not their fault or a reflection of their intelligence.
- Help them to identify and build on their strengths. Provide them with opportunities to shine and succeed.
- Provide examples of successful adults with dyslexia. Hearing adults speak openly about struggling in school can help your child understand that they are not alone and that dyslexia does not need to limit their life options or future potential.



Please Note: It is important to seek professional mental health care for a child when their academic difficulties significantly impact their emotional well-being, behaviour, or relationships with others.

3. Be their champion and advocate.

Having a strong advocate can make all the difference. Dyslexia Canada is here to help you advocate for your child. If you have a specific question, if you're looking for examples of what has worked for someone else, or even if you just need a kind ear to listen, our Community Connections program is here for you.

To ask a question or join a support group please visit www.dyslexiacanada.org or scan this QR code:

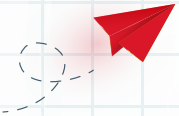


Dyslexia Canada is a national charity committed to ensuring that every child in Canada with dyslexia receives a fair and equitable education.

We advocate for systemic changes in public education to ensure that every child has access to:

- Evidence-based reading instruction
- Universal early screening
- Effective intervention
- Teachers who are supported and empowered with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to teach every child, including those who struggle, to read.

Support our mission by donating today



For more information about dyslexia or to learn about our programs and events please visit www.dyslexiacanada.org.



**Dyslexia
Canada**