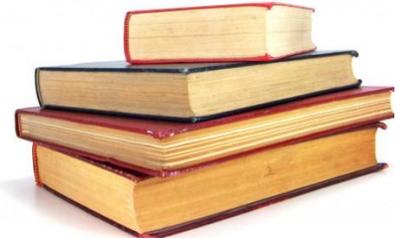


InFORParents: Literacy

Information FOR parents based on the research

Did you know? **20%** of children do not gain reading skills needed to participate effectively in life ³

Literacy is the set of skills that allows a child to skillfully read and write. These skills are essential to a child's academic and life success. Difficulties with reading and writing can and should be identified early in a child's school career in order to provide effective intervention and avoid falling a great deal behind their peers.



Types of Struggling Readers ²

Difficulty with decoding- difficulty sounding out the words on a page

Difficulty with comprehending- difficulty understanding what you've read

Difficulty with both decoding and comprehending- difficulty sounding out words and understanding the text

Red Flags for Reading Difficulties

Many can be seen as early as **kindergarten** ¹ and children with true reading disabilities can be identified with 92% accuracy by age 5 ½.

- Learning to talk later than average
- Difficulty rhyming
- Difficulty learning letter names and sounds
- Left/right confusion
- Guessing at words (based on first letter or pictures)
- Skips words when reading sentences
- Slow and messy handwriting
- Odd pencil grip (should be tripod or pincer grip by age 5-6)
- Spelling words based on their sounds only, rather than involving other rules (e.g., jumped = jumprt)

If You Think Your Child May Be Struggling

- Get an opinion from a professional outside the school (e.g., psychologist, speech-language pathologist with additional training in literacy, educational diagnostician)
- Discuss your observations with their teacher
- Educate yourself on the school's practices for: teaching reading, identifying and supporting children with reading difficulties
- Know that children who truly struggle to learn to read cannot be fully supported with strategies like: reading more at bedtime, having them 'guess' the word based on pictures or the rest of the words in the sentence, re-reading the same book multiple times
- Stick with your gut - if you think your child is struggling, advocate for them. It's never too early to get support!

¹ International Dyslexia Association Ontario Branch. (n.d.). Retrieved August 15, 2019, from <https://www.idaontario.com/signs/>

² Spear-Swerling, L. (2015). Common Types of Reading Problems and How to Help Children Who Have Them. *The Reading Teacher*, 69(5), 513-522.

³ Castles, A., Rastle, K., & Nation, K. (2018). Ending the reading wars: Reading acquisition from novice to expert. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 19, 5-51.