

Dysgraphia

Mikel Peterson

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Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia refers to a brain-based neurological learning disorder that affects writing. Dysgraphia usually occurs among people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). It impairs fine motor skills and writing ability among both children and adults. Dysgraphia affects all aspects of writing that include legibility, spelling, sizing, word spacing, and expression (International Dyslexia Association, 2012). According to the encyclopedia of special education, approximately 5 to 20% of children experience some form of writing deficit, such as dysgraphia (Frye, 2020). Children with ADHD are likely to have one or more learning disorders that include dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and dyslexia. Dysgraphia is challenging to detect in children because it is often seen as a child learning to write. However, when a child demonstrates specific difficulties for a long time, they are said to have dysgraphia. These difficulties include awkward, tight, or painful grip on a pencil, trouble forming letter shapes, trouble following a line or being within margins, and problem with sentence structure.

Instructional Strategies

Children with impaired handwriting or dysgraphia can be helped through various approaches. First, they should be allowed to play with clay to fortify their hand muscles to enable them to learn how to form letters. Second, they can be taken through mazes and shown how to keep lines to develop motor control abilities (International Dyslexia Association, 2012). Third, they should be given tasks to connect dashes or dots to enable them to complete letterforms. Once children learn to form letters, they should be given frequent instructions that help them build automatic letter writing that involves all the 26 alphabetical letters in different ways. A good example is making them study numbered arrow cues to enable them to establish a consistent plan to form letters.

Myths and Stereotypes – and the Real Truth

The first myth about dysgraphia is that untidy handwriting is an undisputable sign that a person has dysgraphia. The truth is that even though several individuals with dysgraphia have messy handwriting, not all of them do. Some can write neatly, but they often take a long time and a lot of effort (National Association for Gifted Children, 2011). Second, it is mythical to conclude that those who have dysgraphia are less intelligent. Research proves that children with dysgraphia often have either average or above-average intelligence. Some believe that learners with dysgraphia are always pretending and that they are just lazy. That is far from the truth because one of the effects of dysgraphia is that it makes one's writing a very slow and tiresome process (Frye, 2020). That is the reason some children may avoid writing assignments in school not because they are lazy but because they feel discouraged.

5 Things I Wish My Teacher Knew

As a person who has struggled with dysgraphia over the years, I would wish my teachers knew the following things. I wish my teachers understood me and did not discipline me for writing wrongly or slowly. Second, I wish my teachers in my early grades knew that I was not lazy or less intelligent. The problem was that I had dysgraphia that was limiting me from writing properly. Third, I wish my teachers knew that when I cried because I was unable to write certain letters or words, I was experiencing pain while writing. It was not pretense or excuse as my grade 2 teacher used to think. The other things I wish my teachers knew are the many writing mistakes I made were not because I was foolish and that I wanted someone to praise me when I wrote well even though I was slow.

References

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Standards. 1331 H Street, NW, Suite 1001, Washington, DC. www.nagc.org