



Recognizing the signs of dyslexia

Children begin learning to read early in their education. Very often some children seem to excel at reading and writing, while others may struggle. The obstacles kids struggle with may disappear as they age and grow more accustomed to reading, but no such relief comes for kids struggling with dyslexia.

The Mayo Clinic defines dyslexia as a learning disorder characterized by difficulty reading. It is a common condition and does not mean a child has subpar vision or intelligence. Dyslexia often goes undiagnosed, and many kids reach adulthood before realizing they are dyslexic. According to Dyslexia Health, 70 to 80 percent of people with poor reading skills are likely to be dyslexic, and dyslexia is the most common cause of difficulties with reading, spelling and writing.

Dyslexia affects people in various ways. While some may experience only

minor symptoms, others may have greater difficulties, including problems with grammar, recognizing left from right and trouble with complex language skills. Without help, children with dyslexia can easily grow discouraged with their studies. However, with therapy, many kids can learn to work around their dyslexia.

CAUSES OF DYSLEXIA. Dyslexia has been linked to improper genetic development in the brain. It tends to run in families and affects the parts of the brain responsible for language development. There are no surefire ways to predict if a person will have dyslexia. However, in families with high rates of the condition, there is a greater risk.

SYMPTOMS. Very often it is difficult to recognize dyslexia before a child enters school. There may be some early clues, but these are not always definitive. Potential clues include learning to talk late, having difficulty learning



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new words and exhibiting difficulty rhyming words. School-aged children may have trouble with sequences, following commands in order, reading at the recommended level, processing and understanding, and/or seeing or writing letters or words in reverse. As children with dyslexia age, they may have difficulty summarizing stories, managing time or learning a foreign language.

TREATMENT. There are no medications to correct the underlying brain abnormality that doctors feel causes dyslexia, but there are various treatment methods. Practice and repetition are some of the hallmarks of dyslexia therapy. Rather than standard lessons, individuals with dyslexia may need

multi-sensory lessons that combine sight, touch and sounds when introducing new concepts. Screen readers and audio books can also help children learn how to read more effectively.

In the classroom, children may need more time to complete assignments. Teachers should be made aware of a dyslexia diagnosis so they can work with students and parents to develop a learning system that works. Practicing reading different types of texts also can help. Dyslexia is a common learning disability that affects many children and adults. But therapy and emotional support can help people with dyslexia overcome their disabilities.