

DYSLEXIA

There are many types of learning disabilities, but one of the most common is dyslexia. Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability in which a person has trouble understanding written words. Children with dyslexia usually also have difficulties pronouncing words, writing, and spelling. The extent of the effects of dyslexia depends on severity and effectiveness of instruction or remediation. Treatment and special instruction can help people with dyslexia learn to read and write effectively. Some common symptoms of dyslexia include:

- Trouble learning the alphabet and numbers
- Difficulty telling a story in the correct order
- Reads and writes letters in the wrong order or backwards
- Confuses math symbols
- Difficulty organizing and managing time and tasks
- Misreads information
- Reads slowly and inaccurately

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- LD Online: www.ldonline.org
- Learning Disabilities Association of America: www.lidaamerica.org

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IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- Have contact information for parents or guardians and the member's doctor in accessible places. An example of this would be behind the child's nametag and in the medical forms box in the main office at 4-H events. This form should include information such as what kinds of medications the child is taking, allergies, if any adaptive devices are used, and other health conditions. Note: most learning disabilities will not require medical information.
- Visit with the member and his or her parents about the member's learning disability. Example of questions to ask include:
 - B What support can we provide for you to get the most out of your 4-H project manuals?
 - C Do you have any concerns with the record keeping process, and if so, what areas are you concerned about?
- Understand that some people may not feel comfortable talking about certain aspects of their condition or disability. Do not force someone to answer questions that make them uncomfortable. Remind them that any information they share is voluntary, confidential, and not required.
- Record keeping and the evaluation of record books is an important part of the 4-H program. However, for someone with a learning disability, accurately and neatly keeping records may be difficult. Allow for modifications such as typing records or having verbal interviews with a member. Try to place more effort on what the member did and learned than on the neatness of the records.
- Avoid having members read aloud if it is known that a member has dyslexia or another learning disability that affects reading.
- Explain and model how to do a task. Some individuals learn better from auditory and visual cues.
- Use more visual cues, handouts, manipulatives, and pictures. If possible, provide handouts in advance, so the child can read at his or her own pace.
- Reword or help decipher confusing written directions.
- Avoid having the child listen and write at the same time.
- Allow extra time to complete a task that may be challenging for the child.

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