

# LEARNING DISABILITIES

## IN CHILDHOOD

✓ TYPES

✓ SIGNS

✓ EARLY INTERVENTION



Some children will experience atypical patterns of development in cognition, communication, emergent literacy, motor, attention and sensory abilities, and/or social-emotional adjustment that may compromise later academic achievement if not identified on time.

A learning disorder is an information-processing/neurological based problem that prevents a child from learning a skill and using it effectively. For instance, learning disorders make it difficult for a child to read, write and solve simple math. Learning disorders does not mean the child has low level intelligence, on the contrary, children with learning disorders have average or above average intelligence. For example, a child with dyslexia (reading disorder) will demonstrate logical thought and intellect when speaking but will have difficulties translating what they say to a written piece.

### TYPES OF LEARNING DISABILITIES

#### READING DISORDER (DYSLEXIA)

A child with a reading disorder a child is able to speak as expected for their age and understands when spoken to. They are able to understand a story when it is read to them but, are not able to put sounds together, read or spell correctly as expected for their age.

- ✓ Letter – sound association
  - ✓ Difficulties reading phonetically, and memorizing sight words
  - ✓ Slow reading rate that affects reading speed and fluency
  - ✓ Understanding what they read
  - ✓ Recalling accurately what they read
  - ✓ Making inferences based on their reading
- Spelling

#### MATH (DYSCALCULIA)

A child with a learning disorder in math will have difficulties understanding basic arithmetic concepts, such as fractions, number lines, and positive and negative numbers. A learning disorder in math may cause problems with the following skills:

- ✓ Understanding how numbers work and relate to each other
- ✓ Calculating math problems
- ✓ Memorizing basic calculations
- ✓ Using math symbols
- ✓ Understanding word problems
- ✓ Organizing and recording information while solving a math problem

#### WRITTEN EXPRESSION (DYSGRAPHIA)

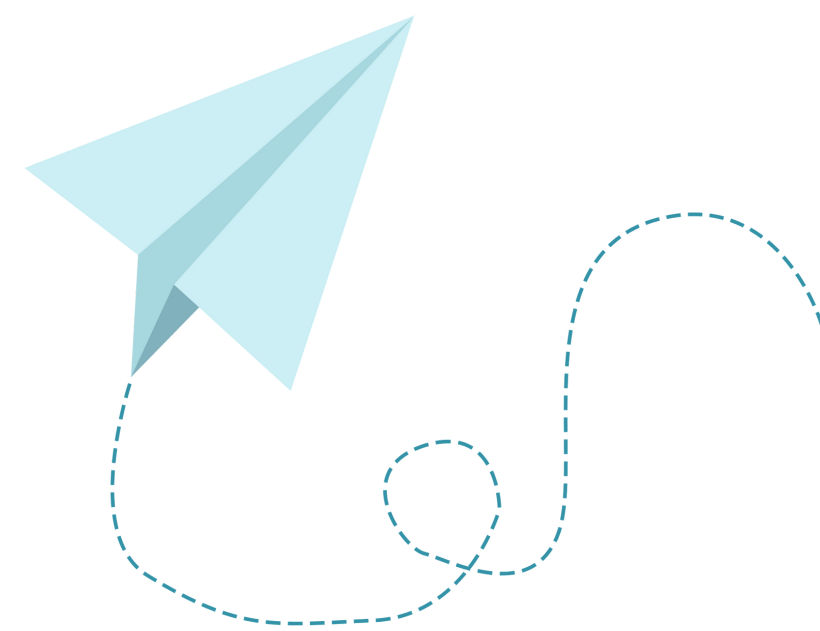
Writing requires complex visual, motor and information-processing skills. A child with a learning disorder in written expression may have difficulties such as:

- ✓ Losing energy or interest as soon as they start writing
- ✓ Slow and labor-intensive handwriting
- ✓ Handwriting that's hard to read
- ✓ Difficulty putting thoughts into writing
- ✓ Written text that's poorly organized or hard to understand
- ✓ Trouble with spelling, grammar and punctuation
- ✓ Saying words out loud while writing
- ✓ Leaving words unfinished or omitting them when writing sentences



## SIGNS OF LEARNING DISORDERS IN CHILDREN

- A child may be at risk if by the age of 5 – 6 years they have:
- History of speech delay in toddler years
- Difficulties with expressive and receptive language
- Problems with word pronunciation
- Often cannot find the "right word": may have a limited vocabulary or slow vocabulary growth
- Problems rhyming words e.g., sat – fat, tag – bag, etc.,
- Heightened difficulty in learning numbers, days, shapes, the alphabet, or colors
- Appears to have motor difficulties with devices like pencils, cutleries, buttons, and shoelaces
- Appears inattentive and restless
- Difficulty with social interaction
- Difficulties learning letter – sound association
- Difficulties reading phonetically, and memorizing sight words
- Slow reading rate that affects reading speed and fluency
- Difficulties counting in sequence, understanding Math symbols and performing simple operations



It is important to have children 4 – 5 years and above screened for learning difficulties in readiness for primary/grade school. Children who indicate risk from such screens can be referred for further assessments and early intervention.

Learning Difficulties if left undiagnosed and without intervention can last through a child's academic life and lead to educational under-achievement. Maturity does not make the child outgrow it.

With early identification and treatment initiated before the age of 8 years, 77% of children with learning difficulties such as dyslexia acquire skills that make it possible for them to thrive and attain success

## EARLY INTERVENTION

Nurture Beststarts offers school-wide screening for Preschoolers from 4.5 years old to help schools identify and support children who may be at risk.

You can also refer a parent who has concerns about their child's learning to get a child screened or assessed by our psychologists. Please visit: [www.nurture-cdc.com/learningscreening](http://www.nurture-cdc.com/learningscreening) or call Lois on: 234 – 7064931025



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