



THE
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PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

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Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is a learning disability that makes it difficult for children to write. There are two sides to dysgraphia — **motor weaknesses** that affect the physical process of writing, and **cognitive challenges** with written expression.

Statistics

- 7-15% of people have dysgraphia
- More common in boys than girls

Symptoms

- Consistent difficulty with forming letters, making them the same size, and spacing them correctly. Letters may be clustered together without spaces or not in a straight line.
- Trouble holding a pencil, such as holding it awkwardly or needing to grip it extra tight.
- Writing fatigue — Hand cramps or pain due to awkward grip or heavy pressure.
- Difficulties with writing mechanics, like spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.
- Trouble organizing their writing — they might have great ideas, but have a hard time getting them down onto paper in a coherent, structured way.

Risk Factors for Children

- Dysgraphia is more common in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Treatment

Emotional Support:	Accommodations:	Physical Aid:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talking through what a learning disability is, and how it has nothing to do with intelligence. ● Praising them for hard work. As with all learning disorders, managing dysgraphia is not about reaching perfection; it's about improving. ● Checking in with teachers and making sure they're understanding and supportive, maybe even defining a subtle signal that the child can use when they need extra help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using a pencil grip to help them hold the pencil correctly and comfortably. ● Using a keyboard in class for note-taking and written assignments. ● Getting notes from the teacher. ● Using a recorder or dictation (speech-to-text) tool. ● Writing on graph paper or in graphic organizers (which are often available online for free) to help them organize their letters and thoughts on paper. ● Getting extra time for writing assignments, note-taking, and written tests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical exercises to strengthen hand muscles, or even practicing writing letters in the air or in sand ● Multisensory instruction

How Can I Help My Child?

- At home, parents can help their child practice spelling and writing letters. If they have writing assignments for homework, they can help them get started in an organized way (like prompting “What are the pieces we need for this story?”) and reminding them to check their work.
- If they’re noticing consistent issues with their child’s handwriting or ability to express ideas through writing, parents can start by talking to their teacher. Parents can likely request an evaluation and then services through the school, or go to an outside provider if they prefer. The earlier a child receives support and intervention, the faster they’ll be able to get on track and keep up with their peers.

Resources:

- [Understanding Dysgraphia - Child Mind Institute](#)
- [Dysgraphia: What It Is, Symptoms, Diagnosis & Treatment \(clevelandclinic.org\)](#)
- [Dysgraphia: An Overview - Smart Kids \(smartkidswithld.org\)](#)
- [Dysgraphia: Signs, Diagnosis, Treatment \(webmd.com\)](#)
- [Dysgraphia: Symptoms, Causes, and Treatment | Psych Central](#)
- [Understanding Dysgraphia - International Dyslexia Association \(dyslexiaida.org\)](#)
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK559301/#:~:text=Dysgraphia%20is%20defined%20as%20a,the%20patient's%20age%20and%20education.>

Extra Helpful Resources (Books)

- *The Whole Brain Child* by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.
- *How to Talk so Little Kids Will Listen* by Joanna Faber and Julie King
- *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
- *No-Drama Discipline; the Whole-Brain Way to Calm the Chaos and Nurture your Child’s Developing Mind* by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.
- *Breaking Free of Child Anxiety and OCD* by Eli R. Lebowitz, Ph.D.
- *Freeing your Child from Anxiety* by Tamar E. Chansky, Ph.D.