



Growing readers!

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8 Tips for Talking to Your Child's Teacher About Dyslexia

Talking to your child's teacher about dyslexia is important. It's the best way for her to understand your child's challenges, strengths and needs, so she'll be able to work with your child successfully. Here are eight tips to help you have productive conversations.

1: Make an appointment

Teachers' workdays are jam-packed. Rather than catching your child's teacher in the hallway before or after school, schedule a 15- to 20-minute appointment. That's typically enough time to have a productive talk. It's also short enough that the teacher won't be worried that it's taking up too much of her day.

2: Share your knowledge about dyslexia

Try not to assume how much the teacher does or doesn't know about dyslexia. No matter how much knowledge she has, you both have valuable information that can help your child.

Ask if she's come across any material on dyslexia that she's found helpful. Share articles or other information that has helped you. By sharing information, you can create common ground for conversation.

3: Share what has — and hasn't — worked

Your child's teacher may have experience working with kids who have dyslexia. But she might not know which strategies work best for your child. Talk to her about what's helped in the past. For example, maybe getting a set of teacher notes helped your child review for tests. Be sure to mention what hasn't worked, too. For instance, perhaps peer editing made your child feel embarrassed or anxious.

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5: Show examples

You can tell the teacher about how dyslexia impacts your child's work. But the teacher will have a much clearer idea if you show her examples.

Bring in samples of last year's writing, for instance. Or the first draft of the book report your child just turned in. Show the teacher the notes your child took in class that week. Work samples can help the teacher see exactly where your child is struggling.

6: Talk about your child's strengths, too

It takes time for teachers to get to know their students. And when your child has dyslexia, the teacher may spend her time focusing on understanding your child's challenges.

But it's important to talk to the teacher about what your child does well, too. Talk to the teacher about your child's strengths and interests. Remind her that dyslexia is only one part of who your child is. You could even encourage the teacher to plan opportunities for your child to shine.

7: Share information about current accommodations

Don't assume your child's teacher is familiar with your child's IEP or 504 plan, if your child has one. Give the teacher a copy and ask her to look over the accommodations.

Let her know you're available to talk about how accommodations for dyslexia make a difference for your child. At the same time, make it clear that you expect your child to do what she can to meet school expectations, with the support she needs to do it.

8: Ask how you can help

Remember that teachers work best with parents who want to be part of a solution. Ask what you can do at home to support what the teacher is doing in school. If you have ideas for what you can do, share them with the teacher.

Being in sync with the teacher lets you reinforce reading strategies your child is learning in school. It also lets your child know that you and the teacher are working as a team to provide the most support possible.