

A resource sheet for Parents and Professionals who care for children and adolescents with



Specific Learning Disability in Reading



Brought to you as a public service by the Pediatric Neuropsychology Special Interest Group of the AACN

What is a Specific Learning Disability in Reading?

When a child has been given good opportunities to learn to read, but hasn't been able to keep up, he or she may have a Specific Learning Disability in Reading (sometimes called "Reading Disability" or "dyslexia"). Reading disabilities can affect some skills more than others, like accuracy (decoding), rate (fluency), or comprehension. This sheet lists resources for Reading Disabilities. Please also see our *General Learning Disabilities* resource sheet for broader information.

Where can I find help?

Children in the US who have a learning disability (LD) have the right to special educational assistance through the public school system because of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). You can find out more about IDEA through the [US Department of Education \(http://idea.ed.gov/\)](http://idea.ed.gov/) or an advocacy site like [WrightsLaw \(www.wrightslaw.com/\)](http://www.wrightslaw.com/). Usually the best starting place is for parents to write a formal letter to their child's school principal requesting an evaluation by an LD specialist. By law the school then has 100 days to respond. IDEA is a federal law, but it can be interpreted differently in each state. Sometimes, an independent evaluator from outside of the school is needed. In those cases, it can be helpful to contact an independent psychologist in the community who works with children. At the bottom of the next page is a link to locate a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist. Even if that psychologist does not specialize in working with kids who have a Reading Disability, they can direct you to the appropriate resources.

How does an LD specialist help a child?

Most specialists focus on evaluating children and providing recommendations to teachers and other school staff. The evaluations help to clarify whether an LD is present and guide interventions. What happens during the evaluations can vary, but typically children are given one-on-one assessments that are designed to better understand personal strengths and weaknesses. Here are some tests that include focused measures of reading or the building blocks of reading:

- Bateria III Woodcock-Muñoz Pruebas de Aprovechamiento (Spanish)
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing
- Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment – 2
- Gray Oral Reading Test – Fourth Edition
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement – Second Edition
- Nelson-Denny Reading Test
- Test of Early Reading Abilities
- Test of Phonological Awareness
- Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency
- Test of Word Reading Efficiency
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Third Edition
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – Third Edition
- Wide Range Achievement Test – Fourth Edition
- Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement – Third Edition
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Third Edition

Some specialists provide tutoring or other interventions themselves. This can be a good thing, if they do high-quality work and don't have ulterior motives. Be cautious about specialists who both conduct evaluations and sell specific treatment "packages", because their recommendations for treatment may be motivated by money, rather than a child's needs.

Where can I find resources online?

Resource	Link
National Institute of Child and Health Development, National Reading Panel	http://www.nichd.nih.gov/research/supported/nrp.cfm
Learning Ally Provides audiobooks to qualified individuals.	http://www.learningally.org/
The International Dyslexia Association	http://www.interdys.org/
Help My Child Read	http://www2.ed.gov/parents/read/resources/edpicks.jhtml
PBS Kids Reading Games.	http://pbskids.org/games/reading.html

What kinds of interventions are available?

Specialists can disagree about which program is ideal for a given child, but there are programs that are grounded better in science than others. Here are some science-grounded interventions that target two different kinds of reading problems.

Programs that target <u>reading accuracy</u>	Programs that target <u>reading comprehension</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earobics • Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Program • Orton-Gillingham Approaches • Phonological Awareness Plus Synthetic Phonics (PASP) Program • Phono-Grafix • Phonological and Strategy Training "PHAST Track" • Wilson Reading Method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated Reader/Reading Renaissance Program: a two-part intervention. The first part is guided reading with a teacher's direct instruction. The second part uses a computer program to facilitate reading practice and to give immediate feedback on comprehension. • Reading Recovery: a short-term intervention, which supplements classroom instruction with one-on-one tutoring. • The Kansas University Learning Strategies Curriculum: a program for improving comprehension strategies, organization and study skills.

What are some good articles and books for professionals?

It is impossible to list everything, but here is a good starting list. Also, please see our General LD sheet for more.

Caylak, E. (2009). Neurobiological approaches on brains of children with dyslexia: Review. <i>Academic Radiology</i> , 16(8), 1003-1024.
Gooch, D., Snowling, M., & Hulme, C. (2011). Time perception, phonological skills and executive function in children with dyslexia and/or ADHD symptoms. <i>The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry</i> , 52(2) 195-203.
Kamps, D. M., & Greenwood, C. R. (2005). Formulating secondary-level reading interventions. <i>Journal of Learning Disabilities</i> , 38, 500-509.
Leach, J. M., Scarborough, H.S., & Rescorla, L. (2003). Late-emerging reading disabilities. <i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i> , 95, 3-21.
McClelland, M. M., Kessenich, M., & Morrison, F. J. (2003). Pathways to early literacy: the complex interplay of child, family, and sociocultural factors. <i>Advances in Child Development and Behavior</i> , 31, 411-447.
Mooney, J., Cole, D., & Hallowell, E. M. (2000). <i>Learning Outside The Lines: Two Ivy League Students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD Give You the Tools for Academic Success and Educational Revolution</i> . New York: Fireside.
Pennington, B. F., & Lefly, D. L. (2001). Early reading development in children at family risk for dyslexia. <i>Child Development</i> , 72(3), 816-833.
Shaywitz, S. (2003). <i>Overcoming Dyslexia: A New and Complete Science-Based Program for Overcoming Reading Problems at Any Level</i> . New York: Vintage Books.
Shaywitz, S. E., Fletcher, J. M., Holahan, J. M., Schneider, A. E., Marchione, K. E., Stuebing, K. K., et al. (1999). The persistence of dyslexia: The Connecticut Longitudinal Study at adolescence. <i>Pediatrics</i> , 104, 1351-1359.
Ziegler, J. C., & Goswami, U. (2005). Reading acquisition, developmental dyslexia, and skilled reading across languages: A psycholinguistic grain size theory. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i> , 131 (1), 3-29..

Brochure version 1.1, 1/31/2012, prepared by Drs. K. O'Toole, S. McCann Lahey, A. Arenivas, & G. Christopher

Additional Information:

What is board certification in clinical neuropsychology?

Believe it or not, most states allow licensed psychologists to call themselves neuropsychologists without showing they have any special training on how to care for people who have neurological or neurodevelopmental disorders. Clinicians who are board-certified in clinical neuropsychology have proven, through a rigorous evaluation, that they are fully competent. That evaluation is conducted by the largest certification group in psychology, [the American Board of Professional Psychology \(ABPP; http://www.abpp.org\)](http://www.abpp.org), and its subspecialty board, The American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology. The goal of ABPP is to protect the public by examining and certifying psychologists who demonstrate competence in approved specialty areas.

How do I find a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist?

These are listed by name and by location on the web site of the [American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology \(AACN; http://theaacn.org\)](http://theaacn.org). Once you find a neuropsychologist near you, click on their name for more information, including the kinds of people they work with and how to contact them.

What is pediatric neuropsychology?

[Click here \(http://www.div40.org/resources.htm\)](http://www.div40.org/resources.htm) to download a pamphlet that explains what makes pediatric neuropsychology unique, and what to expect from an evaluation by a pediatric neuropsychologist.



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