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Screening is not the same as comprehensive evaluation.

Screenings identify risk. Evaluations look deeper to understand strengths, challenges, and needs.

FAMILY RESOURCE GUIDE

Understanding the Dyslexia Evaluation Process

What families can expect before, during and after a comprehensive evaluation.

A dyslexia evaluation helps uncover how your child learns by looking at reading, language, thinking, and processing skills. It's a team effort that brings together information from different sources to build a complete picture so your child gets the right support to thrive.

When Should You Consider an Evaluation?

If your child continues to struggle with reading, spelling, or writing despite extra help, an evaluation can provide clarity. You might consider an evaluation if your child:

- Has difficulty learning to read
- Struggles with spelling or writing
- Avoids reading or homework
- Has a family history of dyslexia
- Is bright and capable but still falling behind

Early evaluation can lead to early support, which can make a lasting difference.

Before the Evaluation

Preparation helps the process run smoothly and ensures the evaluator gets the most complete picture possible.

Gather Information

Collect report cards, past test results, notes from teachers, and any outside evaluations.

Share your concerns

Write down what you've noticed about your child's learning, both strengths and challenges.

Communicate with school

Ask about the evaluation process, timelines, and what assessments will be included.

Support your child

Talk with your child in a positive way and reassure them that they're not alone.

What May Be Assessed?

A comprehensive evaluations looks at multiple areas to understand how your child learns and processes information.

Background & Development

Developmental, medical, and educational history provide important context.

Reading & Spelling

Measures include word reading, decoding, fluency, spelling, and reading comprehension.

Language Processing

Assesses vocabulary, sentence structure, listening comprehension, and verbal reasoning.

Cognitive Skills

Looks at memory, attention, processing speed, and problem-solving abilities.

Parent & Teacher Input

Questionnaires and observations add valuable perspectives from those who know your child best.

During the Evaluation

Evaluations are typically conducted by a team that may include a school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, and other specialists. Your child may complete activities individually or in small groups. Sessions are designed to be supportive and help professionals understand how your child learns best.

Helpful To Know

The length of an evaluation varies. It may take one long day or be spread across multiple shorter sessions.

Understanding the Written Report

The written report brings together all the information collected. It explains your child's strengths and challenges, whether the criteria for dyslexia are met, and how the results impact learning.

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Look for:

- A clear summary of findings in everyday language
- How your child's results compare to same-age peers
- The impact on reading, writing, and academics
- Strengths to build on and areas for support

> Knowledge is Power. Understanding is the first step towards support.

Recommendation and Next Steps

The report will include recommendations based tailored to your child's needs.

These may include:

- Evidence-based reading instruction (structured literacy)
- Accommodations in school
- Assistive technology
- Additional academic or therapy supports
- Ongoing progress monitoring

Work with your child's school to put a plan in place and review progress regularly.

Questions Families Can Ask

- What are my child's strengths?
- What areas need the most support?
- Does my child meet the criteria for dyslexia?
- What interventions do you recommend?
- How will progress be monitored?
- How can we support learning at home?

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does a dyslexia evaluation take?

The timeline depends on the type of evaluation, the provider, the child's age and the number of areas being assessed. Testing may occur in one day or across multiple sessions. School evaluation timelines are governed by applicable state and federal requirements.

Does my child have to fail before I request an evaluation?

No. Families can raise concerns and request an evaluation when they suspect a disability is affecting their child's education. Schools should not require a child to fail or complete every level of intervention before considering an evaluation.

Will insurance cover an independent evaluation?

Coverage varies by insurance plan, provider and reason for testing. Contact your insurer before scheduling and ask about coverage, deductibles, required referrals, in-network providers and documentation requirements.

What if my child does not qualify for special education?

Ask the school team what other interventions, accommodations or support may be available. Options may include general-education intervention, a 504 Plan, targeted reading instruction or privately obtained support.

Can my child be re-evaluated later?

Yes. Reevaluation may be appropriate when needs change, progress is limited, new concerns emerge or updated documentation is needed for a transition.

Every child's story is unique. An evaluation helps ensure your child gets support that fits their needs.