

Washington State Dyslexia Resource Team



The
International
DYSLEXIA
Association
Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy

Washington State Branch
*Serving
Washington
Idaho
Western Montana*



What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words.

Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person's life. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can make it very difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical instructional environment, and in its more severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, or extra support services.

How common is dyslexia?

Many people—perhaps as many as 15-20% of the population as a whole—have some symptoms of dyslexia, including slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, poor writing, or mixing up similar words. Dyslexia occurs in people of all backgrounds and intellectual levels.

Purpose of the Dyslexia Resource Team

The Washington State **Dyslexia Resource Team** is a collaborative effort between the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Association of Educational Service Districts (ESDs), and the Washington State Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (WABIDA).

Goals

- Build an understanding of the term dyslexia.
- Learn how to identify students with dyslexia.
- Support teachers and parents in educating students with dyslexia.
- Provide guidance for administrators, educators, and caregivers in making the best educational decisions for Washington students with dyslexia.

Dyslexia Resource Guide

Written by local dyslexia experts, this online guide provides detailed information, research, and references. It is housed at the OSPI website and provides all audiences with valuable information about dyslexia, including hands on activities for teachers and families. Screening and assessment, Response to Intervention (RTI), instruction and intervention in the classroom, as well as helpful hints for teachers in setting up a dyslexia friendly classroom, are all covered in the guide.

Training Module

ESD Literacy Leaders worked together to create a three hour training module that would provide administrators, reading specialists, and teachers foundational knowledge of dyslexia.

- The module gives participants an overview of what dyslexia is and how it can be recognized in students at various levels.
- A clear definition of dyslexia focusing on the truths and myths helps participants walk away with the information they need to be advocates for students at their buildings.
- Student profiles and work samples are reviewed throughout the training so that participants understand how dyslexia manifests itself in reading, spelling, handwriting and other areas.
- Assessments and instruction are briefly touched on in the module, however, many ESDs provide follow up classes that go more in depth and / or provide coaching support.

Community Outreach and Professional Development

In addition to the Training Module and online Resource Guide, professional development and public education lectures and conferences are part of our outreach plan.

Building on Strong Foundations with Strong Organizations

OSPI, ESDs across Washington, and WABIDA will work with local school districts, administrators, teachers, and families. Each organization brings specific expertise and knowledge to educate the public and address the challenges of students with dyslexia.

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