



Dyslexia Friendly Libraries

NAN CARMACK, ED.D. M.L.I.S.
LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

Introduction of topic and origin story.

Outcomes




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- QUICK OVERVIEW OF DYSLEXIA
- LEARN ABOUT THE DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY LIBRARIAN CHALLENGE
- LEARN ABOUT THE DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY LIBRARY
- LEARN ABOUT ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

In the beginning

...

▶ Rebecca talked...

- About the value of libraries in the life of people with dyslexia
- About how librarians could be first identifiers
- Shared her dream of public libraries being an access

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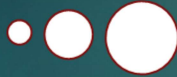
According to Yale University, 1 in 5 people in America have characteristics of dyslexia. Although more dyslexia legislation has passed into law in the last 4 years than in the previous 70 years, these requirements are not impacting public education fast enough to meet the literacy crisis in America. In Virginia, for example, 70% of students in public schools receiving Special Education services for language based learning disabilities display characteristics of dyslexia. Of these SPED students, 1/3 drop out of school. Of students who drop out, 1/3 will be incarcerated within 3-5 years of leaving school. For these reasons, dyslexia is a hot topic in educational organizations and is actively being researched by experts. Sustainable dyslexia training and awareness programs have become a priority.

The Dyslexia Friendly Library (DFL) combines the science of reading, the library mission, and firsthand experience of dyslexia to support both educators and families. Rebecca Warner, mother of a child with dyslexia and founding member of the parent led grassroots movement Decoding Dyslexia Virginia (DDVA), met with the Library of Virginia (LVA) Director of Library Development and Networking, Nan Carmack. We discussed new ways librarians with dyslexia training could have a positive impact in the dyslexic community,

since libraries are often first stops for families with struggling readers. A knowledgeable and compassionate librarian who can answer general questions about dyslexia and guide patrons in their research is imperative to success. Indeed, children's librarians may be the first to notice a child's difficulty during early literacy activities, such as preschool story time. Warner and Carmack developed the DFL program to train librarians in the indicators and characteristics of dyslexia, and proven resources. Once completed, DFL librarians can offer evidence based resources to educate about dyslexia, create safe spaces in which people with dyslexia can interact with books, and could begin to make a valuable shift in the way our society approaches dyslexia.

And...

▶ Nan realized...



The potential and power of the project
That other librarians could easily be enrolled
That this was sustainable



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Rebecca: According to Yale University, 1 in 5 people in America have characteristics of dyslexia. Although more dyslexia legislation has passed into law in the last 4 years than in the previous 70 years, these requirements are not impacting public education fast enough to meet the literacy crisis in America. In Virginia, for example, 70% of students in public schools receiving Special Education services for language based learning disabilities display characteristics of dyslexia. Of these SPED students, 1/3 drop out of school. Of students who drop out, 1/3 will be incarcerated within 3-5 years of leaving school. For these reasons, dyslexia is a hot topic in educational organizations and is actively being researched by experts. Sustainable dyslexia training and awareness programs have become a priority.

{Then Rebecca talks about the path that led her to call me}

Nan: {talk about receiving that call and visioning a future for the project}



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Indicators and Symptoms: Preschool

- ▶ delayed speech
- ▶ mixing up the sounds and syllables in long words
- ▶ chronic ear infections
- ▶ stuttering
- ▶ constant confusion of left versus right
- ▶ late establishing a dominant hand
- ▶ difficulty learning to tie shoes
- ▶ trouble memorizing their address, phone, number, or the alphabet
- ▶ can't create words that rhyme
- ▶ a close relative with dyslexia



Indicators and Symptoms Elementary School

- ▶ dysgraphia (slow, non-automatic handwriting that is difficult to read)
- ▶ letter or number reversals continuing past the end of first grade
- ▶ extreme difficulty learning cursive
- ▶ slow, choppy, inaccurate reading:
 - ▶ guesses based on shape or context
 - ▶ skips or misreads prepositions (at, to, of)
 - ▶ ignores suffixes
 - ▶ can't sound out unknown words
- ▶ terrible spelling
- ▶ often can't remember sight words (they, were, does) or homonyms (their, they're, and there)
- ▶ difficulty telling time with a clock with hands
- ▶ trouble with math
 - ▶ memorizing multiplication tables
 - ▶ memorizing a sequence of steps
 - ▶ directionality
- ▶ when speaking, difficulty finding the correct word
 - ▶ lots of "whatyamacallits" and "thingies"
 - ▶ common sayings come out slightly twisted
- ▶ extremely messy bedroom, backpack, and desk
- ▶ dreads going to school
 - ▶ complains of stomach aches or headaches
 - ▶ may have nightmares



Indicators and Symptoms

HIGH SCHOOL

All of the above symptoms plus:

- limited vocabulary
- extremely poor written expression:
 - large discrepancy between verbal skills and written compositions
- unable to master a foreign language
- difficulty reading printed music
- poor grades in many classes
- may drop out of high school

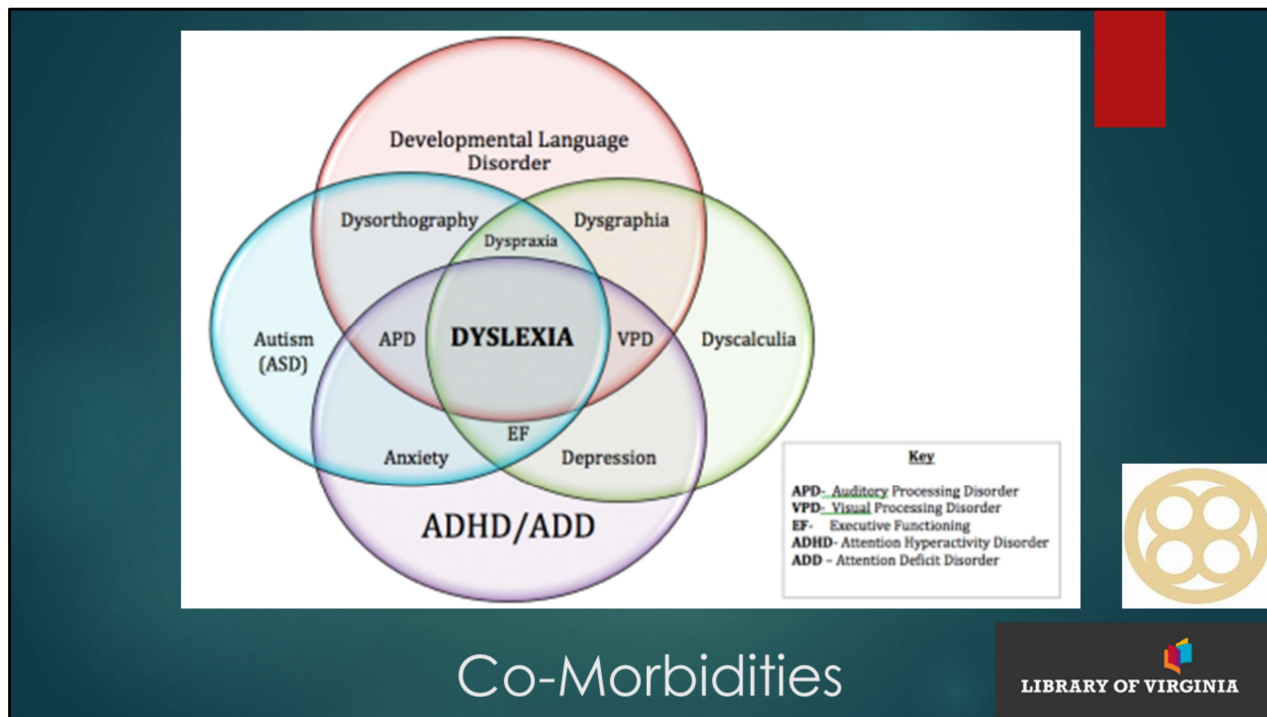
ADULTS

Education history similar to above, plus:

- slow reader
- may have to read a page 2 or 3 times to understand it
- terrible speller
- difficulty putting thoughts onto paper:
 - dreads writing memos or letters
- still has difficulty with right versus left
- often gets lost, even in a familiar city
- sometimes confuses b and d, especially when tired or sick

Bright Solutions for Dyslexia www.BrightSolutions.US
Info@BrightSolutions.US (408) 559-3652
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As part of the symptom range, there are other diagnoses that may go along with dyslexia. APD refers to challenges in how the brain understands speech. The sounds may be loud and clear. But people with APD don't pick up on the subtle differences between them.

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/auditory-processing-disorder/understanding-auditory-processing-disorder>

Children screened for reading success with PALS by the VDOE--official reading screener and is used by virtually every school in Virginia (except in Fairfax County Public Schools). PALS is limited to only assessing phonological awareness and is ineffective in accurately identifying students at risk for reading disabilities.

Fluency reading aloud and the lack of comprehension of what the student just read is a reality.

Dyslexia Friendly Librarian Challenge



Image from [Fortune.com](https://www.fortune.com)



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Nan

The DFL challenge requires only a few hours while providing the same training Virginia public school teachers are required for teaching certification and address social-emotional. Further, the challenge introduces librarians to local dyslexia advocates and families, bibliographic and professional development resources. DFL librarians receive a certificate and a dyslexia symbol pin for recognition.

What resources do you think library staff should be viewing/engaging with?

Dyslexia Friendly Librarian Challenge Outcomes

- Challenge Completion Results
- Presentations to varying Virginia stakeholders
- [A website: www.dyslexiafriendlylibrary.org](http://www.dyslexiafriendlylibrary.org)



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Rebecca

From the initial challenge in October of 2019 to the current date, 182 public librarians in 74 of our 94 Virginia public libraries, completed the challenge. The move to translating DFL librarians to DFL certified libraries has been stalled by COVID 19. The effort to establish DFLs will commence post-pandemic.

Participant comments demonstrate the power of the challenge:

- “I have a daughter who is dyslexic. Until this moment, no amount of explanation would have helped me understand. I certainly had no idea of the depths of her struggles. If I can help someone with this it would be phenomenal. My goal is to be able to help in my community.”
- “The simulation was particularly helpful to help me understand what kids with dyslexia see when they look at a page of words; when doing reader's advisory, I will spend more time helping children picking their books by making sure they aren't having trouble reading the words on the page”
- “I feel more capable of noticing the signs of a person struggling with dyslexia, and therefore will be more prepared to help them to read and comprehend better. I also think

the modules were very helpful in recognizing how frustrating reading with dyslexia actually is, which will make me much more sympathetic to a person with dyslexia's struggles.”

Nan: Further presentations

- Virginia Association of School Librarians Conference
- Virginia Adult Continuing Education Conference
- Southeastern Online Collaborative Conference (collective of 6 state libraries)

Dyslexia Friendly Libraries

- 50% of staff has completed the DFL challenge, including children's programming staff.
- Bibliography and resources available, organized by the needs of the branch. This could include
 - resources identified by spine labels
 - Dyslexia content section
 - Direct links to resources on their public desktop computers and websites
 - IDA fact sheets available
 - A connection with their public schools special education specialists
- Available to host Decoding Dyslexia groups



Bluefield Library, Tazewell, Virginia



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What's Next

- Library of Congress Literacy Awards
 - State wide training formalized for libraries and parents
 - Develop public library collections, with identifying stickers
- Beginning (again) the Dyslexia Friendly Library phase of the project
- Replication nationally: [state library guide to DFL](#).
- Getting VBIDA members involved!
 - What would YOU be able to do ?




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Rebecca: LOC award

Nan:

The DFL project sustainability is guaranteed by the Library of Virginia. LVA's Library Development and Networking Division, with a budget of over \$1.5 million dollars, can sustain the web presence, print material requirements and perpetual marketing of the challenge and resources to the public library community as well as fund attendance at conferences for presentations, travel to libraries for face to face training, and continual updating of bibliography and resources. LVA and Decoding Dyslexia VA have been able to reach audiences through the Virginia Association of School Libraries, The Coalition for Adult Basic Education, and connections within the Virginia Department of Corrections to keep awareness, education and resources top of mind for librarians. LVA's visibility in these communities allow a continual reach for new participants.

Rebecca:

The DFL challenge draws from decades of existing research that can constantly be updated and improved. The information in the challenge is free of charge and was obtained and organized with the guidance of dyslexia educational experts. By repackaging these existing resources in a straight forward and manageable format, the entire challenge is easy and free to replicate. The digital format allows the DFL to be shared easily and at minimal costs. LVA created and hosts a DFL state library's guide to replicating the project on their website, found at <https://vpl.virginia.gov/continuing-education/ce-general/dyslexia-friendly-libraries/>.

The interest in replicability has been high: The DFL project was a requested topic for a 2019 SPARK Talk, live session for the Virginia Association of School Librarians 2020 annual conference, and a recorded session for the Virginia Branch International Dyslexia Association 2021 annual conference. It was the most downloaded podcast for the James L. Hamner Public Library podcasts in 2019 with a second session recorded in 2020. Another presentation is scheduled on March 15, 2021 to a four state virtual library conference specifically to address recreating this project in their own library.

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How To Help Teachers & Parents

- ▶ **NOTICE:** When you see a child exhibiting behaviors discussed, mention it to the teacher/special education coordinator
- ▶ **REFER** parents to resources presented later in the presentation
- ▶ **RECOMMEND** titles, videos, etc., that feature dyslexia so children can see themselves; so parents can normalize the situation.
- ▶ **LEARN MORE:** take more professional development in the topic
- ▶ **SHARE** your knowledge through in-services, articles, conference presentations.



Professional Development

- ▶ **Reading Rockets** has free modules that IDA certification teachers use for professional development.
- ▶ **VDOE Literacy and Reading Summit:** The 2020 General Assembly, HB904: "a statewide coalition of public institutions of higher education to gather and share information on the latest evidence-based methods and approaches to prepare teachers to effectively educate K-12 students in reading, including multisensory structured language education to instruct students with dyslexia."
- ▶ **AIM-Va** has some free professional development resources for teachers on how to make curriculum accessible via scanners and fillable PDFs, etc.



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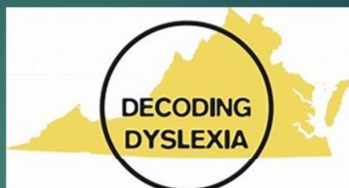
Nan: If our attendees are anything like me, once I learned a little, I wanted to learn a lot! I know all of you had to take the DOE module, but I'm dropping in chat a file that has a comprehensive list of resources and their links so you don't have to worry about taking tons of notes during these next two slides.

Rebecca: talk about these resources

VELS: This half-day, virtual summit is focused on the science behind developing early literacy and will provide an opportunity for educators and division superintendents to learn about best practices and the role of division-level instructional leaders in implementing high-quality early literacy programs.

It is sponsored by the UVA School of Education and Human Development, the UVA K-12 Advisory Council, the Virginia Department of Education, the Office of the Secretary of Education, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, and the Virginia Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Questions?



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