

The RESOURCE

Creating Avenues of Success for Dyslexics!

VOL. 21, ISSUE 2

founded in memory of Samuel T. Orton

FALL 2006

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thur., Oct. 12, 2006
“Creative Brains,” for
parents & educators at
RCOE (see pg. 6).

Sat., Nov. 4, 2006
“Dimensions of Dys-
lexia Conference in
Long Beach, CA, (p. 4).

**Friday & Saturday
March 16th & 17th, 2007**
“Literacy Conference:
Research to Practice”
featuring Maureen W.
Lovett & Patricia Kuhl
the Ontario Marriott
(pg. 8).

Board meetings—
Open to anyone with
the desire to make a
difference and enhance
awareness of language
learning differences.
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686-9837 for location
and times.

The Diagnosis of Dyslexia and Learning Disability

*by Jeffrey W. Gilger, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Discovery and Faculty Development
Purdue University College of Education*

The first obstacle is the definitions of dyslexia and learning disability. Do we need to be so specific in our need to classify children or in selecting teaching methods specific to each and every learning “problem”?

Physicians are often faced with a collection of symptoms that they attempt to make fit into neat categories with labels that we call “diagnoses.” These labels, and the research/data behind them, provide important information such as life-course, prognosis, and prescriptive treatment methods.

Of course, all people with the same diagnostic label do not look exactly alike nor do they necessarily respond similarly to the same treatment. Nonetheless, one of the objectives of medical science is to refine and develop reliable and valid diagnostic categories that can be used to discriminate cases accurately and ultimately advise the physician regarding the cause and treatment of the disease in question.

The field of LD began under a medical model and for many years has aspired to develop clear diagnostic schemes with clear directions for treatment. Unfortunately, as a complex neuropsychological trait, the

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The Influence of Research on Accommodation Policies

by Marilyn Zion

Educational research in the field of reading has uncovered much information that has had a positive impact on the lives of students with learning problems, their parents and their teachers. Through this research, we have come to understand better the root causes of reading problems, how to diagnose reading difficulties, and how to reach children at risk for reading failure. Educational research has also been used for a less obvious, but related purpose. It has been instrumental in shaping public perception and public policy regarding the fairness of providing accommodations to students with learning disabilities.

In recent years, there have been a number of court cases dealing with the issue of allowing people with learning disabilities to take standardized tests with special accommodations, such as extra time. Is this policy fair, or do the special accommodations that some students receive give them an unfair advantage? The popular press has frequently characterized students with learning disabilities as slackers and frauds who

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greatly exaggerate their conditions so they can take the best seats in universities and generally get what they do not deserve. Much like the stereotypical welfare mother, students with learning differences and their families are seen as forces unfairly manipulating the system for their own personal gain.

Guckenberger v. Boston University (1996-1997) was a landmark case that explored important questions about the definition and reality of learning disabilities, the fairness of granting accommodations, and how stereotypical thinking influenced the actions of some officials at Boston University. The case was filed by a group of students with learning disabilities after a sudden change in the university's policies for proving one had a learning disability and receiving accommodations. These changes were initiated by the very opinionated and outspoken provost of the college, Jon Westling, who had strong beliefs about learning disabilities. For example, in 1995, Westling spoke at a conference where he told the supposedly true story of a student dubbed "Somnolent Samantha" who needed the accommodations of extra time, a seat in front of class and copies of the lecture notes. In addition, Samantha might fall asleep in class, so Westling needed to be prepared to fill her in on any information she missed while dozing. Westling stated that this young woman "exemplified students who were encouraged to seek help rather than work to their full potential," but later admitted that Samantha did not exist (Wolinsky, p. 287).

Although both sides claimed victory when the case was finally settled, most of the decisions were favorable to students with learning disabilities, and these decisions were reached based on information derived from research. For example, the court concluded that students with dyslexia could continue to substitute another course in place of the foreign language requirement. The court came to this determination because there was substantial research to show that, for some students, learning a foreign language was a Sisyphean task. Secondly, the court found that staff at BU were guilty of forming many policies based on "uninformed stereotypes about the learning disabled" (Wolinsky, 1999, p. 288). Although many people share such stereotypical views, research provided the objective ammunition needed to fight unfounded but widely held misconceptions about the nature of learning disabilities.

Shortly before the ruling, an article appeared in the *New Republic* (1997) called *Defining Disability Down* in which Ruth Shalit questioned the reality of learning disabilities and wondered if the civil rights law has to cover "the dysfunctional, the debilitated and the drowsy." She claimed that individuals with learning differences are really very privileged because they get many special entitlements, such as extra time on important tests like the SAT. She quoted a study conducted by the College Board claiming that most individuals who take the SAT untimed are able to raise their score by 100 points. She also noted that the diagnosis of learning disabilities is booming and attributed this to "the hordes of pushy parents" who are creating a culture "where the more problems you have, the better off you may be." How true is Shalit's implicit claim that allowing students with learning disabilities extra time on standardized high-stakes tests gives them an unfair advantage?

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Local Resources

Look for books & videos on dyslexia and learning issues at your local public library! Our branch has donated a large number of items to local libraries in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties four times, over the last few years. Check it out – the libraries have interlibrary sharing programs.

A Message from Your President

by Regina G. Richards

The happiness of life is made up
of the little charities of a kiss or a smile,
a kind look, a heartfelt compliment.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Our IEB mission is.....*Facilitating Literacy Success in Our Communities*

We designed our mission to create a climate of hope for those in our communities. While we focus on dyslexia and other literacy issues, our goals extend to any student who may struggle with learning and the school environment.

When people run out of hope, their behavior deteriorates: ordinarily generous people can become stingy, the kind can become mean, and calm, gentle people can become violent. We strive to bring hope to those who struggle with literacy—hope through suggestions for parents, strategies for students to use, and teacher training using the highest quality evidence-based philosophies and techniques.

Since our Branch began in 1984, we have made a positive difference in the lives of many children and adults throughout Riverside, San Bernardino, and Orange Counties. It is so gratifying to hear the stories of how this concept or that set of strategies helped a given child. But, there is still so much more to do. There are still children, parents, and teachers without enough hope.

Your Inland Empire Branch is composed of a vast number of dedicated and caring volunteers working diligently to fulfill our mission. Won't you consider joining us? Every minute you can volunteer to help us, every dollar you can contribute, and every idea you can share will help all of us pull together to continue to bring hope and quality information to our communities.

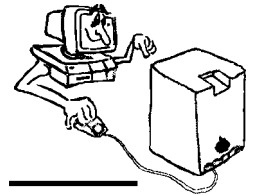
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I am not the same person I was yesterday because
each day I learn and experience more.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at our wonderful events this year. We have activities planned for October, November, January, March and sometime in Spring. Your Inland Empire Branch is a wonderful collection of varied individuals—consider joining us and sharing your ideas.

The Inland Empire Branch...
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Looking for information??

www.ldonline.org is an invaluable website for all kinds of information for parents, children, teachers, and other professionals.

Check out "LD in Depth." Click on any of the large variety of topics for articles and help lists.



DIMENSIONS OF DYSLEXIA

*Sponsored by the Southern California Consortium
of The International Dyslexia Association*

Saturday, Nov. 4, 2006

Renaissance Hotel, Long Beach

111 East Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, California

SPEAKERS

Guinevere Eden, D. Physiology from Oxford University

Dr. Eden specializes in studying visual, spatial and language processing in reading disabled children. Since 1996, she has been at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., focusing on using functional MRI to study children with and without reading difficulties. Her focus is on improved understanding of the neural mechanisms of developmental reading disability to suggest novel approaches leading to improvements in diagnosis and treatment.

Kristine Laverty, Ph.D.

A psychologist in San Diego specializing in diagnosing and treating learning differences, she focuses on the emotional aspects of having a learning difference and helping parents and teachers understand testing results.

Andrew Stetkevich, M.A.

Staff Development Specialist, Riverside Unified School District
A State Trainer in Student Success Team Process
He is also a nationally endorsed Project Read Trainer.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

Teachers (all levels), parents, special education support staff,
speech/language therapists, adult dyslexics, and anyone interested
in literacy

Further information available under "events" at www.dyslexia-ca.org

Or, call 818/506-8866

Southern California Consortium of The International Dyslexia Association
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student's writing paper. Then the student can set up his paper and copy the heading information in the holes, then flip the template out of the way to finish the assignment.

- ✦ Break writing into stages. Teach the stages of the writing process (brainstorming, drafting, editing, and proofing, etc.). On a computer, a student can make a rough draft, copy it, and then revise the copy, so that both the rough draft and final product can be evaluated without extra typing.

- ✦ Don't grade spelling on rough drafts or one-sitting assignments.

- ✦ Encourage the student to use a spellchecker and have someone else proof-read his work. Speaking spellcheckers (with headphones) are recommended, especially if the student may not be able to recognize the correct word.

- ✦ Allow the student to use either cursive or manuscript, whichever is most legible.

- ✦ Teach cursive earlier than would be expected, as some students find cursive easier to manage, and the student will have more time to learn it.

4. Change the tools:

- ✦ Paper with raised lines can help primary students keep writing on the line.

- ✦ Allow older students to use the line width of their choice.

Keep in mind that some students use small writing to disguise messiness or poor spelling, though.

- ✦ Different colored paper or writing instruments can sometimes help writers of all ages.

- ✦ Graph paper or lined paper turned sideways can help students line up numbers for math problems.

- ✦ A comfortable writing instrument is important. Many students have difficulty writing with ballpoint pens, preferring more friction in contact with the paper. Mechanical pencils are very popular. Let the student find a favorite pen or

pencil (and then get more than one like that).

- ✦ Have pencil grips available for everybody, no matter what the grade. Sometimes high school students enjoy the novelty of pencil grips or even big "primary pencils."

- ✦ Teach Word Processing. Bear in mind that learning to use a word processor may be difficult for the same reasons that handwriting is difficult. Consider keyboarding instruction or word processing software which addresses the needs of learning disabled students. Features may include teaching the keystrokes alphabetically (instead of the "home row" sequence), or sensors to change the "feel" of the D and K keys so that the student can find the right position kinesthetically.

- ✦ Hunt down the newer editing features in word processing programs which can really make a difference for struggling writers. Special programs have text-to-speech and word prediction features.

- ✦ Consider speech recognition software. Even more than with word processing, issues which make writing difficult can make learning to use speech recognition software difficult, especially if the student has reading, speech, or attention challenges. However, if the student and teacher are willing to invest time and effort in training the software to the student's voice, and learning to use it, the student can be freed from the motor processes of writing or keyboarding.

For some situations, accommodations will be inadequate to remove the barriers that writing problems pose. Assignments can be modified without sacrificing learning by figuring out just what information needs to be expressed (specific people and events in history, scientific concepts, etc.) and designing ways to express that knowledge in other ways.

Credit Illinois Branch of IDA, Summer 2002

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Definition:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological 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 growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.


Adopted by the International Dyslexia Association
Board of Directors, November 2002

Flyer for October 12th 2006
Community Meeting in Riverside
in honor of
Dyslexia Awareness Month

See Events page

Top 10 Reasons to Join the International Dyslexia Association

10. Because it feels good to be part of something that does good
9. Because contributing to the "Dyslexia Awareness Movement" helps put to rest the myth that dyslexia is only seeing backwards
8. Because membership provides alerts and discounts for national and local conferences
7. Because membership in IDA is an essential source of funding for programs and outreach, which includes intellectual information, emotional support, networking & advocacy efforts
6. Because IDA is the most accepted and recognized professional group pertaining to the field of dyslexia
5. Because membership in IDA provides the most complete access to current, credible research available in the field of literacy
4. Because research has shown that teachers using scientifically based interventions CAN teach children with dyslexia and other literacy issues to read — ACCESS IS THE KEY
3. Because 1 in 5 individuals struggle with the process of learning to read — 3 out of 4 children who cannot read by the 4th grade end up on public assistance, in jail, or in menial jobs
2. Because our job is to continue to educate and support everyone that dyslexia touches
1. Because if everyone does his job, together, we can make a real difference!



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Save the Date!

Friday, March 16th and Saturday, March 17th 2007,
for the continuation of our *Research to Practice Conference*
(again at the Ontario Airport Marriott Hotel)

Speakers: Maureen W. Lovett and Patricia Kuhl

Dr. Maureen W. Lovett is Professor of Paediatrics and Psychology, and the Senior Scientist and Director of the Brain and Behaviour Program at the Learning Disabilities Research Program, as well as, at the University of Toronto. Her research is unique because over several decades she has demonstrated the importance of combining the teaching of strategies with teaching specific skills in a sequential manner. She is an energetic speaker with a gift for explaining complex ideas in a concrete, easy-to-follow manner. Her presentations lead the participant from the theory to specific strategies, and participants obtain many concrete ideas to use with their own students.

Dr. Patricia Kuhl is co-director at the University of Washington Center for Mind, Brain and Learning and she is a professor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences. Her research focuses on language acquisition and processing by the brain and she relates this directly to literacy and to autism. She has demonstrated how early language exposure alters the mechanisms of perception and has dramatically shown that language processing involves many senses, including vision, both in early infancy and in adulthood. Her work has broad implications, extending to psychology, linguistics and education for its applicability to bilingual education and to neuroscience for its implications for brain mapping of complex information. She is a dynamic speaker who presents research and related strategies in an easy-to-understand manner through the use of multiple visual aids.

Visit
the
national
office of the
IDA website
www.interdys.org

Including:

- * New Kids Only web site
- * Ask the Experts
- * Facts about dyslexia
- * Pen pals bulletin board
- * A special members only section
- * Resources . . . and much, much more!



Adults with Dyslexia and the Workplace

Adults with dyslexia in the workplace often face unique challenges: Here are some suggestions for finding the right job match:

- Match your interests with your job prospects; look for jobs that will keep your attention.
- Identify jobs that you would find rewarding (e.g., working with children or doing research).
- Consider your personality traits; evaluate if the work fits your personality.
- Identify any special skills needed for the job you are considering (filing, word processing, supervising, etc.). Decide if you have the skills for the job or can obtain them.
- Analyze your work values (e.g., punctuality, helping others, working hard, etc.). Do your values match the job you are considering?
- Role-play the job interview process as a way to decrease anxiety and build self-confidence.
- Dress appropriately for the job interview. Usually, more formal clothes are expected.
- Be prompt with your appointments. Allow for possible travel delays.
- Bring copies of any materials with you that the employer may want to see (recommendation letters, application information, etc.).
- Be realistic about the salary level and benefits. You may need to work up to the position you want to obtain.
- During the interview, try to emphasize your strengths as being assets for the job.
- Provide the employer information needed about prior jobs. Speak openly about previous successes or frustrations.
- Seek information about a potential employer before the interview if possible. Talk to someone who already works for the firm or industry.

This information was drawn from Fact Sheet #7, Information provided by the International Dyslexia Association.

Accommodations for Students with Handwriting Problems

by Susan Jones, M.Ed.

Many students struggle to produce neat, expressive written work, whether or not they have accompanying physical or cognitive difficulties. They may learn much less from an assignment because they must focus on writing mechanics instead of content. After spending more time on an assignment than their peers, these students understand the material less. Not surprisingly, belief in their ability to learn suffers. When the writing task is the primary barrier to learning or demonstrating knowledge, then accommodations, modifications, and remediation for these problems may be in order.

SIGNS OF DYSGRAPHIA

- ✦ Generally illegible writing (despite appropriate time and attention)
- ✦ Inconsistencies: mixtures of print and cursive, upper and lower case, or irregular sizes, shapes, or slant of letters
- ✦ Unfinished words or letters, omitted words
- ✦ Inconsistent position on page with respect to lines and margins
- ✦ Cramped or unusual grip, especially holding the writing instrument very close to the paper, or holding thumb over two fingers and writing from the wrist
- ✦ Strange wrist, body, or paper position
- ✦ Talking to self while writing, or carefully watching the hand that is writing
- ✦ Slow or labored copying or writing—even if it is neat and legible
- ✦ Content which does not reflect the student's other language skills

ACCOMMODATIONS:

1. Change the demands of writing rate:
 - ✦ Allow more time for written tasks including note-taking, copying and tests.
 - ✦ Allow students to begin projects or assignments early.

- ✦ Include time in the student's schedule (resource room, or library or office assistant) that could also be used for written work.
- ✦ Encourage learning keyboarding skills to increase the speed and legibility of written work.
- ✦ Have the student prepare assignment papers in advance with required headings (Name, Date, etc.).

2. Adjust the volume:

- ✦ Provide an incomplete outline of lecture notes. The student can fill in details under major headings or headings over the detail
- ✦ Provide a scribe for some assignments or tests (or parts of tests). Train a scribe to write what the student says verbatim ("I'm going to be your secretary") and then allow the student to make changes, without assistance from the scribe.
- ✦ Allow abbreviations in some writing (e.g., b/c for because). Have the student develop a notebook of abbreviations.
- ✦ Reduce copying: e.g., provide math worksheets with the problems already on it instead of copying from a book.

3. Change the complexity:

- ✦ Provide a writing binder for written assignments, with a model of cursive or print letters on the inside cover (significantly easier to refer to than one on the wall).
- ✦ Make a laminated template of the required format for written work. Make a cutout where the name, date, and assignment would go and model it next to the cutout. Three-hole punch it and put it into the binder on top of the

[Continued on page 5](#)

Janice S. Cleveland

Attorney-at-Law

**Specializing in advocating
for the rights of special
education children**

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IDA Disclaimer

The International Dyslexia Association supports efforts to provide dyslexic individuals with appropriate instruction and to identify these individuals at an early age. The Association believes that multisensory teaching and learning is the best approach currently available for those affected by dyslexia.

The Association, however, does not endorse any specific program, speaker, or instructional materials, noting that there are a number of such which present the critical components of instruction as defined by the Task Force on Multisensory Teaching which works under the guidance of the Association's Teacher Education Issues Committee.



Book Review

by Beverly Metcalf, MS, BCET, FAET

Ready or Not Here Life Comes

By Melvin D. Levine, MD

Simon and Schuster

Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas

New York, NY 10020

Hardback, 273 pp. References, Index

As you read this book, you will be reminded of why our organization is so fortunate to have Dr. Mel Levine on its Advisory Committee. In his new book, *Ready or Not Here Life Comes*, Dr. Levine provides ideas for helping to prepare students who are making the transition from the school environment to the workplace. However, the book is not meant for the older students, because preparation for the crossover from education to work must begin early. In his preface Dr. Levine writes, "I doubt if any mother, father or teacher ever actually posed the question to me, 'What will he be like when he's in his twenties?' But I know they never stopped thinking about it and may have wondered and worried mostly in silence." Because educational therapists define their task as working with the whole child, this question is often in our minds. This book encourages us to go beyond our usual instructional program—fighting for accommodations, assisting organizations, remediation, motivation, and teaching about learning styles—to considering the student's preparation for life after school.

In his inimitable style, Dr. Levine lists, discusses, graphs, and furnishes vignettes to inform his readers—parents, educators, adolescents, and young adults—about the pitfalls encountered in the years after school, along the challenging path to adulthood. *Ready or Not, Here Life Comes* advocates a diagnostic process that goes from "Getting Ready" to "Ways To Grow" to "Mind Growers." He offers an inventory that evaluates progress over time, and provides, step-by-step, things to be done for short term and long term readiness.

Vignettes throughout the book suggest reasons for difficulties. A few of the titles are "Persistent Adolescence," "Cool Dudeship," "Former Heroes," "Conservative Non-Risk Takers," "The End of Free Rides." For each Vignette Dr. Levine suggests ways to work on twelve vital growth processes that he divides into four areas: inner direction, interpretation, instrumentation, and interaction. Each area contains three growth steps. Under inner direction, the steps are inside insight, foresight, and self-launching. The steps under interpretation are comprehension, pattern recognition, and evaluative thinking. Under instrumentation, the steps are skill building and adaptation, work efficiency, and productive thinking. Interaction embodies communication, alliance formation and reputation management, and political behavior.

As readers familiar with Dr. Levine's work would expect, he provides lists and graphs that break down these subjects into thoughtful, manageable, easy-to-use assists in the process of moving from the start-up years to adulthood. Because these complex ideas are presented in such clearly stated sections, this book would be very easy for educational therapists to use as an adjunct to our more academic-oriented work.

At a time when there is great interest in "mindfulness" and executive function, Dr. Levine's pediatric, clinical approach complements other readings. This book provides the perspective that in spite of a predictable school life, with helpful support and interventions, the transition from school to work life can be very difficult for students not prepared with self-knowledge and an understanding of the outside world (sometimes called "mindfulness").

In a beautiful epilogue, someone with the pseudonym Carol Carter traces her "helluva trip" from age twenty to thirty before finding fulfillment. She concludes, "And I have some friends who just plod without going anywhere. They have to be very unhappy and totally bored and trapped in what they are doing or not doing, but they may not realize how they feel. I wish I could help them. I wish all of us could have been more ready for all of this." Well, educational therapists could help, and Dr. Levine's new book is a handy way to get started.

Beverly Metcalf is a past president of AET. She serves as Chair of the Advisory Board and as Supervision Chair of the Membership Committee. She is retired from educational therapy practice, but continues to write, lecture, and teach on the subject and to serve as retired faculty. Reprinted with permission of AET (Association of Educational Therapists), UCSF Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Breimhorst v. ETS (2000) dealt specifically with the issue of the fairness of granting extra time to students with disabilities. Mark Breimhorst, a Stanford University graduate who was born with no hands, initiated the case. He was allowed to take the Graduate Management Test with the accommodations of extra time and the use of a computer equipped with a trackball. However, his test was “flagged” meaning that it was stamped “scores obtained under special conditions” (Widavsky, 2001, p. 1). Following the court decision, the Educational Testing Service agreed to stop the practice of flagging the tests of individuals with disabilities who use accommodations. The following year the College Board who administers the SAT agreed to appoint a panel of experts to study the issue of extended time, and the panel would also decide if the College Board should stop the practice of flagging their tests.

The panel ultimately recommended discontinuing the flagging of the SAT “based on scientific, psychometric and social evidence” (Gregg, 2001, p. 2). They arrived at the following findings based on their review of the current research. First, the vast majority of students with learning disabilities are those with reading disabilities or dyslexia, and “there is strong evidence that students do not outgrow a reading disability” (Gregg, 2001, p. 3). They found that although students with dyslexia often become accurate readers, most remain very slow readers. More significantly, they concluded that “the need for extra time is further demonstrated by data indicating that while students with reading disabilities show significant increase in test scores with extra time, other nondisabled students do not demonstrate such a significant increase” (Gregg,

2001, p. 3). The panel’s findings challenged the widely held belief that if everyone could take the SAT’s untimed they would improve their score by hundreds of points. The research simply does not support this claim. While most people would do somewhat better if they took tests untimed, individuals with learning disabilities score *significantly* better with extended time. The panel also came to three other important conclusions. First, due to flagging, many students with learning disabilities did not request extended time. Second, students with learning disabilities were under-admitted to college. Finally, the panel concluded that sometimes “it is necessary to treat people differently in order to treat them equally” (Gregg, 2001, p. 4).

Greg, N., Mather, N., Shaywitz, S., & Sireci, S. (2002). *The flagging test scores of individuals with disabilities who are granted the accommodation of extended time: a report of the majority opinion of the blue ribbon panel on flagging*. From <http://www.drlegal.org/cases/ask>

Shalit, R. (1997). *Defining disability down*. *New Republic*, 214(8), 1-9.

Wildavsky, B. (1999). *Helping or hurting*. *U.S. News and World Report*. 130(7).

Wolinsky, S. (1999). *Federal law and the accommodation of students with LD: the lawyers’ look at the BU decision*. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*. 12(4), 286-291.

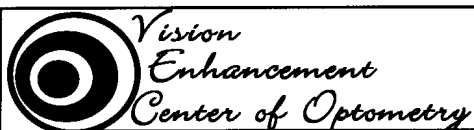
This article comes to us from the Winter, 2005 edition of the Illinois Branch of The International Dyslexia Association’s newsletter.

Local Resources

Look for books & videos on dyslexia and learning issues at your local public library! Our branch has donated a large number of items to local libraries in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties four times, over the last few years. Check it out – the libraries have interlibrary sharing programs.

Have you noticed?

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October is National Dyslexia Awareness Month

Let us hear from you!

The Resource is intended as an educational resource for professionals and families alike. We welcome your input on our newsletter. Please send us your ideas for future articles, book reviews, upcoming seminars, etc. We would also love to be able to share "success stories" of individuals in our area.

- Help us spread awareness about literacy problems!
- Share information about the Inland Empire Branch of IDA
- Attend one of our events
- Bring a friend, colleague, and/or relative to one of our events
- Check out our information on our web site – www.dyslexia-ca.org

In an effort to promote greater knowledge and understanding of dyslexia and related learning disabilities, the Board of Directors of The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) has officially designated the month of October as National Dyslexia Awareness Month.

According to The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), 1 of every 3 special education students drops out of school and, tragically, a high school drop-out has a greater likelihood of going to jail than a smoker has of getting cancer.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Early identification and appropriate intervention are critical. If identified early, a learning disability can be treated through effective teaching methods and the majority of students with learning disabilities will have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

"When children do not learn to read, their lives are affected forever", says IDA's President, Nancy Hennessy. "Academically, socially, economically, and emotionally, these individuals unnecessarily find themselves at risk. Teaching a child to read is a fundamental responsibility of our educational system. IDA believes strongly that effective instruction depends on the qualitative preparation of our teaching corps and on-going professional development. If we give our teachers the right tools, they will succeed and our children will also succeed."

The Inland Empire Board of Directors

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Dovid Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund



✦ Contributions to the Dovid Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund are welcome to help provide scholarships to parents and teachers to expand their knowledge of dyslexia. The fund was established by Regina and Irv Richards in memory of their son Dovid, who was in a fatal car accident shortly after his 21st birthday.

✦ We are a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible. Donations are a meaningful way to remember a loved one, honor a special occasion, or show appreciation for someone. Just send a note with your donation, indicating “in memory of” or “in honor of.” Include the name and address of the person you wish to receive the acknowledgment. You will also receive acknowledgment of your contribution.

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Help us help
others.**



Who we are...

In 1984, several **Inland Empire** professionals and parents determined our area had a need for an organization to disseminate accurate & current information on dyslexia and we contacted the International Dyslexia Association. Now, a variety of professionals, parents and adults with dyslexia comprise the all-volunteer Board of Directors representing Riverside, San Bernardino and portions of Orange County here in So. California.

We actively promote effective teaching practices and related educational intervention strategies **for any individual with a language-based learning disability**. We are committed to the dissemination of research-based knowledge that supports multi-sensory structured language teaching.

We invite you to join our **mailing list**: receive Newsletters & Email announcements on new research. To join, send us your name, address, phone, email or see “Contact Us” form on our web site.

We invite you to join us...

We are a volunteer organization and our Board of Directors is a working board. The strength of our organization relies on the interest and commitment of its volunteers. Won't you help us in our goal of “*Facilitating Literacy Success in Our Communities*”?

Attention United Way Contributors

You can designate your contributions through the United Way to the **Inland Empire Branch of the International Dyslexia Association** when you choose the category “**OTHER**” and include our name and address: Inland Empire Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, P.O. Box 6701, San Bernardino, CA 92412

Thank you to all who have been designating your United Way contributions to IEB-IDA!

The Diagnosis of Dyslexia and Learning Disability – Continued from page 1

various forms of LD do not make themselves as readily classifiable as do, say many medical conditions. While true, this fact has not prevented researchers from making great advances in the definitions, descriptions, and understanding of LDs.

While imperfect as a diagnostic scheme, clinicians, psychiatrists, teachers and other professionals, often employ labels such as “reading disorder (or dyslexia)”, “math disorder”, “developmental coordination disorder”, among others (e.g., see the DSM-IV-TR; 2000, APA Press, Washington, DC). One of the reasons why labels are often used is that they provide legal access to services for the LD individual.

The implication of such labels is that each disorder is independent in terms of symptoms and cause, and therefore, most likely, in terms of treatments as well. However, research indicates that biologically and neurologically, many disorders may be related or have variable etiologies across people with the same basic diagnosis. Moreover, any particular individual may fit the criteria for multiple diagnoses. For example, Attention Deficit Disorder, Writing Disorder, and other disorders, often co-occur with a reading problem.

Also relevant to our discussion, is research that indicates: 1. That irrespective of cause, individuals with the same diagnostic LD label can look different in terms of degree of deficit (e.g., mild to severe); 2. That irrespective of a particular LD label individuals can vary in terms of their profiles of neurocognitive strengths and weaknesses; 3. That LD symptomology and a person’s neurocognitive profile can change with age, whether or not treatment is provided; and, 4. That individuals with the same LD label can show very different responses to the treatments received.

So, back to the basic questions as posed, but paraphrased here: What are the obstacles to defining dyslexia and LD in general? And is the field far enough along to know what treatment to prescribe, when and for how long?

Yes, there are obstacles in LD definitions, some of which were summarized above. Some experts even say that the idea of a learning disability as a distinct disorder or disease is in error to begin with and that low and high learning skills are more-or-less on the same continuum. This debate is important as the form of the classification scheme can guide teaching methods (see http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/research_digest/rethinking_ld.pdf).

On the other hand, RD is perhaps the best studied LD and its diagnostic criteria have been fairly well described (see *Annals of Dyslexia*, v. 53, 2003, Pgs. 1-14). There are no doubt other forms of LD but a better understanding of these cognitive profiles and etiologies awaits further research. Until that research is done, it is difficult to reliably and validly prescribe specific treatments for specific disorders other than, say, people with math problems need math training, while people with writing problems need writing practice. It is also difficult to prescribe what the best treatment would be for even one specific disorder like dyslexia (e.g., the type of reading training program). Why?

Again, some of the reasons for this difficulty stem from the complexities outlined above, such as differences in the expression (e.g., symptoms or profile of cognitive strengths and weaknesses) of dyslexia across ages and individuals. There is also a relative bias in favor of the amount of research done on the causes and definitions of RD, compared to the amount of methodologically sound research on treatments and treatment practices for reading-related disorders. There is, however, a push in the nation to refocus a lot of research energy and funding towards the study of academic skill remediation and teaching in general (see <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/>).

Focusing on reading, there are a handful of reading programs shown to be efficacious with dyslexic populations in general (see <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/>). It is also noteworthy that many of the reading teaching strategies that work for the RD population also work for normal and low normal readers, and vice versa. Bearing in mind the caveats already mentioned, such treatments are a good place to start if you are looking for help while thing about a remediation plan. While doing so, it is good to bear in mind the following advice: assess the child thoroughly in the reading domain and other domains such that a well described profile of strengths and weaknesses can be developed; as much as possible, integrate current best practices in the remediation of deficits with a reliance on the individual’s strengths; and, track the individual with regular evaluations of progress and needs, modifying the treatment program as indicated.

This article comes to us from the Fall, 2005 edition of the Indiana Branch of The International Dyslexia Association’s newsletter.

Save-The-Date!

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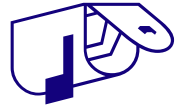
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October is National Dyslexia Awareness Month

Our Inland Empire Branch is celebrating Dyslexia Awareness Month:

- ❖ By obtaining numerous Proclamations from local mayors declaring October as National Dyslexia Awareness Month
- ❖ By sponsoring a free community program in Riverside on Thursday, October 12th celebrating the Creative Minds of Dyslexics, followed by IEB members at tables for your specific questions (see page 6).
- ❖ By sponsoring a free community program in Orange County - location to be arranged (check our website)

Help us spread awareness about literacy problems!

- ❖ Share information about the Inland Empire Branch of IDA
- ❖ Attend one of our events
- ❖ Bring a friend, colleague, and/or relative to one of our events
- ❖ Check out our information on our web site - www.dyslexia-ca.org



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