



Pillar One:

Identification and Screening

See beyond their poor academic performance and connect the dots. Identify learning disabilities early to power how they are taught.



#Speak4Dyslexia:
The New Education Policy Way

Did You Know?

Benjamin Franklin's dyslexic scientific genius gave us bifocal spectacles in 1785. With a clear vision for innovation, he was responsible for numerous inventions – including the lightning rod, catheter, and Franklin stove. Franklin even developed a new phonetic system for spelling English, which inspires how we spell today!

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1. Introduction

Have you ever come across children whom you think have potential, but can't understand why their potential does not translate into their academic performance? Do these students seem to be careless, lazy, forgetful, unfocused, and always making excuses? Or maybe you know students who make silly spelling mistakes, have untidy handwriting, and often mirror letters while writing. It seems like they are always confused and very slow at completing any task.

Are you struggling with a growing percentage of school dropouts in your state or school, and there is no explanation of why many of them are refusing or unable to study? Are teachers struggling to manage their diverse classrooms? Are your interventions not meeting learning outcome targets?

There is more to this struggle than meets the eye. These are all signs of Specific Learning Disabilities, that impact 20% of the population. This group of disabilities have a direct effect on learning outcomes and if supported through inclusive measures, can quickly turn struggling learners into the great academic minds.

The key is to mainstream inclusion of students with disabilities, especially those with invisible learning disabilities.

This series on #Speak4Dyslexia: The National Education Policy Way, highlights the five pillars that can enable mainstreaming inclusion for students with disabilities, including those with SLDs.

These are:

1. Identification and Screening
2. Remedial Support and Accommodations
3. Inclusive Teaching
4. Inclusive Assessments
5. Leveraging Technology

This book focuses on the first pillar- Identification and Screening.

NEP 2020. PARA 6.13

In India, both the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD 2016) and the National Education Policy, 2020 (NEP 2020) recognize SLDs and mandate the full participation of individuals with SLDs in the regular schooling process from the foundational stage to higher education, through inclusive classrooms.

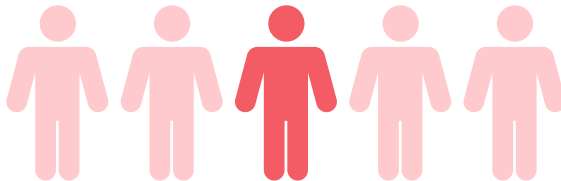
2. What are Specific Learning Disabilities?

It is important to remember that with support, remedial interventions and accommodations, individuals with specific learning disabilities can not only cope, but succeed in their lives.

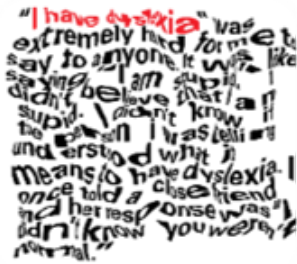
Individuals with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) have average or above average intelligence, and struggle with processing language (both spoken or written). They have difficulty in comprehending, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, and/or doing mathematical calculations.

This is because Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) impact the brain's ability to process information and learn. They include conditions such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, Dyspraxia, and Developmental Aphasia.

1 out of 5 individuals have a Learning Disability



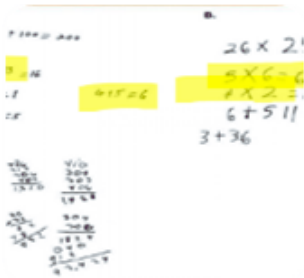
INDIVIDUALS WITH SLDS HAVE AVERAGE OR ABOVE AVERAGE INTELLIGENCE.



"I have dyslexia" was extremely hard for me to say to anyone. It was like saying I am stupid. I didn't believe that I was stupid. I didn't know what it meant to have dyslexia. I once told a close friend and her response was "I didn't know you were that normal."

Dyslexia...

...struggles with language. It accounts for 80% of all SLDs

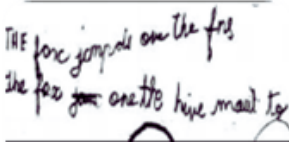


26 x 21
536

6 + 51
3+36

Dyscalculia...

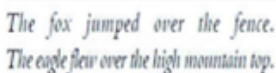
...struggles with math. It is present in about 5% of the population.



THE fox jumps on the fox
the fox jumps on the fox

Dysgraphia...

...struggles with writing and fine motor skills.



The fox jumped over the fence.
The eagle flew over the high mountain top.

KEY FACTS

01
It is more common than one realises-affecting 20% of the global population. Yet only 1 in 20 get identified.

02

Individuals with SLDs have average or above average intelligence (IQ). However, they are often confused to be “slow learners”.

03
Beyond academics, SLDs impact an individuals daily functioning, and emotional wellbeing.

04

SLDs impact language abilities across all languages. If you are diagnosed with Dyslexia in English, you will also have Dyslexia in Hindi.

05
No two learners with learning disabilities are the same.

06

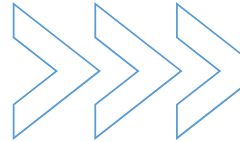
SLDs are a lifelong condition that runs in families.

07
Accommodations and assistive technologies help individuals excel through their lifetime.

08

It is an invisible disability-diagnosed through psychometric testing.

SLD STRENGTHS

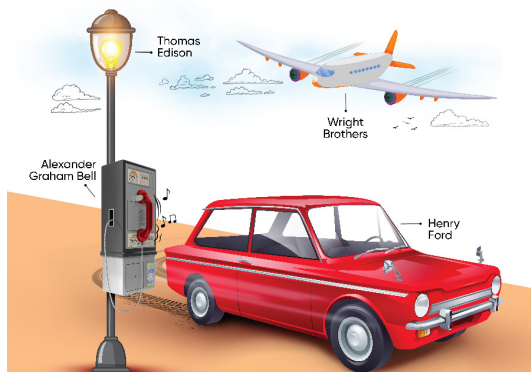


It may come as a surprise that despite their many struggles, individuals with SLDs have been extremely successful and are responsible for most innovations that have changed the world!



DID YOU KNOW?

These differently abled **DYSLEXIC** inventors have changed the world



It's time to change the conversation about the differently abled.
International Day of Persons with Disabilities
December 3, 2022

#SashaktDivyang

#Speak4Dyslexia

Dyslexia is one of the 21 disabilities recognised by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. The Act protects the rights of people with disabilities, recognizing them as valuable human resources for the country and creating an environment that provides them equal opportunities and full participation in society.

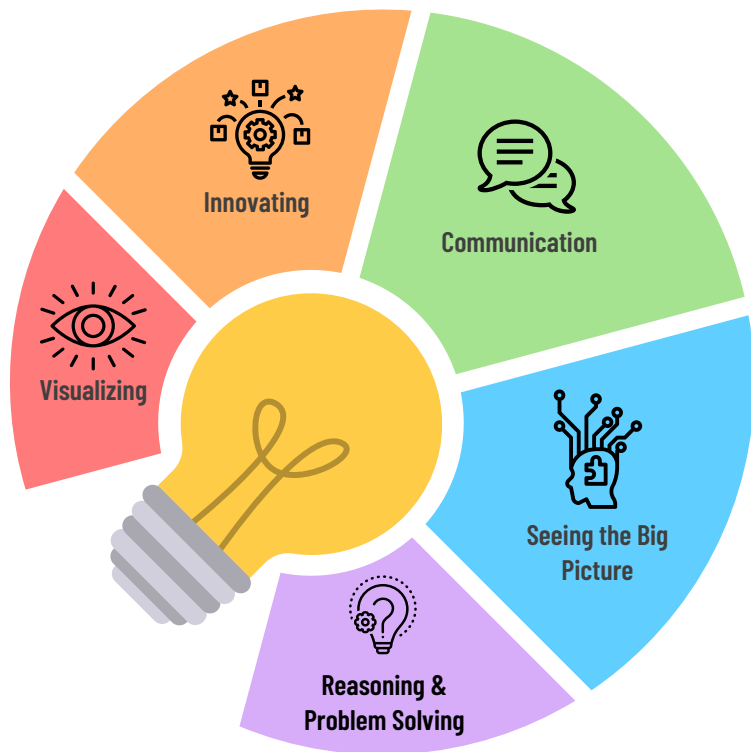
Global studies have shown that the percentage of students with Dyslexia in the fields such as engineering, arts and entrepreneurship is over twice the percentage of individuals with dyslexia in the general population.

Dyslexia is surprisingly so common at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), that it is also known as the MIT disease.

40% of the world's self-made millionaires are dyslexic.

Top 10 companies founded by Dyslexics, in 2020 generated \$1 trillion globally,

INDIVIDUALS WITH SLDS CAN ACHIEVE THESE ACHIEVEMENTS BECAUSE THEY HAVE CRITICAL SKILLS- OFTEN REFERRED TO AS "DYSLEXIC THINKING"



SLD STRUGGLES

Specific Learning Disabilities impact three core aspects of an individual's life.

01 Academic Performance

The impact of SLDs on a student's academic performance, often results in educators and parents thinking that the child is being lazy and/or is a "slow learner." This is not true. Remember- Individuals with SLDs have average or above average IQ. However-

- There is generally a gap between written and oral performance.
- Despite trying hard, they struggle with academic results.
- They struggle with spellings, writing and completing tasks on time.
- They may understand a concept but struggle with showcasing steps and doing complex calculations.

02 Executive Functioning or Daily Struggles

SLDs impact processing of information, which impacts the ability to manage basic, daily tasks. This could include difficulty in time management and planning, following instructions, understanding directions, completing tasks especially those that involve multi-tasking, among other things.

03 Emotional Wellbeing

- When forced to process lots of information (reading/writing) without breaks, they are likely to experience headaches, aches and pains (especially hands and fingers), exhaustion, as well as may sleep excessively.
- Judgements around their intelligence and their abilities leads to poor self-esteem, frustration, depression, etc.
- There is a higher probability of them being bullied by their peers and teachers, for not being smart enough.
- High levels of anxiety.

3. Identification

As per the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities notification dated 04.01.2018, diagnosis of a person with SLDs requires a paediatrician, or a psychiatrist or paediatric neurologist or clinical or rehabilitation psychologist. The official diagnosis for SLDs can happen only in or after third grade or 8 years of age, whichever is earlier.

Diagnosis for SLDs is a 3 Step process:

- **Step 1: Assessment of paediatrician** to eliminate any visual or hearing impairments.
- **Step 2: IQ Assessment** by Child/ clinical psychologist/ paediatric neurologist/ psychiatrist. Only if the IQ is determined to be average or above (>85), then Step 3 will be applied.
- **Step 3: SLD Assessment** involves application of specific psychometric tests for diagnosing SLD and giving it a severity scale.

Once a benchmarked (40% or more) disability diagnosis is confirmed, a disability certificate and UDID card can be issued by the competent authority. The disability certificate is needed to access any facilities, benefits, or concessions available under the government schemes for persons with disabilities.

WHAT IS UDID & DISABILITY CERTIFICATE?

Unique Disability Identification (UDID) was created by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan). The objective is to build a complete, end-to-end integrated system for the Issuance of Universal IDs & Disability Certificates for Person with Disabilities with their identification and disability details. This includes -

- Data of Persons with Disabilities across country is available online through a centralized web application.
- Online filing and submission of registration application form for disability certificate/ Universal ID card; Offline applications may also be accepted and subsequently digitized by agencies.
- Quick Assessment process for calculating the percentage of disability by the hospitals/ Medical Board.
- Online renewal and update of information by Person with Disabilities/on their behalf.

The UDID card has a lifelong validity when issued to a disabled person above the age of 18 years.

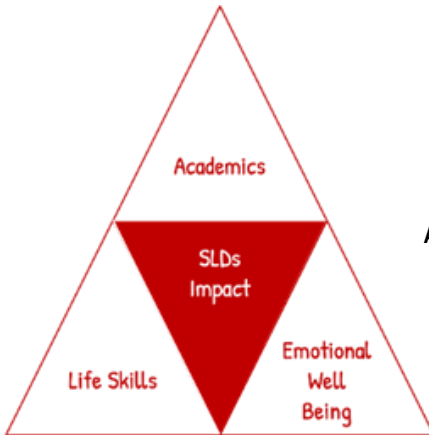
- For disabled children below 18 years of age, the card is required to be updated once in every five years.
- No fresh medical examination is necessary in the case of permanent disability.

Apply for a UDID:

- Go to the official website of the unique disability ID programme (UDID) at <https://www.swavlambancard.gov.in/>
- Click on the register link to register yourself with your personal, disability, employment, and identity details.
- Apply for a disability certificate and UDID card online by filling out the required information and uploading the necessary documents.
- Submit your application and wait for the verification and approval process.

4. Screening

3 pillars of SLD impact



While a formal diagnosis can be done only after 8 years, a screening process can be undertaken for early identification of a child at risk of SLD. The process is much like taking a child to get their eyes tested for poor vision when a child regularly complains of a headache.

As part of the screening process, one must assess not just academic performance but also the impact on daily life and emotional well-being. The screening must be done in the primary language of the student.

It is important to highlight that the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act “mandates that the appropriate Government and the local authorities shall endeavour that all educational institutions funded or recognized by them shall detect specific learning disabilities in children at the earliest and take suitable pedagogical and other measures to overcome them.”

ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN SCREENING

1

TEACHERS COMPLAIN OF POOR UNDERSTANDING / DROP IN SCHOOL GRADES

This can be monitored as part of ongoing learning assessments (including HPC, exam results, etc.) and written submissions.

TEACHER APPLIES SCREENING TEST AND REFERS THE CHILD WITH ANOMALY TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE / PRINCIPAL

Please refer to screening tool details on the following page

2

3

IF POSITIVE IN STEP 2, THEN STUDENT IS REFERRED FOR SLD ASSESSMENT WITH LETTER BY PRINCIPAL AND TEACHERS' SCREENING.

ASSESSED BY PEDIATRICIAN WITH DETAILED NEUROLOGICAL EXAMINATION FOR COMORBIDITIES

Chalk out the domains affected and involvement of visual/hearing abilities, as well as any other co-occurrences.

4

5

ASSESSMENT BY PSYCHOLOGIST WITH SPECIFIC TESTS FOR IQ USING MSIC/WISC-III

If IQ > 85, do the specific test for SLD

SLD CONFIRMED & SEVERITY ASSESSED

Remember: To be eligible for accommodations, support, and any other services, disability must be benchmarked at 40% or more

6

7

MEDICAL BOARD ASSESS AND CERTIFIES

Re-certification at 14 years and 18 years

SLD CHECKLIST

Following is a basic checklist to monitor signs that the child may be at risk of having SLD.

It is important to highlight that most children will fall into either one category at some point. However, only if the child continuously shows signs in each of the three categories mentioned below (beyond age-appropriate development goals), then they may be at risk for an SLD. Talk to the teacher, special educator and/or your doctor to understand the condition and initiate a formal diagnosis.

Academic Academic

- Difficulty learning to read, write & spell in all languages being learnt
- Difficulty with phonological awareness
- Persistent and continued reversing of letters & figures, e.g., '15' for '51', 'b' for 'd'
- A tendency to read inaccurately/ read slowly and/or without adequate comprehension
- Difficulty copying accurately from board or textbook
- Poor structure and organization of written work, but can express orally
- Difficulty in mathematical operations
- A gap in their oral and written performance

Daily Struggles

- Difficulty remembering information in order, e.g., order of a story, time table, science procedures, dates & days of a week
- Difficulty in writing or taking longer than average to complete written tasks
- Difficulty telling left and right
- Difficulty in fine motor skills including tying shoelaces, putting on a belt or buttoning a shirt.
- Unable to focus for long periods or getting tired easily
- Difficulty in concentration, especially if there is movement & noise around them

Emotional Well-Being

- Low self-esteem and/or low confidence
- A sense of frustration due to constant failure despite working hard
- A high level of anxiety
- Bullied, no friends or social pariah
- Often complains of having headaches, is constantly tired and/or excessive sleeping.

Disclaimer: The above list is not a diagnostic tool. The checklist is only indicative that the child may be at risk of an SLD, and necessary action may be taken. There are multiple other tools also available for detailed screening. These include PRASHAST (by NCERT) & the CLASS Tool by NERD Tools Foundation.

5. Policy Action

- If teachers see that a student is not meeting learning outcomes regularly or not meeting his/her potential, then they should check whether the child is at risk of having an SLD. This can be done, by evaluating whether the student is struggling in all three aspects – academics, life skills, and emotional well-being.
- Further, as part of all assessments, teachers should check for child being at risk for SLD. For example,
 - At the end of each Holistic Progress Card (HPC), a Dyslexia checklist can be integrated to check if a student is at risk of having an SLD.
 - While monitoring learning outcomes online, for children not meeting those outcomes, teachers should be prompted to check for SLDs.
 - At the end of every academic year, any student who has not met learning outcomes should be screened for being at risk of a learning disability. Multiple screening tools are available in the form of checklists, and online applications to assess students for a learning disability including PRASHAST (developed by NCERT), CLASS (developed by NERD Tools Foundation), and the ORKIDS Dyslexia Checklist.
- Build capacity of parents and teachers at the classroom and school level on identifying at-risk children including possible signs to look out for, whom to approach, and procedure for screening/diagnosis.

6. Recommended Readings

Following is a list of additional resources that we encourage you to read, to better understand and support individuals with SLDs.



Understanding SLDs

- The Complete Learning Disabilities Handbook: Ready-to-Use Strategies and Activities for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities (Jossey-Bass Teacher), Joan M. Harwell; Rebecca Williams
- The Gift of Dyslexia, Ronald D. Davis, Eldon M. Braun
- The Dyslexic Advantage, Brock L. Eide, Fernette F. Eide
- Overcoming Dyslexia, Sally Shaywitz
- The Misunderstood Child, Fourth Edition: Understanding and Coping with Your Child's Learning Disabilities, Larry B. Silver
- The Dyslexia Document: A Checklist Reference for Parents and Teachers to Dyslexia of Kids, Jon Phillips, Free Online Version

Living with Dyslexia

- Fun Games and Activities for Children with Dyslexia, Alais Winton, Joe Salerno
- More Fun Games and Activities for Children with Dyslexia, Alais Winton, Hannah Millard
- Dyslexia Tool Kit for Tutors and Parents - what to do when phonics isn't enough, Vyonna Graham, Dr. Alta E. Graham
- The Dyslexia-Friendly Teacher's Toolkit: Strategies for Teaching Students 3-18, Barbara Pavey, Margaret Meehan; Sarah Davis
- The Dyslexia Empowerment Plan: A Blueprint for Renewing Your Child's Confidence and Love of Learning, Ben Foss
- Dyslexia Outside-the-Box: Equipping Dyslexic Kids to Not Just Survive but Thrive, Beth Ellen Nash
- Learn to Read for Kids With Dyslexia: 101 Games and Activities to Teach Your Child to Read, Hannah Braun,
- Blast Off to Reading!: 50 Orton-Gillingham Based Lessons for Struggling Readers and Those with Dyslexia, Cheryl Orlassino

At ChangeInkk Foundation, we strongly believe that for India to become a \$10 trillion economy, contributions of individuals with Specific Learning Disabilities is a must. After all, 40% of the world's self-made millionaires have a learning disability, like Dyslexia, and #DyslexicThinking has powered most innovations that have changed our world!

So, we are working hard to #Speak4Dyslexia, raising awareness around the many strengths of dyslexic minds. Through innovative programs, advocacy and capacity-building initiatives, we are #ChangeInkkTheConversation, to actively build inclusive ecosystems that support them from cradle to career.

We engage closely with individuals, parents, educators, employers, policy makers, and civil society, to mainstreaming inclusion in schools, higher education and workplaces, where individuals with SLDs can thrive.



For more information about ChangeInkk and our initiatives, visit www.changeinkk.org or write to us: info@changeinkk.org.