

This month the Florida PTA is celebrating Dyslexia Awareness Month. On October 15th we ask you to join us in lighting it up for Dyslexia by wearing red!

What is Dyslexia? According to the International Dyslexia Association, Dyslexia is 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 growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

Dyslexia is quite common with an estimated 15% of Americans having this learning disability. Within a school, of the children diagnosed with a specific learning disability (SLD), 70-80% have deficits in reading. Although dyslexia is a lifelong disability, children and adults can learn to read utilizing Structured Literacy instructional techniques. If children who have dyslexia receive effective phonological awareness and phonics training in Kindergarten and 1st grade, they will have significantly fewer problems in learning to read at grade level than children who are not identified or helped until 3rd grade.

By using the EduData Report Cards, <https://edudata.fldoe.org/>, you can find the number of children who are enrolled in the ESE program in your district, and your local school. From there you can ask your ESE Department about the number of children diagnosed with a specific learning disability.

During the 2020 Legislative Session, Florida PTA worked with Decoding Dyslexia Florida and Senator Gayle Harrell to support legislation that would have recognized dyslexia as a specific learning disability, provided screening for any students in grades K-3 who are struggling in reading and provided access to more resources to specifically address dyslexia. While the bill did not pass, Florida PTA is committed to ensuring the passing of legislation that will support students with dyslexia.

Please check out our new dyslexia resources on our Florida PTA's Exceptional Child Website: <https://floridapta.org/exceptional-child-education-and-support-services/>

We thank Shore Acres Elementary PTA in Pinellas County for bringing Dyslexia Awareness to their school and kindly sharing their resources with us, so you can bring Dyslexia Awareness to your district.

Here are additional resources to learn more about dyslexia and other learning disabilities:
International Dyslexia Association:
<https://dyslexiaida.org/>

Understood:
https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/dyslexia/what-is-dyslexia?_sp=820db030-46fc-40f5-a8a6-e70a5375b09b.1602024324375

Dyslexia Fact Sheet:
https://assets.ctfassets.net/p0qf7j048i0q/7gUDX1YFkaOHbBHiqylfli/4c5292b9283a2dc41f6b33a14dd867b4/Dyslexia_Fact_Sheet_Understood.pdf

Dyslexia Virtual Simulation
https://www.understood.org/en/through-your-childs-eyes?_ul=1*1c1538t*domain_userid*YW1wLXQta3FIdG4tVnZEeFVwWUtKcXdqduE.