

What is Adult Dyslexia?

What is Dyslexia in adults?

Dyslexia is one of several distinct learning disabilities. It is a specific language-based disorder of constitutional origin characterised by difficulties in single word decoding, usually reflecting insufficient phonological processing abilities. These difficulties in single word decoding are often unexpected in relation to age and other cognitive and academic abilities; they are not a result of generalised developmental disability or sensory impairment. Dyslexia is manifested by variable difficulty with different forms of language, often including, in addition to problems in reading, a conspicuous problem with acquiring proficiency in writing and spelling.

Dyslexia is a dysfunction of the lexical system. This is the system which conveys information, concepts or thoughts in the form of words, whether spoken or written.

Is this a disorder or disease?

Dyslexia is neither. Some forms of dyslexia can be caused by damage or disease affecting relevant parts of the brain and in such cases there is clear medical evidence of this.

How do I detect the possibility of developmental dyslexia?

Reading or spelling are not in line with one or more of the following benchmarks:

- The rest of general intellectual functioning ("intelligence") on formal test.
- The performances produced by the rest of the class.
- The average performance for persons of that age on formal testing.
- A large discrepancy between oral and written language use.
- The learner avoids reading aloud or production of thoughts in written form.

What else might be noticeable?

The requisite skills and knowledge for language development have been taught to the appropriate stage of development for the individual but have not been learned.

The learning style or attitude to learning of the individual learner is such that the teaching of the necessary skills and knowledge for language development has had little effect. This may be particularly noticeable if the learner is hyperactive or distractible and has great difficulty in maintaining attention on task for adequate lengths of time.

The general intellectual development of the individual is otherwise adequate for development of the skill in the use of the written language to convey information - that is, the deficit is **unexpected**. This can be detected only by formal testing - especially of those intellectual activities like verbal reasoning which make the use of language to convey information, thought and opinions possible.

The learner struggles to develop the skills of reading and writing but becomes progressively distressed and loses self-confidence in some or all of his or her abilities.

Possible causes

- Inadequate vision or visual perception.
- Inadequate hearing or auditory perception.
- Inadequate teaching of the necessary skills and knowledge.
- Inadequate learning of the necessary skills and knowledge.
- Inadequate motivation for, commitment to and/or giving of attention to the learning and development of the skills of reading or communication in writing - including spelling.
- Inadequate development of the intellectual activities which make possible reading and writing.

Is it hereditary?

There are suggestions that the development delays or deficits seen in dyslexia are passed on genetically and run in families.

How do you find out more?

This is normally undertaken through assessment by a professional psychologist - often working with other appropriate professionals such as optometrists, audiometrists, occupational therapists or physiotherapists. More information and lists of specifically trained teachers are available from The Dyslexia Institute and British Dyslexia Association.

What does an assessment consist of?

The usual assessment procedure involves a test of general intellectual abilities using standardised objective tests to determine the adequacy of operation of other mental capacities. The results of these are also used as a baseline for evaluation of any discrepancy between that and achievement in reading, spelling or writing. Other diagnostic tests are used to investigate the basis of the errors produced and recommendations are made for treatment.

What treatment is available?

Teachers and tutors who are appropriately trained, qualified and experienced in the teaching of dyslexics provide personal or group tuition related to the recommendations of the assessment for development of the abilities. Appropriate management of the individual's development in the classroom or place of work is also necessary. There are a number of dyslexic reading schemes available to support the individual with Dyslexia.

Useful Contacts:

The Dyscovery Centre

4a Church Road
Whitchurch
Cardiff
CF14 2DZ
Tel: 029 2062 8222
Fax: 029 2062 8333
E-mail: dyscoverycentre@btclick.com
Web: www.dyscovery.co.uk

Hyperactive/Attention Deficit Disorder Family Support

Carmichael House
4 North Brunswick Street
Dublin 7
Tel: 00 353 1 8748349
E-mail: hadd@eircom.net

National Learning Network Assessment Service

Block A
Institute of Technology
Blanchardstown
Blanchardstown Road North
Dublin 15
Tel: 00 353 1 8851386
E-mail: denise.richardson@innovations.itb.ie
Web: www.nln.ie

Dyspraxia Association of Ireland

c/o 389 Ryevale Lawns
Leixlip
Co Kildare
Tel: 00 353 1 2957125
E-mail: dyspraxiaireland@eircom.net

ASPIRE

Aspergers Syndrome
4 North Brunswick Street
Carmichael House
Dublin 7
Tel: 00 353 1 8780027
Web: www.aspire-irl.com

National Learning Network

Head Office
Roslyn Park
Beach Road
Sandymount
Dublin 4
Tel: 00 353 1 2057344
Fax: 00 353 1 2057376
Web: www.rehab.ie

Dyslexia Association of Ireland

1 Suffolk Street
Dublin 1
Tel: 00 353 1 6790276
Web: www.dyslexia.ie

PACTS

