


# Inclusive



# Education

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

## Difficulty in reading? Your child might be dyslexic

How many of us have heard the word 'Dyslexia'? It's surprisingly an uncommon word but a very common condition among our children

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The popular Bollywood movie, 'Taare Zameen Par', revolves around 8-year-old Ishaan who finds all his subjects in the school difficult. While kids of his age are way ahead with their lessons in the classroom, Ishaan is quite slow with grasping the subject.

Children learn and develop at their own pace, and reading is no

different from other skill-building. It's common for kids to find reading challenging at one point or another. But if learning to read becomes an ongoing struggle that leaves a child falling behind his peers, he may have a learning disorder known as dyslexia.

### HOW TO HELP?

Alana Emanuel, Director, Akira by St. Andrews School says, "If a parent feels their child is having a learning difficulty and wants clarification on the matter, they should approach an Educational Psychologist for a comprehensive, intellectual and educational assessment."

PICTURE USED FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY

demic gap. It's important to determine if the child requires other therapies additional to academic remediation e.g. Occupational Therapy, Behaviour Therapy or Speech Therapy."

**Right intervention is important:** Ruth Abraham whose 6 years child was diagnosed with dyslexia shares, "The frustration of children with dyslexia often centres on their inability to meet expectations. Their parents and teachers see a bright, enthusiastic child who is not learning to read and write. No one realises just how hard the dyslexic child is trying." "Researchers note that many children go undiagnosed as struggles in school are incorrectly attributed to intelligence, level of effort or environmental factors," says Dr Ravikant Gupta, a paediatrician from the city.

**Not a reflection of a child's intelligence:** Dyslexia is not a reflection of a child's intelligence. Some youngsters with dyslexia

can keep up with their peers with an extra effort at least for the first few grades. But by the third grade or so, when they need to be able to read quickly and fluently in order to keep up with their work, they run into trouble.

**Understand the child's interest:** Not every child is interested in

Maths and Science. Some are born to excel in other areas of life. Today, we have a huge list of celebrities such as Jennifer Aniston, Steven Spielberg, Steve Jobs, Mother Teresa and other such great personalities who have achieved fame and success in spite of dyslexia. "With help and strategies for compensating for their weakness in decoding, students with dyslexia can learn to read and thrive academically. But dyslexia is not something one grows out of," says K Narmadha, a curriculum facilitator.

### WHAT CAUSES DYSLEXIA?

Dyslexia is not a disease. It's a condition someone is born with, and it often runs in families. People with dyslexia are not stupid or lazy. Most have average or above-average intelligence, and they work very hard to overcome their learning problems.

Research has shown that dyslexia happens because of the way the brain processes information. Pictures of the brain show that when people with dyslexia read, they use different parts of the brain than people without dyslexia.

When asked on how to identify Dyslexia in children, Alana Emanuel says, "Children with dyslexia will have the following problems — decoding difficulties, poor handwriting, poor time management and organisational skills. They are slow readers, have difficulties with logic and time, difficulty with maths, particularly with word problems and directionality and laterality difficulties."

She further adds, "Such child should receive multi-sensory based teaching methodology. We should determine what level of support the child requires, for example, can the child manage in their current school with after school remediation, or, does the child requires a pull out program like Akira for 1-2 years to help improve their skills and aca-

