

# October is Dyslexia Awareness Month

References provided by Melissa Tremblay Brimmer, G&P Grade 3/4 Language Based Learning Disabilities Teacher, A/AOGPE, Certified Dyslexia Practitioner



Did you know that October is Dyslexia Awareness Month? This is especially important in our school as we are proudly home to two classes for children with Language Based Learning Disabilities (LBLD) who receive specialized instruction, while partnered with general education classrooms. Dyslexia falls under the umbrella of LBLD. The following information about dyslexia is provided by the ***International Dyslexia Association (IDA)*** website.

## WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, that result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia often experience difficulties with both oral and written other language skills, such as writing, and pronouncing words and writing. 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 without phonics-based reading instruction that is unavailable in most public schools. In its more severe forms, a student with dyslexia may qualify for special education with specially designed instruction, and as appropriate, accommodations.

## WHAT CAUSES DYSLEXIA?

The exact causes of dyslexia are still not completely clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. Moreover, most people with dyslexia have been found to have difficulty with identifying the separate speech sounds within a word and/or learning how letters represent those sounds, a key factor in their reading difficulties. Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn; with appropriate teaching methods, individuals with dyslexia can learn successfully.

The ***International Dyslexia Association*** is an excellent resource for further information, including the effects and early signs of a language based learning disability. And, as always, if you have concerns about your child's reading development, check in with their classroom teacher.

**If you are interested in learning more, please join Cambridge SE-PAC for a discussion of reading and dyslexia with Dr. Nadine Gaab:**

### **Struggling Readers with Dr. Nadine Gaab**

Thursday, November 15th at 6PM  
Cambridge CityWide Senior Center, 806 Mass. Ave.

[Register for this session now>>](#)

[www.eventbrite.com/e/se-pac-meeting-and-workshop-reading-with-nadine-gaab-tickets-50801567857](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/se-pac-meeting-and-workshop-reading-with-nadine-gaab-tickets-50801567857)

Dr. Gaab will discuss her research on language and reading development, including the neurology of developmental dyslexia. Through the Gaab Lab at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, her research team focuses on children diagnosed with or at risk for various developmental disorders, particularly language-based learning disabilities. Dr. Gaab is also on the faculty of Harvard Graduate School of Education and an adjunct at Brandeis University.

### **RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES IN CAMBRIDGE**

Cambridge Special Education Parent Advisory Council - The mission of the Cambridge Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SE-PAC) is to work for understanding of, respect for, and support of all children with special needs in the community. [www.se-pac.com](http://www.se-pac.com)

If you aren't sure how to connect with SE-PAC, call SE-PAC Family Liaison Zuleka Queen-Postell at 617.593.4402 or email [ZQueen-Postell@CPSD.US](mailto:ZQueen-Postell@CPSD.US) and she will tell you what's coming up that might be a match for your needs.

### **OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES**

Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity  
<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/resources/parents/what-parents-can-do/talking-with-your-child-about-dyslexia/>

The Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, [www.ortonacademy.org](http://www.ortonacademy.org)

Learning Disabilities Association of America  
[www.ldanatl.org](http://www.ldanatl.org)

National Institute of Child Health & Human Development "Put Reading First"  
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/Documents/PRFbrochure.pdf>