

Dyslexia - information for parents

If dyslexia is making it hard for your child to do well at school or if they are losing confidence or avoiding school work, what can you do? The following tips might help.

Be understanding

Remember that your child will be working harder than their classmates or siblings because of the processing difficulties associated with short term memory. This means that they may come home exhausted, frustrated and possibly angry with themselves and others. Your role is to provide as much praise as possible for what they have done well and help them stay organised.

Be encouraging

You have a tremendous influence on your child's attitude to learning. Remind them that everyone is good at something and even though they find some things difficult, they have other strengths.

- ◆ Your child's success will be greatly increased if they feel confident.
- ◆ If they feel confident then they will not feel stupid.
- ◆ If they feel confident then they will keep trying.

Be supportive

It is important to liaise with the class teacher and Support for Learning staff in order to maintain positive relationships with school. Share your concerns with the teacher and discuss ways to tackle problem areas together. It is not your child who is a problem, nor is it dyslexia. If your child can learn in the way that suits them, then school work will not be as difficult. Schools and local authorities have policies for working with children with additional support needs - you can ask for a copy.

Be patient

- ◆ Try to avoid failure at home, which should be a reassuring and supportive place.
- ◆ Allow time to relax – your child will be tired after trying to keep up all day.
- ◆ Give hints and reminders – being tired makes short term memory worse.

- ◆ Be realistic about the time your child takes to complete homework. Discuss concerns about how long homework takes with the class teacher.
- ◆ Try doing homework in short blocks of 15 - 20 minutes to improve concentration.

Be positive

- ◆ Encourage and praise your child for all the things they do well.
- ◆ Do not show your anxiety – be calm and encouraging.
- ◆ Read longer texts aloud and discuss how your child will tackle them.
- ◆ Give rewards – a computer game, TV programme, trip to the park.
- ◆ Let your child watch TV and discuss programmes with them. This may be supportive of your child's learning and could make it easier for them to retain information discussed.

Be organised

- ◆ Establish a routine, with rest periods. You know your child and what suits best.
- ◆ Create a clutter-free homework area at home to help with focus and concentration.
- ◆ Plan for breaks during homework, breaking large tasks down to manageable tasks.
- ◆ Make sure you are familiar with your child's school timetable so you can help with daily organisation.
- ◆ If your child struggles to properly record their homework, arrange for them to check with a classmate at the end of the day, or for the teacher to provide a written note.
- ◆ Colour-coding different subjects or a timetable may be useful and help your child to pack the correct coursework, books and equipment each day.

Further information

- 📖 **Dyslexia: A Parent's Survival Guide** by Christine Ostler
- 📖 **Overcoming Dyslexia** by Beve Hornsby
- 📖 **Dyslexia: A Complete Guide for Parents and Those Who Help Them** by Dr. Gavin Reid
- 📖 **Dyslexia: A Parent's Guide** by Maria Chivers
- 📖 **Taking the Hell out of Homework** by Neil Mackay
- 📖 **The Everything Parent's Guide to Children with Dyslexia: All you need to ensure your child's success** by Jody Swarbrick

