

Decoding Dyslexia Utah

Does my child have Dyslexia?



Start Here - Option #1

Request, in writing, an initial evaluation for Special Education through your school. This is how the school determines if your child qualifies for services under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act).

PROS: Your child may qualify for services and/or accommodations through the school with an IEP (Individual Education Plan). With an IEP, you are part of the team that decides what services and goals your child needs. An IEP is a legal document that schools must follow.

CONS: The process can be lengthy, the school has 45 school days to complete the evaluation. With dyslexia, time is important and should always be considered. Schools do not diagnosis Dyslexia, or any other condition. Schools test to determine if your child qualifies for an IEP. Also, the evaluation is the property of the school; however most of the time they will give you a copy. Under IDEA, Dyslexia is a qualifying condition under the category Specific Learning Disability. Interventions for dyslexia may be different than what your school is currently using. You should always ask what interventions/methods are being used to teach reading, writing, and spelling. Students with Dyslexia need structured literacy interventions that are explicit, and sequenced.

Option #2

Obtain an outside educational evaluation by a psychologist or neuropsychiatrist. Check with your medical insurance to see if they will cover an education evaluation (We strongly recommend a referral).

PROS: This is the only way to get a 'legal diagnosis' in the state of Utah. If you have a diagnosis your school should consider the information when deciding on an IEP and 504. However; remember a diagnosis doesn't guarantee services under IDEA. A diagnosis pinpoints areas of strengths/weaknesses and can confirm your suspicions. A psychologist will perform tests in multiple areas, including ADHD, behavior, intelligence, etc. The psychologist will provide guidance along with recommendations.

CONS: The route can be expensive without insurance. To get accommodations in college, and for the ACT/SAT the evaluation has to have taken place within the last three years.

NOTE: If you disagree with the IEP teams determination of eligibility (i.e., your child didn't qualify for an IEP) you can request an IEE (Independent Education Evaluation) at the schools expense, where a psychologist will evaluate your child.

PROS: you are part of the decision on which psychologist to use.

CONS: Again, the process can be lengthy.

Option #3

Contact a qualified* dyslexia screener to get your child identified as having characteristics of dyslexia (We strongly recommend getting a referral).

PROS: Can be done quickly. Inexpensive in comparison to a neuropsychiatrist. There is a possibility that your school will provide a 504 for accommodations based on a screening. Screenings should also be considered as outside documentation in an IEP meeting. They are a tool to help you to better advocate for your child. The screener will provide guidance along with recommendations and resources.

CONS: A SCREENING IS NOT A DIAGNOSIS! While screeners cannot diagnosis they can give standardized tests to measure phonological awareness and rapid naming, the two typical deficits associated with Dyslexia. Screeners cannot give an IQ test. The school is not required to provide services or accommodations based on the screening. There are no laws in Utah governing who can identify themselves as a dyslexia screener.

Remember, Dr. Shaywitz found that less than 1/3 of students who were below grade level in reading were receiving service in the school.* Parents can find a tutor trained in explicit, sequenced and structured literacy interventions. Parents can also obtain this training.

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Possible Indicators of Dyslexia	Preschool Aged Children	Elementary Aged Children	Adults
<p>Dyslexia occurs on a continuum meaning that the degree to which a child struggles in one area can be vastly different from his struggle in another area. It is also important to keep in mind that many children without dyslexia struggle with some of these same symptoms, as well.</p> <p>Look at your child as a whole and if there are multiple symptoms and a family history of dyslexia (diagnosed or undiagnosed). If your child has three or more warning signs, further evaluation may be necessary.</p>	<p>Delayed speech.</p> <p>Difficulty pronouncing words.</p> <p>Trouble following multi-step directions.</p> <p>Struggles with rhyming words.</p> <p>Difficulty reading single sight words.</p> <p>Confusing small two-letter words.</p> <p>Letter reversals.</p> <p>Word reversals.</p> <p>Difficulty connecting sounds and letters.</p> <p>Difficulty with word retrieval or naming problems.</p> <p>Family history of dyslexia (diagnosed or undiagnosed).</p>	<p>Trouble with rhyming words.</p> <p>Difficulty connecting sounds and letters.</p> <p>Trouble remembering sequences such as the days of the week, months of the year, 0-20, or a phone number.</p> <p>Have trouble distinguishing left and right.</p> <p>Has trouble remembering spoken directions.</p> <p>Difficulty identifying and remembering sight words.</p> <p>Misreading or omitting common short words (a, the, an, of).</p> <p>“Stumbling” through longer words.</p> <p>Poor reading comprehension.</p> <p>Slow, laborious oral reading.</p>	<p>Poor speller.</p> <p>Relies heavily on memory and oral communication.</p> <p>Avoids writing or uses editor.</p> <p>Difficulty with time management, organization, and planning.</p> <p>Hides reading problems or reads based on context.</p> <p>Can often be described as a “people person” with strong people skills.</p> <p>May be an entrepreneur.</p>

Resources:

Decoding Dyslexia Utah decodingdyslexiautah.org
 International Dyslexia Association ida.org

Learning Ally learningally.org
 Dyslexia Training Institute dyslexiatraininginstitute.org

*Qualified means someone trained and certified as a screener/evaluator by a legitimate organization. Barton Reading System and Dyslexic Training Institute certify evaluators/screeners. ** Source, *Overcoming Dyslexia* by Dr. Shaywitz.