



You **CAN** Help Your Child

Since 1980, Neuhaus Education Center has been a trailblazer in solutions for overcoming obstacles to literacy, including dyslexia, and today is a nationally recognized leader in the Science of Reading. Its professional instruction for educators, referral and resource services for families, and classes for adult learners unlock a brighter future of *Literacy For All*.



You **CAN** Help Your Child

Neuhaus Education Center is an educational nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting reading success for all by providing educators with professional development in research-based methods of literacy instruction, information and resources to families, and direct services to adult learners.

Neuhaus Education Center offers resources for family members:

Family Support Coordinators are available to provide information and resources including consultations with parents and family members by phone or email.

Monthly Information Sessions are held at no cost to participants on designated Wednesdays and Saturdays address the following: reading difficulties, especially dyslexia; multisensory, evidence-based literacy instruction; and the Texas dyslexia legislation. This session was designed specifically for family members seeking information about how to help a struggling reader. We are often joined by educators, medical professionals, and others, but the content and resources were curated specifically with family members in mind. A live Q&A is held at the end.

The Collie Library and Pi Beta Phi Audio-Video Library lend books and videos on reading instruction, dyslexia, and related topics.

The Neuhaus Speaker Series features topics presented by industry experts and thought leaders dedicated to promoting reading success for all. Visit www.neuhaus.org/speakerseries for current schedule.

College Share seminars provide information to college-bound students with learning differences, their parents and family members, and interested professionals.

College Panel is a presentation by college students with learning differences who talk about their college experiences and share success stories.

Neuhaus classes and materials are available to family members as well as to teachers.

Visit our [website](#) for:

- Registration for presentations, classes, or seminars
- A downloadable copy of the family booklet ***You Can Help Your Child***
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Links to additional reliable sources of information

For more information or to register for seminars,
visit www.neuhaus.org/families or call (713) 664-7676.
You can also email us directly at NeuhausFSO@neuhaus.org.



You CAN Help Your Child

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Neuhaus Education Center’s dedication to *Literacy for All* includes resources for educators to support student acquisition of reading, school districts striving for excellence, families searching for answers, and adults who may have spent their lives concealing an inability to read.



I. WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

The diagnosis of dyslexia reflects a reading difficulty that is unexpected for a person's age, intelligence, level of education, or profession. It is a clinical diagnosis based on a thoughtful synthesis of information – from the child's (or adult's) personal and family history, from observations of spelling and reading, and from tests of reading and language. *Taken from Overcoming Dyslexia, Shaywitz, p. 132.*

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) defines dyslexia as “a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.” *Adopted by the IDA Board of Directors, November 12, 2002.*

DYSLEXIA IS NOT A DISEASE!

The word “dyslexia” comes from the Greek language and means poor language. Individuals with dyslexia have trouble with reading, writing, spelling, and/or math although they have the ability and have had opportunities to learn. Individuals with dyslexia can learn; they just learn in a different way. Often these individuals, who have talented and productive minds, are said to have a language learning difference.

As many as one in five students has dyslexia. Undiagnosed or without special instruction, dyslexia can lead to frustration, school failure, and low self-esteem. The common myths about dyslexia are that dyslexics read backwards and reverse words and letters. While these characteristics may be part of the problem with some individuals, they are NOT the most common or important attributes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DIFFICULTIES:

Individuals with dyslexia usually have some of the following characteristics:

Difficulty with oral language

- Late learning to talk
- Difficulty pronouncing words
- Difficulty acquiring vocabulary or using age-appropriate grammar
- Difficulty following directions
- Confusion with before/after, right/left, and so on
- Difficulty learning the alphabet, nursery rhymes, or songs
- Difficulty understanding concepts and relationships
- Difficulty with word retrieval or naming problems



Difficulty with reading

- Difficulty learning to read
- Difficulty identifying or generating rhyming words or counting syllables in words (phonological awareness)
- Difficulty with hearing and manipulating sounds in words (phonemic awareness)
- Difficulty distinguishing different sounds in words (phonological processing)
- Difficulty in learning the sounds of letters (phonics)
- Transposes the order of letters when reading or spelling
- Difficulty remembering names and/or the order of letters when reading
- Misreads or omits common little words
- “Stumbles” through longer words
- Poor reading comprehension during oral or silent reading
- Slow, laborious oral reading

Difficulty with written language

- Difficulty putting ideas on paper
- Many spelling mistakes
- May do well on weekly spelling tests, but there are many spelling mistakes in daily work
- Difficulty in proofreading

DOES MY CHILD HAVE OTHER RELATED LEARNING DISORDERS?

Difficulty with handwriting (Dysgraphia)

- Unsure of right or left handedness
- Poor or slow handwriting
- Messy and unorganized papers
- Difficulty copying
- Poor fine motor skills
- Difficulty remembering the kinesthetic movements to form letters correctly

Difficulty with math (Dyscalculia)

- Difficulty counting accurately
- May misread numbers
- Difficulty memorizing math facts
- Difficulty copying math problems and organizing written work
- Many calculation errors
- Difficulty retaining math vocabulary concepts

Difficulty with attention AD/HD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)

- Inattention
- Attention varies, based on interest level
- Distractibility
- Impulsivity
- Hyperactivity

Difficulty with motor skills (Dyspraxia)

- Difficulty planning and coordinating body movements
- Difficulty coordinating muscles to produce sounds

Difficulty with executive function/organization

- Loses papers
- Poor sense of time
- Forgets homework
- Messy desk
- Overwhelmed by too much input
- Works slowly
- Things are “out of sight, out of mind”

Other

- Difficulty naming colors, objects, and letters (rapid naming)
- Memory problems
- Needs to see or hear concepts many times in order to learn them
- Distracted by visual stimuli
- Downward trend in achievement test scores or school performance
- Work in school is inconsistent
- Teacher says, “If only she would try harder,” or “He’s lazy.”
- Relatives may have similar problems

Everyone probably can check one or two of these characteristics. That does not mean that everyone has dyslexia. A person with dyslexia usually has several of these characteristics, which persist over time and interfere with his or her learning. If your child is having difficulties learning to read and you have noted several of these characteristics in your child, he or she may need to be evaluated for dyslexia and/or a related disability. *Taken from Dyslexia: Beyond the Myth by Suzanne Carreker, Neuhaus Education Center (reprinted with permission from The Houston Branch of The International Dyslexia Association).*

II. WHAT ARE THE FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS REGARDING DYSLEXIA?

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA) 2004 - (FEDERAL SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW)

Dyslexia is a disorder that is included in the special education category and the diagnostic category of a *specific learning disability*.

“The term ‘specific learning disability’ means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia” (IDEA).

QUALIFYING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

With the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), schools are no longer tied to the discrepancy model for identifying and serving students with specific learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. The discrepancy model states there must be a significant difference between a student’s ability and his or her academic performance before he or she can be identified and qualified for special education services. The reauthorization of IDEA permits schools to use *Response to Intervention* (RTI) to identify those students who are not making adequate progress and may need additional instruction. Note that in Texas, “...the use of a tiered intervention process, such as Response to Intervention or RTI, must not be used to delay or deny an evaluation for dyslexia” (Texas Dyslexia Handbook, 2021, p. 15).

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES

Under IDEA, a *full and free individual educational evaluation (FIIE)* may be requested from the public school district or public charter school at no cost to parents. If a need for special education services is suspected, you should write to the Director of Special Education in your school district to request an educational evaluation. Include your child’s teacher and the principal of your child’s school.

Check with your state educational agency (Texas Education Agency), school administrators, or regional education service center for any rules that are specific to your state.

- The Texas Education Agency parent information line is (800) 252-9668.
- Region IV Education Service Center’s Office of Special Education can be reached at (713) 744-6365 or esc4.net.
- The Federal website for IDEA information is idea.ed.gov.

In Texas, with the 2021 Dyslexia Handbook update, if there is a suspicion of dyslexia, then the student must be referred for a full individual and initial evaluation (FIIE). For more information, see p. 23 of [The Dyslexia Handbook – 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders](#).

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

A full individual and initial evaluation (FIIE) should include a variety of tests to provide a complete evaluation of a student's strengths and learning needs. The areas and skills that should be measured are listed below. If a school district has employed RTI and a student is not making adequate progress, a battery of tests may be given to further evaluate the student's learning needs.

Testing of intelligence to determine:

- Your child's overall learning ability

Testing of reading to determine:

- Word decoding and recognition skills
- Reading vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Reading comprehension — oral and silent
- Phonological processing skills (awareness of speech sounds)
- Rapid, automatic naming skills

Testing of writing to determine:

- Understanding of sentence and paragraph structure
- Level of mechanics — spelling, grammar, handwriting
- Measure of content/ideas

Testing of oral language to determine:

- Auditory processing and comprehension
- Receptive and expressive language skills
- Linguistic awareness skills

Testing of math to determine:

- Basic computation skills
- Basic concept understanding
- Reasoning skills and application of skills



TEXAS STATE DEFINITION OF DYSLEXIA

The Dyslexia Handbook - 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders page 1, definition is as follows:

“Dyslexia” means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty to learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and socio-cultural opportunity. “Related disorders” include disorders similar to or related to dyslexia, such as developmental auditory perception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

TEXAS DYSLEXIA LEGISLATION AND YOUR RIGHTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Your school should have a copy of *The Dyslexia Handbook - 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*, which is published by the Texas Education Agency. Texas residents may reproduce the handbook for personal use, or the school is allowed to duplicate it for you. To obtain your own copy or to contact a dyslexia consultant, visit <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/dyslexia> or call the dyslexia hotline at (800) 232-3030.

DYSLEXIA ASSESSMENT IN TEXAS

According to *The Dyslexia Handbook - 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders* pages 28-29:

Domains to Assess

Academic Skills

The school administers measures that are related to the student’s educational needs. Difficulties in the areas of letter knowledge, word decoding, and fluency (rate, accuracy, and prosody) may be evident depending upon the student’s age and stage of reading development. In addition, many students with dyslexia may have difficulty with reading comprehension and written composition.

Cognitive Processes

Difficulties in phonological and phonemic awareness are typically seen in students with dyslexia and impact a student’s ability to learn letters and the sounds associated with letters, learn the alphabetic principle, decode words, and spell accurately. Rapid naming skills may or may not be weak; but if deficient, they are often associated with difficulties in automatically naming letters, reading words fluently, and reading connected text at an appropriate rate. Memory for letter patterns, letter sequences, and the letters in whole words (orthographic processing) may be selectively impaired or may coexist with phonological processing weaknesses. Finally, various language processes--such as morpheme and syntax awareness, memory and retrieval of verbal labels, and the ability to formulate ideas into grammatical sentences--may also be factors affecting reading (Berninger & Wolf, 2009, pp. 134-135).

Based on the student's academic difficulties and characteristics and/or language acquisition, additional areas related to vocabulary, listening comprehension, oral language proficiency, written expression, and other cognitive abilities may need to be assessed.

Possible Additional Areas:

- Vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Verbal expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Memory for letter or symbol sequences (orthographic processing)
- Mathematical calculation/reasoning
- Phonological memory
- Verbal working memory
- Processing speed

RECOMMENDED DYSLEXIA INTERVENTION IN TEXAS

Below are the components of instruction for students with dyslexia as outlined by *The Dyslexia Handbook - 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders* pages 39-43.

Standard Protocol Dyslexia Instruction

For the student who has not benefited from the research-based core reading instruction, the components of instruction will include additional focused intervention as appropriate for the reading needs of the student with dyslexia. Standard protocol dyslexia instruction provides evidence-based, multisensory, structured literacy instruction for students with dyslexia. A standard protocol dyslexia instructional program must be explicit, systematic, and intentional in its approach. This instruction is designed for all students with dyslexia and will often take place in a small group setting. Standard protocol dyslexia instruction must be evidence-based and effective for students with dyslexia, taught by an appropriately trained instructor, and implemented with fidelity.

Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction

- Phonological awareness
- Sound-symbol association
- Syllabication
- Orthography
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Reading comprehension
- Reading fluency

Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction

While it is necessary that students are provided intervention in the above content, it is also critical that the way in which the content is delivered be consistent with research-based practices. Principles of effective intervention for students with dyslexia include all of the following:

- Simultaneous, multisensory (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile)
- Systematic and cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
- Synthetic instruction
- Analytic instruction

In addition, because effective intervention requires highly structured and systematic delivery, it is critical that those who provide intervention for students with dyslexia be trained in the program used and that the program is implemented with fidelity.

Training and Practice Standards for Teachers of Students with Dyslexia

According to *The Dyslexia Handbook - 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*, pages 50-51, the knowledge and skills needed to teach reading include the following:

The psychology of reading and reading development

- The psychology of reading and reading development
- Basic facts about reading
- The characteristics of poor and novice readers
- Environmental and physiological factors in reading development
- How reading and spelling develop

Knowledge of the language structure

- Phonology
 - Phonetics
 - Morphology
 - Orthography
 - Semantics
 - Syntax and text structure
-
- *Practical skills of instruction--use of validated instructional practices*
 - *Assessment of classroom reading and writing skills. Moats, L.C. (1999). Teaching reading is rocket science (Item No. 39-0372). Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers.*





Instructional Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

According to *The Dyslexia Handbook - 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*, page 55:

“Students with dyslexia who receive dyslexia instruction that contains the components described in this chapter will be better equipped to meet the demands of grade-level or course instruction. In addition to dyslexia instruction, accommodations provide the student with dyslexia effective and equitable access to grade-level or course instruction in the general education classroom. Accommodations are not one size fits all; rather, the impact of dyslexia on each individual student determines the necessary accommodation.”

For more information see *The Dyslexia Handbook - 2021 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*. Download from tea.texas.gov/academics/dyslexia

III. WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE AT NEUHAUS?

FAMILY SUPPORT OFFICE

Neuhaus Family Support Coordinators are available for consultations either by phone or email to provide information and resources about appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia. Coordinators will share information about the laws in Texas that relate to instruction for students in public schools who are identified as having dyslexia. They can direct parents to reliable research-based information about dyslexia and effective reading interventions.

When appropriate resources are not available at the child's school, Coordinators may be able to provide referrals for instruction. Neuhaus refers to specialists who are certified as Certified Academic Language Therapists, Certified Academic Language Practitioners, and Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialists. We also refer to specialists-in-training who are actively participating in one of the Neuhaus Pathways to Certification.

To contact a Family Support Coordinator, email NeuhausFSO@neuhaus.org or call (713) 664-7676.

NEUHAUS SPECIALIST PREPARATION PROGRAM FOR DYSLEXIA THERAPISTS

The Neuhaus Dyslexia Specialist Preparation Program (DSSP) provides comprehensive professional development for individuals working with students with dyslexia and other related reading difficulties. The Program is accredited by the *International Multisensory Language Education Council* (IMSLEC). Individuals enrolled in the Program will complete 200 instructional hours and 700 clinical teaching hours.

Upon completion, individuals are eligible to sit for the ALTA Competency Exam at the appropriate level. Passing the exam qualifies the individual for membership in the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) as a **Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT)**, and the individual is eligible to apply to the State of Texas for licensure as a **Dyslexia Therapist (LDT)**.

A licensed dyslexia therapist may practice in a school, learning center, or private practice setting. A licensed dyslexia practitioner may practice only in an educational setting, including a school, learning center, or clinic.

As parents, it is appropriate to request confirmation of the educational preparation and licensing of the individual who is providing literacy instruction to your child.



IV. HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD?

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Visit neuhaus.org/families to find links to reliable sources of information about reading and dyslexia.

ATTEND AN UPCOMING EVENT

Monthly Information Sessions

Each month on a select Wednesday and Saturday, the Neuhaus Education Center hosts a free virtual information session on reading challenges, including dyslexia, multisensory, research-based instruction, and the Texas dyslexia legislation. This repeating presentation includes information on resources available at Neuhaus and within the Houston-area community. Parents, educators, and other professionals can benefit from this presentation. *Due to the personal nature of the Q&A portion of this presentation, the monthly information presentations will not be recorded.*

Dyslexia 101

Understand how and why some people struggle with learning to read, which of these people might be considered as having dyslexia, and what kind of reading instruction is essential to their learning.

This is a live, interactive virtual presentation that will not be recorded.

Dyslexia 201

Participants will have a hands-on experience learning key vocabulary and procedures typical of a structured literacy lesson for a student with dyslexia. This session is open to any interested audiences and those who want to understand their child's experience in dyslexia therapy.

This is a live, interactive virtual presentation that will not be recorded.

Dyslexia Simulation

Students with dyslexia frequently experience feelings of anxiety, frustration, and failure. This simulation guides you through reading and handwriting activities in a way that allows you to experience a sense of the struggles and frustration that students with learning differences often face. Understanding the difficulties that students face can help us provide more effective support.

This is a live, interactive virtual presentation that will not be recorded.



LOOK FOR HELPFUL BOOKS AND WEBSITES

A bibliography of suggested books and a list of internet resources in English and Spanish can be found at neuhaus.org/our-services/families/family-support.

ATTEND AN EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

The Neuhaus Speaker Series offers a variety of prerecorded, virtual presentations by experts in the field of reading. Some sessions feature topics specifically for family members. Additionally, visit www.neuhaus.org/events/previous-family-support-events/ for previous sessions for family members.

ATTEND COLLEGE SHARE

College Share occurs 1-2 times annually and provides college-bound high school students with learning differences, parents, and professionals with such information as choosing a college, legal rights, college admissions testing, and allowable accommodations. For information, call Neuhaus at (713) 664-7676 or visit the website at www.neuhaus.org/events/family-support-events/college-share-panel/.

ATTEND COLLEGE PANEL

College Panel occurs in early January and is co-sponsored by the Houston Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HBIDA) and The Briarwood School. High school students hear from current college students about how to find success in college despite learning challenges. For information, call Neuhaus at (713) 664-7676 or visit www.neuhaus.org/events/family-support-events/college-share-panel/.

V. WHICH ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDE HELPFUL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION?

At www.neuhaus.org/families there are links to web resources for families to access other reliable sources of information about reading and dyslexia:

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) - a non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals with dyslexia, their families, and the communities that support them.

(410) 296-0232	dyslexiaida.org
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The Houston Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HBIDA) - HBIDA annually presents a conference, a symposium, and a college panel dealing with dyslexia and related disorders. Free resource directories are available on their website.

(713) 364-5177	houstonida.org
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Learning Ally - a source for recorded books and textbooks. Texas public schools can apply for free accounts through a grant to get licenses for qualifying students at no cost.

learningally.org	
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Disability Rights Texas (*formerly Advocacy, Inc.*) - a nonprofit corporation funded by the U.S. Congress to protect and advocate for the legal rights of people with disabilities in Texas.

(713) 974-7691	disabilityrightstx.org
(800) 252-9108	

Understood - 15 nonprofit educational organizations joined forces to support parents of children with learning and attention issues throughout their journey. With state-of-the-art technology, personalized resources, free daily access to experts, a secure online community, practical tips and more, Understood aims to be that support. Sign up for the e-newsletters.

understood.org	
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Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity - This center at Yale University is a source of information for students, parents, and educators. Its mission is to “illuminate the strengths of children and adults with dyslexia.”

dyslexia.yale.edu

PARENT COMMENTS

“We have clearly seen the academic benefits from my son’s hard work in the Neuhaus program, but there are many ‘unspoken’ benefits as well. He understands the value of hard work and its reward. His self-esteem is strong and bolstered by a ‘can-do’ attitude. I share these personal traits with you because they are such a strong contrast from the ‘first-grade Joe’ with a broken spirit just starting the Neuhaus Basic Language Skills Program.”

“You do not have any idea how helpful you have been! It was a relief to be able to get answers to so many questions so quickly. We met with the dyslexia specialist you recommended, and she was perfect. We are impressed with her enthusiasm and commitment and are really excited to work with her.”

TEACHER COMMENTS

“I am absolutely sold.... I noticed my students’ reading ability increase due to this program.”

“This curriculum makes me feel confident and equipped to meet students’ needs and bring about change and growth. I can now say to a parent or student that I know this curriculum works. It takes time and effort, but it works. You will be able to read, spell and write.”



Neuhaus Education Center Mission and Vision

Mission

Neuhaus Education Center is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to promoting reading success for all. Neuhaus promotes reading success by providing evidence-based professional development to educators, information and resources to families, and direct services to adult learners.

Vision

Neuhaus Education Center creates the opportunity for reading success.

Connect with Us!

Join our social network community. Like, follow, share, and join the conversation!

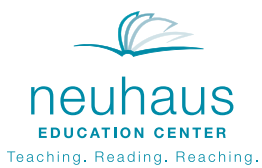


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YouTube	@NeuhausEducationCenter

Join our e-mail list!

Add impact to your inbox. Join our mailing list and receive news, professional development class information, and events and happenings at Neuhaus Education Center. [Sign up](#) today!





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