

## **Identification and Support for Students with Characteristics of Dyslexia**

Tennessee's law for screening for characteristics of dyslexia was passed in 2016. The law requires school districts to universally screen all students and to further screen students who flag for risk for characteristics of dyslexia through their existing Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) procedures. School teams will use screening information to determine the need for dyslexia-specific intervention.

**Parents will receive a letter if their child demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia and needs intervention.**

**Receiving a letter does NOT mean your child has dyslexia; however, it does mean:**

- Your child is struggling with one or more foundational aspects of reading, such as sounding out words, spelling, or reading accurately.
- Your child will receive additional small group intervention using methods that are effective in building foundational skills.

**Receiving a letter also means schools have additional obligations:**

- School teams will collect and review your child's progress data regularly to determine if interventions are effective.
- School teams will change interventions as needed.
- The school will send home updates about your child's progress approximately every 4.5 weeks.
- School teams may consider the use of accommodations and assistive technology.
- School teams may make referrals for additional evaluations to determine whether more intense support is needed (see *Dyslexia Resource Guide* for more information).

**To address the individual needs of the student, a continuum of support may include:**

- Tiered interventions through Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>);
- Accommodations provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and/or
- Special education interventions and accommodations.

**Please see the links on the back for additional information.**

**Districts must have the ability to screen, as needed, in the following areas associated with characteristics of dyslexia:**

<b>Difficulties</b>	<b>General Definition</b>
<b>Phonological awareness</b>	When a child listens, the ability to recognize and identify sounds and words in spoken language when no print is involved (e.g., rhyming, recognizing and identifying individual words within sentences, and sounds and syllables within words, and blending and changing sounds to create new words)
<b>Phonemic awareness</b>	The awareness of individual sounds within the spoken word and the ability to manipulate those sounds when no print is involved (i.e., a subcomponent of phonological awareness)
<b>Alphabet knowledge</b>	Ability to name letters of the alphabet
<b>Sound/symbol recognition</b>	Ability to identify the sounds that letters and letter combinations make
<b>Decoding skills</b>	Ability to sound out words and read words using phonics (linking letters and sounds)
<b>Encoding skills</b>	Ability to spell words
<b>Rapid naming</b>	Ability to quickly and accurately name familiar things (e.g., letters, objects, shapes, colors, etc.)

**Tips for Parents**

Ask your child’s school:

- Who is the best person to speak with about my child’s current reading program and progress?
- Who should I contact if I believe my child has a disability requiring 504 or special education supports?

Other things you can do:

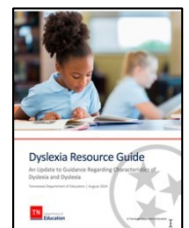
- Read to and with your child and listen to audiobooks together.
- Always praise your child’s reading and spelling efforts, and never criticize them.
- Celebrate all reading and spelling progress, and realize improvements take time.
- Create an organized space for schoolwork and a comfortable place for reading.
- Work with the school to find simple, easy-to-use tools to help with reading and writing.

**Resources**

- Tips for Parents of Children with Dyslexia [bit.ly/2FErynK](http://bit.ly/2FErynK)
- Decoding Dyslexia Tennessee [bit.ly/2sFR6PU](http://bit.ly/2sFR6PU)
- International Dyslexia Association (IDA) [dyslexiaida.org](http://dyslexiaida.org)
- International Dyslexia Association - Tennessee [tnida.org](http://tnida.org)
- MTSU Center on Dyslexia [www.mtsu.edu/dyslexia/](http://www.mtsu.edu/dyslexia/)

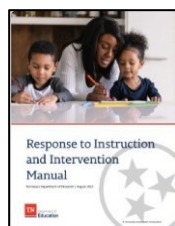
**Tennessee  
Dyslexia  
Resource Guide**

[bit.ly/4bykVDX](http://bit.ly/4bykVDX)



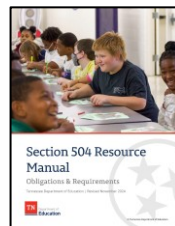
**RTI² Manual**

[bit.ly/TNDOERT12](http://bit.ly/TNDOERT12)



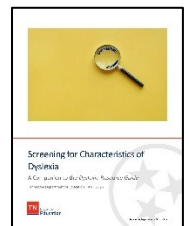
**504 Guide**

[bit.ly/3EUdVVA](http://bit.ly/3EUdVVA)  
OR  
[bit.ly/4cwvx5z](http://bit.ly/4cwvx5z)



**Screening for  
Characteristics  
of Dyslexia**

[bit.ly/3GTvkP9](http://bit.ly/3GTvkP9)



[Dyslexia.Questions@tn.gov](mailto:Dyslexia.Questions@tn.gov)

For more information contact: TNSTEP [www.tnstep.info](http://www.tnstep.info) 1.800.280.7837

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