



www.decodingdyslexiapa.com

Dear Early Childhood Educator:

As a group, Decoding Dyslexia PA is working to spread awareness about the importance of early identification of literacy skill deficits in young children.

With this letter, we want to share several key components that support children and their families as they approach their elementary years. We believe early childhood facilities and their staff best serve their clientele when they are well versed in phonological awareness skills. A lack of phonological awareness skills often indicates that a child may have dyslexia.

What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a neurobiological disorder that involves difficulty in learning to read or interpret words, letters, and other symbols, but that does not affect general intelligence.

Dyslexia Facts:

Approximately 10% of our population or 1 in 5 students has dyslexia

- Despite this statistic, many children remain undiagnosed
- This has serious consequences for children who are often seen as behavioral challenges, who internalize a sense of inability, and who may have higher risks for mental health challenges and depression as adults

Early screening identification = better results in remediating reading difficulties

- Early screening is important as it takes four times as long to intervene in fourth grade as it does in late kindergarten (Lyon & Fletcher, 2001)
- “Deficits in phonological awareness, rapid automatized naming, verbal working memory and letter knowledge have been shown to be robust precursors of dyslexia in children as young as age three” (Gaab, 2017)
- An early screening tool allows educators to be proactive and assists teachers in providing the appropriate differentiated, targeted instruction for each child.

DDPA is working to share more information with early childhood educators so they are better able to support families. Our goal is to have all families enter elementary school with a basic understanding of dyslexia's prevalence, its warning signs, and what to do if a family suspects their child may be dyslexic.

Included in this letter you will find direct links to resources to support your facility and our goal. We hope that you will work with us to ensure that Early childhood educators are equipped to:

- help every child and every family as they navigate emergent literacy.
- Have and share a basic understanding of dyslexia.. We suggest this resource as a great one for teachers and parents alike: The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity's Signs of Dyslexia ;
 - a. Mayo Center definition
- Understand different types of screenings and how to interpret the results of the selected screening.

We invite you to join us by choosing an early screener and screening the four year old students in your program.

If you would like additional information about early screenings, phonological awareness skills, or dyslexia, please feel free to contact us at Decoding Dyslexia Pennsylvania or at our personal emails listed below.

Respectfully yours,
DDPA Action Coordinators Team

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Resources:

<https://www.gaablaboratory.com/screening-for-reading-impairments> Gaab Lab Boston Children's Hospital

<https://www.ncl.org/> National Center of Learning Disabilities

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/signs-symptoms/could-your-child-have-checklist-signs-of-dyslexia-at-different-ages> Understood

<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/> The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity

Screeners:

Davis Dyslexia Screener <https://www.testdyslexia.com/>

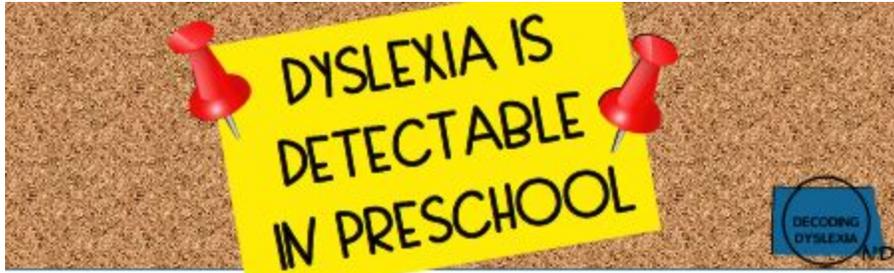
Get Ready to Read! <http://www.getreadytoread.org/screening-tools/grtr-screening-tool>

Individual Growth and Development Indicators Early Literacy Assessment

<https://www.myigdis.com/preschool-assessments/early-literacy-assessments/>

Lexercise Dyslexia Test <https://www.lexercise.com/tests/dyslexia-test>

Phonological Awareness Screening Test <https://www.thepasttest.com>



"Preschoolers can show early warning signs of dyslexia long before they start reading. That's because dyslexia can affect a variety of language skills that are the building blocks for reading." -Emily Lapkin, understood.org

If your child has three or more of these classic warning signs, save this sheet to document and share your concerns with a dyslexia specialist, pediatrician, or teacher.

- Family history of learning difficulties
- Speech delay as a toddler
- Early stuttering
- Slow to add new vocabulary
- Trouble recalling the right word (hands you a fork when you ask for a spoon)
- Has not established a dominant hand
- Has trouble following directions
- Struggles with rhyming
- Difficulty pronouncing words (basghetti for spaghetti)
- Has trouble learning the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, colors, shapes, how to spell and write name
- Has difficulty separating sounds in words and/or blending sounds to make words

