

SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA BY AGE



PRESCHOOL (AGES 3–5)

TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Notice repeated sounds when spoken (like Baa, Baa, Black Sheep)
- Notices and enjoys rhymes in songs
- Understand that words carry meaning
- Know at least 10 letters, including those in their name

SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

- Have trouble learning common nursery rhymes
- Don't recognize rhyming patterns
- Struggle to learn and remember alphabet letters
- Use persistent "baby talk" beyond what's expected

K - 1ST GRADE (AGES 5–7)

TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Learns letter-sound relationships (e.g., B says /b/)
- Understands that sounds build words
- Starts decoding simple words (e.g., cat, map)
- Begins to understand what they read
- Recognizes reading as meaningful and enjoyable

SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

- Don't connect letters with their sounds
- Have trouble breaking words into sounds or blending them
- Struggles to sound out even basic words
- Makes reading mistakes that don't match the letters
- Complain that reading is hard or avoid it altogether

2ND GRADE (AGES 7+)

TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Sounds out unfamiliar words independently
- Breaks long words into parts (e.g., sun/shine)
- Reads fluently with good comprehension
- Spells common words correctly
- Focuses on meaning while reading

SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

- Frequently guesses instead of decoding
- Has trouble decoding multisyllabic words
- Reads slowly or avoids reading aloud
- Has poor spelling and messy handwriting
- Confuses similar-sounding words (e.g., form/from)

For more information, visit improvingliteracy.org.