

Dyslexia

Awareness

Week 2024

British  
Dyslexia  
Association



# Parent and Carer Information Pack



#DAW24

# Dyslexia Awareness Week 2024

**Dyslexia Awareness Week (#DAW24)** is an annual awareness campaign established and hosted by the British Dyslexia Association. #DAW24 will run from 7-13 October inclusive. **This year's theme is 'What's your story?'** Each day we will be celebrating our wonderful community by sharing stories - each one as individual as the person telling it.

Storytelling is a powerful tool. It connects us, brings understanding and inspires, shaping how we see the world together.

For many dyslexic children, storytelling and developing other literacy skills can be challenging. Often parents and carers are the first to voice concerns. In this interactive booklet we have provided information and downloadable resources to help you on your journey to support a dyslexic child.

## You will find the following:

- What is dyslexia?
- Signs and facts
- If you think your child is dyslexic...
- Talking to your child about dyslexia
- Reading stories to support literacy
- Top tips for storytelling
- Resources and free webinars
- Support us
- Books exploring dyslexia for young learners

## Our Key Messages



### **Every story is different**

Dyslexia affects everyone differently. Every person is unique and so is everyone's experience of dyslexia. Dyslexia impacts around 10% of the population, that's over 6.7 million different stories to tell. Tell us your story and inspire others.



### **A strong opening sets the scene**

The beginning of any story is crucially important. It sets the scene for everything that follows. But we hear too many stories where support wasn't available early enough. Help us provide information and training so that more learners receive identification and support at the start of their story.



### **It's never too late to change your story**

We know that the right support at the right time can make a dramatic difference. Whether that's later in life, in education or in the workplace. Help us support more people to start a new chapter in their own story.

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## What is dyslexia?



Dyslexia is a lifelong, genetic, neurological Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) It affects all genders, ethnicities and social groups. It is not connected to intellectual ability and its impact ranges from mild to severe.



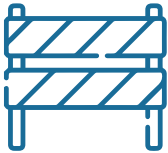
Dyslexia is best described as a set of processing difficulties that affect learning to read and spell. But its impact goes beyond this and children with dyslexia experience difficulty in becoming automatic in all aspects of their learning and need more explicit teaching in order to reach the standards expected.



There can be early indications of dyslexia such as slower development of speech and language skills, but it is usually first noticeable when a child starts school and struggles to learn to read and spell.



Dyslexia affects everyone differently, and each child will have their own strengths and challenges. Dyslexia often occurs with other SpLD such as dyscalculia or dyspraxia/DCD which can further impact upon learning and development.



Dyslexia can present daily barriers at school, and a child may find it hard to thrive. They may feel shame or anxiety because of their difficulties, and this can be compounded if their challenges are misinterpreted as a lack of ability, laziness or behavioural issues. When this happens, it can have a big impact upon their confidence and self-esteem. **As a parent it is important to recognise if this happening and to find ways to support their emotional wellbeing.**



A diagnosis can be made by a Specialist Teacher Assessor with an Assessment Practicing Certificate (APC) or an HCPC registered Educational Psychologist, but diagnosis is not routinely carried out at school and a formal diagnosis is not needed for support to be put in place at school. All schools should be identifying and supporting children who require additional support to achieve the expected literacy and numeracy skills.

You can find further information about obtaining a diagnostic assessment for a child or an adult via our website [here](#).












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## Dyslexia - Signs and facts

The following may be signs of dyslexia:

-  A family history of similar difficulties.
-  A lack of enjoyment of reading – may develop tactics to avoid reading whenever possible.
-  Difficulties with reading accuracy or fluency.
-  Persistent difficulties with spelling.
-  Difficulties remembering sequential information or accurately following a set of instructions.
-  Poor structure and organisation of written work – just don't seem to be able to express their ideas on paper in a way that matches their verbal ability.
-  Lose personal possessions or forget instructions.
-  Poor concept of time.
-  Exhausted at the end of a school day.
-  Lack of confidence or low self-esteem.
-  Changes in their behaviour.



**1,000,000+**

School children in the UK have dyslexia. **Many are undiagnosed.**

 **x Learners**

There are three learners with dyslexia in every typical class

**3.5x**

more likely that a child with dyslexia will be temporarily or permanently be excluded from school.

**80%**

of young people with dyslexia are not identified at school.

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## If you think your child is dyslexic...



Talk to your child's school about your concerns and try to work with the school to develop an action plan to support them.



Build your child's self-esteem. Find things that they enjoy doing and which give them a sense of achievement.



Focus on finding fun ways to support developing literacy skills and learning.



Find out if there is a local dyslexia support group. You can find out where our Local Dyslexia Associations are [here](#).



Contact our helpline - **0333 405 4567**

You can find our opening times [here](#).

- Email us anytime on: [helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk)
- Direct Message on Facebook or Instagram
- Live Instagram days on first Tuesday of the month



Supporting a Child or  
Young Person with Dyslexia  
A guide for parents



### British Dyslexia Association - Guide for Parents

This downloadable guide provides in-depth information about how to support your child with dyslexia. Sign-up and it will be delivered straight to your inbox.

[Sign-up](#)

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## Talking to your child about dyslexia

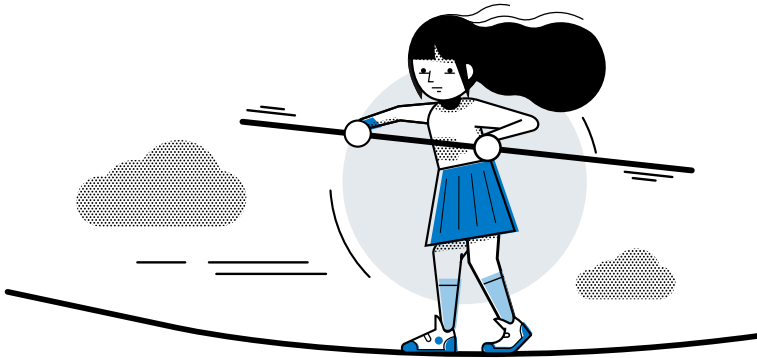
Every child is different, and a diagnosis of dyslexia will affect them in different ways. For most children and their parents, it will bring a whole mix of different emotions. Some may feel positive and relieved by the diagnosis because it helps to explain the reason why they find certain things challenging. While other children may be concerned or upset. It is important to discuss these feelings with your child so that you can understand how they feel and know how to best support them.

All children will have questions. It is important to talk about dyslexia and for them to know that they can share their questions with you and that you can work together to find the answers.

Here are some key messages about dyslexia and some suggestions for talking to your child. They can be adapted based on the age and needs of your child.

-  Lots of people have dyslexia – it affects 1 in 10 people – so that’s over 1 million children in the UK. There will be other dyslexic children in your school.
-  Dyslexia is genetic – just like hair and eye colour. So, there will be someone else in your family who has dyslexia, but they may not have been diagnosed.
-  Dyslexia has nothing to do with how clever you are – dyslexic children just learn in a different way.
-  Dyslexic children are not lazy – they work harder than others to keep up.
-  Dyslexia affects everyone differently. Everyone will have things that they are good at or find easy (strengths) and things that they find difficult or challenging.
-  Dyslexia should not stop you from doing what you want to do – but you may need to be taught in a different way or need extra help with some of your learning – especially tasks that require reading, writing and spelling.
-  There are lots of things that can help including teachers, parents and learning to use technology.

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Everyone will have their own strengths and challenges – here are some that other dyslexic people experience:

## STRENGTHS

- Problem solving
- Imaginative
- Visualisation
- Creative thinkers
- Interpersonal skills

## CHALLENGES

- Reading, writing and spelling
- Being organised
- Remembering things
- Following sequences

Think about the things that your child is good at – this could include things like working hard, being kind, being a good friend etc, and the things that they find challenging. Try and find more positive things to discuss, especially if your child has a very negative view of themselves.

## Tips for starting the conversation



Talk about dyslexia in a **positive way**.



### **Ask your child:**

- how they feel about being dyslexic – a diagnosis can evoke lots of different emotional responses.
- if they have any specific questions or concerns.
- which things they find hard and easy, and discuss why so that you can work together to find some ideas to help. Encourage them to use their strengths to help with the challenges.



Talk about things that your child likes doing and which give them a sense of satisfaction or achievement. Some children may have obvious interests such as music or sport, others may need time and help to discover a new hobby.



Remind them of things they do well. **Give them lots of praise.**



Be led by your child's response. Some children will need reassurance to boost their confidence and self-esteem. Some may be happy to share their diagnosis and others may need more time to accept it and feel confident to tell others.



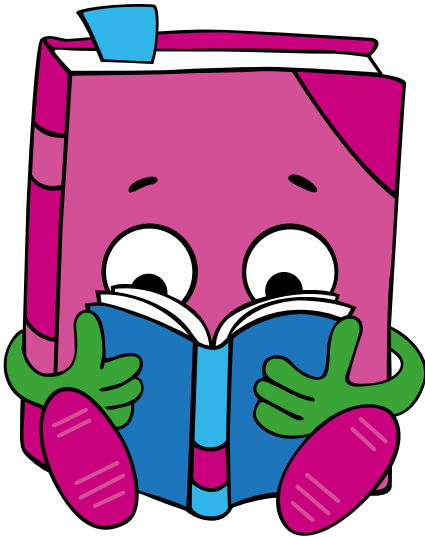
**Keep the conversation going** – not just a one-off dialogue.

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## Reading stories to support literacy



Reading stories aloud helps develop children's concentration and creativity, expands their vocabulary, and teaches them about the broader world. Stories can be used in a fun way to support developing literacy skills.

Here are a few ideas which should help to encourage active participation when sharing books. These can be adapted to most books aimed at primary age children:

- ★ Use the pictures in story books to prompt discussion. This can help your child's prediction skills, introduce vocabulary which you are likely to find in the book and can prompt an interest in the story to come.
- ★ Echo reading (children copying with what has just been read to them) can help children recognise the effect of intonation and punctuation on the fluency of language.

-  Have fun encouraging your child to correct silly mistakes. For example, if a sentence read, “Be careful” whispered Tom; shout out the words then, when the child points out your errors get them to read it correctly.
-  Encourage your child’s interest in the story by talking about what you have read and asking them to predict what they think may happen next and why.
-  Talk about why characters are doing certain things and how you think they are feeling.
-  Support spelling and reading work by encouraging your child to identify any words or letter patterns they have been working on at school.
-  Identify rhyme and alliteration and encourage your child to play with language by thinking of other words they could add to the alliteration or other rhyming words (including silly or nonsense words).
-  The main aim, when sharing stories, should be to help children to develop a love of reading and to spend fun time together. Be led by your child and incorporate these ideas into story time and when sharing school “reading books” to support their literacy journey.

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## Top tips for storytelling

Storytelling is an important part of literacy. It is a fantastic way for children to practice their reading, writing, and spelling whatever level they are working at. It is a great activity to try at home and here are a few tips to help you get started.

1

### Planning a story

Use mind maps or a story mountain to help.

2

### Telling a story

Get the children to share their story verbally and ask another child or an adult to write down what they say. Perhaps they might want to use props and act it out as a little play – try to make it fun!

3

### Recording a story

Encourage children to try speaking and recording a story on a phone, tablet or other device. Or use software or an app that writes as they speak. Children love seeing their words appear on the screen as they speak.

4

### Writing a story

Encourage children not to worry about spelling or handwriting, let the ideas flow, and help them to edit afterwards.



There are brilliant resources available to support storytelling on the BBC website including interviews with celebrities that have dyslexia, and share their own experiences of learning and being in school.



### **Jamie Oliver's advice for children who are dyslexic**

Dyslexia can create a barrier to some children when writing their 500 Words story, so we reached out to Jamie Oliver for some of his top tips.

“

Being dyslexic, I never thought I'd ever write a cookbook, let alone a kid's book. My advice to you is that I wrote most of my stuff on a dictaphone, just record it.

”

Jamie Oliver



Scan the QR code to access the [BBC 500 words resources](#).

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**Resources**



**Top Tips for Parents/Carers Booklet**

[View](#)



**YouTube Channel**

[Visit](#)

**British Dyslexia Association Helpline  
0333 405 4567**

You can find our opening times [here](#).

- Email us anytime on: [helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk)
- Direct Message on Facebook or Instagram
- Live Instagram days on first Tuesday of the month

## Free Webinars

Throughout the year we run a series of FREE webinars exploring the key aspects of this learning difference and how to support those affected by it. It's an opportunity to gain valuable insights and practical advice on supporting individuals with dyslexia.



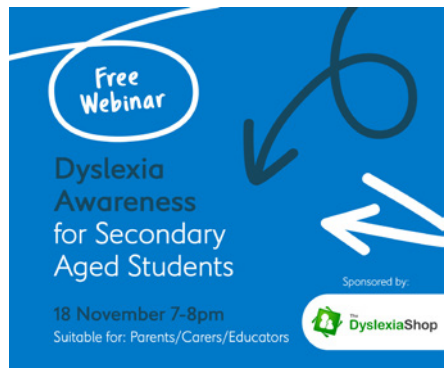
Early Years and Foundation Stage  
24th October 7-8pm

Register



Primary School Aged Children  
5th November 7-8pm

Register



Secondary Aged Students  
18th November 7-8pm

Register

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## Support us

Our national Helpline provides free information and advice to people with dyslexia and those who support them. Every year, we hear thousands of stories from members of the general public needing our help to turn the next page or start a new chapter. Help us raise funds so we can continue to provide this vital service free to all.

Over the last 12 months, our national helpline:

**5,500+**  
enquiries via  
our Helpline





**£10**

Funds a phone call sharing support strategies with an adult facing literacy difficulties.

**£55**

Funds support for up to six families desperately seeking advice on how to work with their schools to support their learners.

**£72**

Funds a live Q&A session on social media enabling us to reach a wider demographic.

**£160**

Helps fund training for four volunteers to join our Helpline team.

If you would like to fundraise during Dyslexia Awareness Week, you will find useful resources on our website.

[Donate](#)

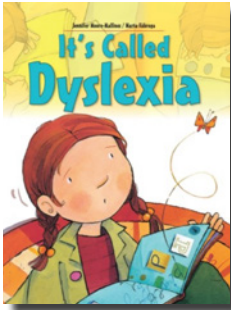
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## Books exploring dyslexia - young learners

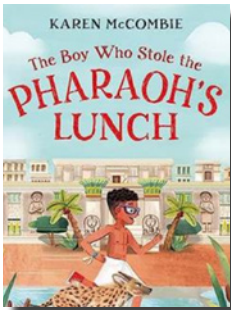
Here are a few book suggestions that cover dyslexia in a range of styles, all encourage children to be mindful of the differences that exist between their friends and classmates and to be aware that all children, regardless of their talents, learn differently. **Please note selected books are not endorsed by the British Dyslexia Association.**



### It's Called Dyslexia

by Jennifer Moore-Mallinos

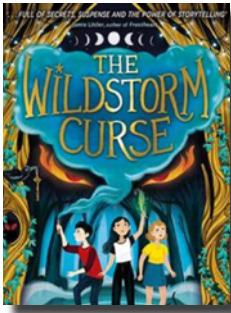
Have you ever wondered what it's like to be Dyslexic? This sweet story is empowering and will inspire you to be the best you can be!



### The Boy Who Stole the Pharaoh's Lunch

by Karen McCombie

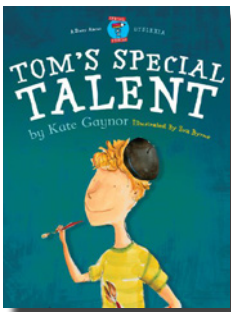
This engaging time-slip adventure, features dyslexia as part of the storyline, ideal for reluctant or dyslexic readers.



## **The Wildstorm Curse**

by Eve Wersocki Morris

This is a spine-tingling adventure that weaves in history, thrilling action scenes and ultimately showcases the power of storytelling. Kallie has dyslexia, but she can still use words powerfully, which is a message all children need to hear.



## **Tom's Special Talent**

by Kate Gaynor

It encourages other children to be mindful of the differences that exist between their friends and classmates and to be aware that all children, regardless of their talents, learn differently.



## **Fish in a Tree**

by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

An emotionally-charged, uplifting novel that will speak to anyone who's ever thought there was something wrong with them because they didn't fit in.



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[bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://bdadyslexia.org.uk)



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REGULATOR**

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