

Let's Talk Learning Disabilities

EPISODE 01

In Episode 01 Laurie & Abbey unpack the unknowns behind dyslexia and what it looks like to seek testing, receive diagnosis and how to advocate for yourself or a loved one. Laurie & Abbey discuss common occurrences in testing at the right age and ruling out all other possible learning distractions before finding a good dyslexia program.

What is Dyslexia? 1:30

Dyslexia is a learning disorder that affects the way you read, learn and communicate. It typically occurs in people with average to above-average intelligence and is a reading difficulty that is unexpected in relation to their other learning abilities.

Phonological Dyslexia 4:50

Phonological Dyslexia is the most commonly diagnosed type of dyslexia. Diagnosis should really come after a comprehensive evaluation that looks at the cognitive process and the academic process of the individual being assessed. The main objective in a comprehensive evaluation is to rule out that it's an attention issue.

Seeking Testing 5:40

Fully comprehensive evaluation is the most important piece in successful treatment. You want to rule out any other factors that might attribute to the difficulties an individual is having so that they don't get years down the line in a program that isn't truly helpful to them. In the podcast, we mention a story about a young woman who only noticed issues once she was a junior in college. She had come to the point of no longer being able to lean on the vocabulary she had memorized. All of this new language attributed to her realizing she needed to seek evaluation, and was ultimately relieved once she knew what she was facing. It's almost as if relief came in knowing there was a name that went with what she was experiencing. In the podcast, Abbey also mentions when is too soon to seek evaluation (11:05). If the child has not yet had educational opportunity to learn through phonics instruction, sight word instruction, the foundational reading skills, and learning through that multi-sensory approach of all the different sounds of the letters and associating each letter with its sound and putting those sounds together, then they are probably not ready for

testing. Give a little time to see the learning pattern and what really contributes and pulls away from the development of reading skills. In the same breath however, you want to catch dyslexia as soon as possible, if that's what we're dealing with because truthfully it can have a domino effect on the entire learning journey through a student's school years.

You've Got a Diagnosis, Now What? Correction & Accommodations 21:00

After you know what you're facing, you're working on correcting it through a Dyslexia program. Many of the most beneficial program and curriculum materials are based on what's called the Orton-Gillingham method. And while you're working on correcting and learning skills to combat the dyslexic tendencies of the brain, you can seek accommodations for you or your loved one.

Types of accommodations:

- Being read out loud to
- More time to process through tests and assignments
- Modified spelling lists
- No expectations to read aloud in class

Multi-sensory Approach 26:30

The very best way to engage with a dyslexic brain is through a multi-sensory approach. Seeing it, hearing it, touching it, hitting all of the senses gives an individual with dyslexia the highest opportunity to further their treatment.

Limitations 29:00

We get asked a lot from parents if they should tell their kids what it is that they've been diagnosed with. At any age, we do feel like it's a good thing that allows them to associate a reason with why they are struggling in the areas that they're struggling in. Knowing what you're facing and having conversations about still being capable of so much are so important to leaving a successful and fulfilled life, even with dyslexia. College, success, and so much more are possible.