

 Ohio's Parent Mentor Project


SPRING CONFERENCE 2024

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**Championing Success for
Every Child—Together**

Friday, April 19, 2024, Columbus, Ohio

 **Department of
Education &
Workforce**

 **THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**
CENTER ON EDUCATION AND
TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT





Ohio Statewide

Family Engagement Center

Professional Learning ————— at The Ohio State University

Communicating with Families about Dyslexia

Dr. Meredith Wellman
Parent Mentors Spring Conference
April 2024

About Me

Dr. Meredith Wellman
Program Manager
Ohio Statewide Family
Engagement Center



Ohio Statewide
Family Engagement Center

at The Ohio State University

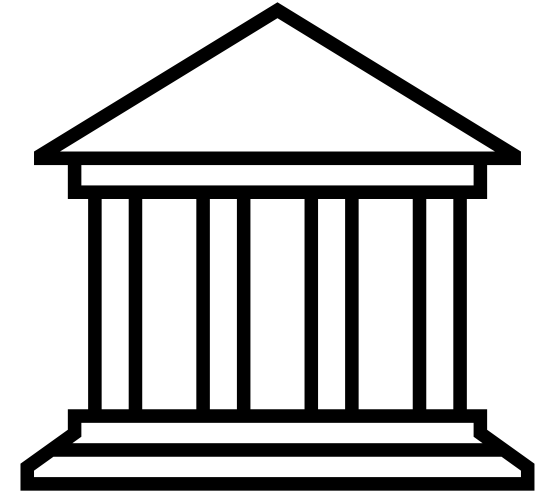


Who is in the room today?



Ohio Dyslexia Laws

The Big Pieces



- Teacher Professional Development
- Screening for Kindergarteners and older grade level options
- Instructional support and resources
- Communication between schools and families



Department of
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Workforce

How do we learn to read?

Listen to our language(s) all around us

Then we are taught letters and their sounds

Then we learn simple rules about letter sounds and how they match with letters printed on paper

We learn that there are vowels, and short and long sounds for them.

Then we learn more and more complex rules and patterns so that we can read longer words and words that don't follow common patterns.



Our Dyslexia Communications Work

- **Collaborative process** to develop tools to help schools meet new legal requirements
- **Results:** 9 templates for educators and families
- Continuously improving, adapting



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STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL
*for The Ohio Statewide
Family Engagement Center*



Dyslexia, defined

“a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person’s intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language.” – Ohio Law



Templates from the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center

Equipping families for their role

Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center
Every Child. Every Family. Every School.

Dyslexia Resource Guide for Ohio Families

As many as 1 in 5 people have dyslexia worldwide!

What is dyslexia?

People with dyslexia have trouble matching letters on a page with the sounds they make. Dyslexia is brain-based disability, however, people with dyslexia can be taught to read. In fact, dyslexia does not affect a person's intelligence. Families, early childhood teachers, or kindergarten teachers are often the first to notice children having difficulty with talking or learning at school. Since dyslexia can run in families, sometimes parents find out they are dyslexic when their children are diagnosed. It is important to pay attention to potential signs that a child may have dyslexia. It is not simply seeing letters differently. Children with dyslexia can show any mix of signs. While any one sign does not necessarily mean your child has dyslexia, it is important to talk with your child's teachers if you notice the signs.

What are signs that my child might have dyslexia?

Preschool

- Delay in learning to talk
- Pronouncing words can be a challenge
- ("puzette" for "spaghetti")
- "Persistent" "baby talk"
- Remembering nursery rhymes and chants can be a challenge
- Difficulty naming letters/numbers
- Telling stories that are hard to follow

K-2nd Grade

- Doesn't associate letter or letter combinations with sounds
- Sounding out simple words like cat, map, and zap is a challenge
- A history of reading problems in parents or siblings
- Reads slowly, reads words incorrectly or reads without expression
- Confusion with pairs such as before/after, right/left, etc.

3rd-6th Grade

- Often guessing words because they cannot sound them out
- Relies on answering questions about text if it is read aloud
- Difficulty pronouncing words correctly (e.g., "magines" instead of "magazine")
- Writing can be a challenge, with frequent spelling mistakes
- Skipping or misreading common short words

6th-12th grade

- Reads slowly and becomes frustrated.
- Often skips over small words or leaves out part of longer words when reading aloud
- Prefers multiple choice questions over fill in the blank or other questions with short answers
- Learning a foreign language can be a challenge
- Memorizing facts, lists or directions can be tough

September 2022

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT

What is dyslexia?

Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center
Every Child. Every Family. Every School.

What is structured literacy?

Structured literacy is a way to teach students to read.

What does it look like or sound like?

Structured literacy follows a specific order to teach reading, from simple to more complex skills, based on how we know people's brains work. It is also very direct. Teachers focus on the exact skills that students need to know to go from speech to printed words. Structured literacy is hands on learning with lots of practice, review, and correction of errors as students learn their new skills. Structured literacy teaching can begin in early childhood and continue through high school. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are paired with one another to teach reading skills.

It looks like:

- Teaching letter names and sounds,
- Sounding out letters and how they blend together into words,
- Building words with letter tiles and other objects,
- Tapping or clapping out sounds and syllables in words,
- Using a word mapping chart to show students how each separate sound in a word is made up of one or more letters,
- Making sentences with words on cards, and
- Color coding sentences in paragraphs.

Using this approach, we do not ask students to "guess" or use "context clues" in a book to teach them how to read words.

Where can I learn more?

Structured literacy is based on hundreds of thousands of research studies by educators, speech and language specialists, psychologists, neurologists, and more. This body of knowledge is called the Science of Reading.

Your local school district should be able to share more information with you about how they are using a structured literacy approach. There are also many organizations that share information about structured literacy and family-friendly activities that build reading skills. For example, the International Dyslexia Association (dyslexiaid.org) and Reading Rockets.org. Visit the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center's website at OhioFamiliesEngage.osu.edu to view more resources like this one that support strong family, school, and community partnerships for student well-being and academic success!

March 2023

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT

What is structured literacy?

Dear Teacher,

I have noticed that my child, _____, is having trouble in school with learning (to read, to do math work, other). I have noticed the following signs: _____. Given these warning signs, I would like my child to be screened for Dyslexia as soon as possible.

Please give me a call so that we can discuss next steps for the screening, and talk about other steps that can be taken to get my child more support in the classroom for learning.

Thank you,
Parent/Caregiver Name
Date

Sample dyslexia screening request letter families can customize



Dyslexia Resource Guide for Ohio Families

- **Purpose:** Families will have more general knowledge, feel equipped for conversations with the school, and connect to resources
- Web version
- Print version (3 pages)
 - English, and also Arabic, Chinese Simplified, Nepali, Somali, Spanish
- Audio versions
 - Available in Arabic, English, Mandarin, Nepali, Somali, and Spanish



When might you use this?



Dyslexia Resource Guide for Ohio Families



As many as 1 in 5 people have dyslexia worldwide!

What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is one of the most common learning disabilities. People with dyslexia have many strengths, but have unexpected trouble learning to read. These difficulties are not related to a person's intelligence or motivation. Children with dyslexia can learn to read. Families, early childhood teachers, or kindergarten teachers are often the first to notice children having difficulty with talking or learning at school. It is important to pay attention to potential signs that a child may have dyslexia. Children with dyslexia can show any mix of signs. While any one sign does not necessarily mean your child has dyslexia, it is important to talk with your child's teachers if you have concerns.

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K-2nd Grade

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- Sounding out simple words like cat, map, and nap is a challenge
- A history of reading problems in parents or siblings
- Reads slowly, reads words incorrectly or reads without expression
- Confusion with pairs such as before/after, right/left, etc.

3rd-5th Grade

- Often guessing words because they cannot sound them out
- Better at answering questions about text if it is read aloud
- Difficulty pronouncing words correctly (e.g., "mazingine" instead of "magazine")
- Writing can be a challenge, with frequent spelling mistakes
- Skipping or misreading common short words

6th-12th grade

- Reads slowly and becomes frustrated; doesn't like to read
- Often skips over small words or leaves out part of longer words when reading aloud
- Prefers multiple choice questions over fill-in-the-blank or other questions with short answers
- Learning a foreign language can be a challenge
- Memorizing facts, lists or directions can be tough

September 2022

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
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What is structured literacy? Handout

- **Purpose:** Brief, general, non-technical overview for families and educators
- Print version only
- 1 page

What is structured literacy?

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What does it look like or sound like?

Structured literacy follows a specific order to teach reading, from simple to more complex skills, based on how we know people learn to read. It is also very direct. Teachers focus on the exact skills that students need to know to go from speech to printed words. Structured literacy is hands-on learning with lots of practice, review, and correction of errors as students learn their new skills. Structured literacy teaching can begin in early childhood and continue through high school. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are paired with one another to teach reading skills.

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Sample Dyslexia Screening Request Letter

- **Purpose:** Give families a template to communicate their concerns clearly with educators.
- Building “dual-capacity” of families and schools

Dear Teacher,

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Please give me a call so that we can discuss next steps for the screening, and talk about other steps that can be taken to get my child more support in the classroom for learning.

Thank you,

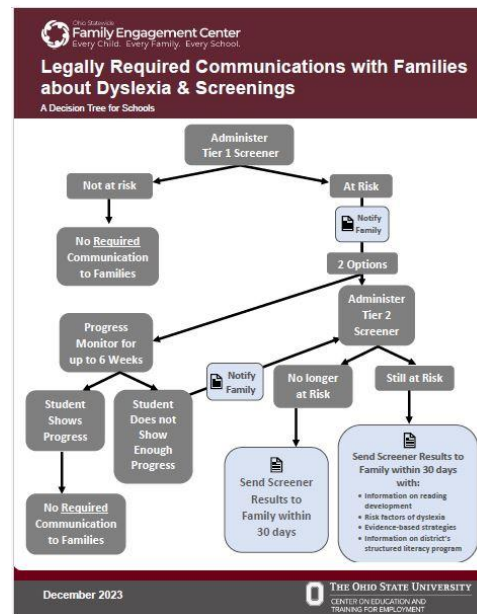
Parent/Caregiver Name

Date

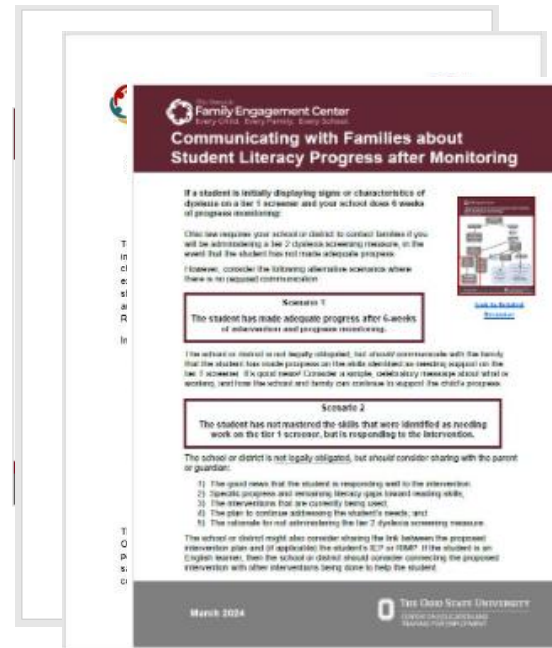


Templates from the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center

Equipping educators for their role



Legally required communications with families: Decision Tree and sample screening timeline



Sample Letters to Send to Families



Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center
at The Ohio State University

Adding Family-Friendly Content to your School's RIMP Communications

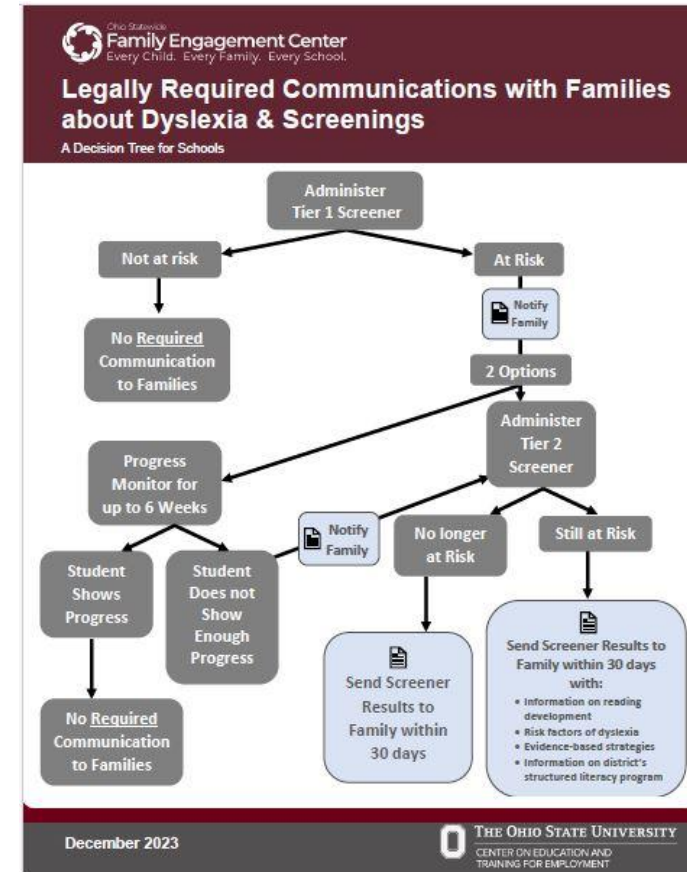
Ohio Districts are now [required](#) to include in their Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP) letters/communications to families specific aspects of literacy that the school will be focusing on with their child, based on the school's assessments. In the table below, we share 5 key early literacy concepts based on the Simple View of Reading, how to talk about these concepts with families, and activities families can try at home together to support their child's early literacy skill development, which can be added to a RIMP letter. We encourage you to consult our [guide for writing a family-friendly RIMP letter](#) as you continue to improve upon your school's communications for families.

What schools do to Support Early Literacy (OEI Guide from ODE)	How to Talk about this Literacy Skill in Communications with Families	Family-Centered Activities to Add to your Communications with Families	Links to More Family Resources
Explicit instruction in Fluency	An important reading skill for children is to read like they speak in everyday conversations.	Things to try at home: • Ask your child to read something out loud to you. • Read books more than once together. • Ask your child to read something at the same time as you (choral reading).	5 Fluency-Building Activities for Families from Reading Rockets for all ages
Explicit instruction in Vocabulary	Part of learning to read is knowing all the words to say what you want to say.	Things to try at home: • Kids need to hear new words many times to learn them well. We work on learning new words in school, and at home you help with this skill by having conversations with your child every day. Kids learn more words from conversations at mealtimes than they do from reading with you! For example, you can ask your child about what they enjoyed most about their school day, and what they enjoyed least. You can tell them about when you were in school, or talk about your favorite place to visit. We can't wait to learn more about your family and the conversations you're having as the school year goes on!	9 Tips for Families to Build Vocabulary from Iowa Reading Research Center, All Ages Supporting Young English Learners at Home: 8 Family Activities from Institute of Educational Sciences Book Fix: Online Books to Develop Vocabulary Skills

Avoiding jargon: Family-friendly ways to explain literacy terms, and home learning ideas

Legally required communications with families

- **Purpose:** Visual representation for educators and families, to see the minimum requirements for communication from school to home about screenings.
- Might also be useful for families to see what they can expect!



Adding Family-Friendly Content to Communications

Purpose: Family-friendly definitions for common literacy terms AND quick ideas for what parents can do at home daily.

- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Phonological Awareness
- Comprehension
- Phonemic Awareness



Adding Family-Friendly Content to your School's RIMP Communications

Ohio Districts are now [required](#) to include in their Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP) letters/communications to families specific aspects of literacy that the school will be focusing on with their child, based on the school's assessments. In the table below, we share 5 key early literacy concepts based on the Simple View of Reading, how to talk about these concepts with families, and activities families can try at home together to support their child's early literacy skill development, which can be added to a RIMP letter. We encourage you to consult our [guide for writing a family-friendly RIMP letter](#) as you continue to improve upon your school's communications for families.

What schools do to Support Early Literacy (EMIS Guide from ODE)	How to Talk about this Literacy Skill in Communications with Families	Family-Centered Activities to Add to your Communications with Families	Links to More Family Resources
Explicit instruction in Fluency	An important reading skill for children is to read like they speak in everyday conversations.	Things to try at home: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask your child to read something out loud to you• Read books more than once together• Ask your child to read something at the same time as you (choral reading)	5 Fluency-building Activities for families from Reading Rockets for all ages
Explicit instruction in Vocabulary	Part of learning to read is knowing all the words to say what you want to say.	Things to try at home: "Kids need to hear new words many times to learn them well. We work on learning new words in school, and at home you help with this skill by having conversations with your child every day. Kids learn more words from conversations at mealtimes than they do from reading with you! For example, you can ask your child about what they enjoyed most about their school day, and what they enjoyed least. You can tell them about when you were in school, or talk about your favorite place to visit. We can't wait to learn more about your family and the conversations you're having as the school year goes on."	9 tips for families to build vocabulary from Iowa Reading Research Center All ages Supporting Young English Learners at Home - 9 family activities from Institute of Educational Sciences Book Flip: Online Books to Develop Vocabulary Skills



Scenario

Kindergartener

Signs of dyslexia on screener

Family sent screener results

Family perceives a lack of support at school

Frustrations/resistance at home also

What can a parent mentor do?

Parents meet with teacher

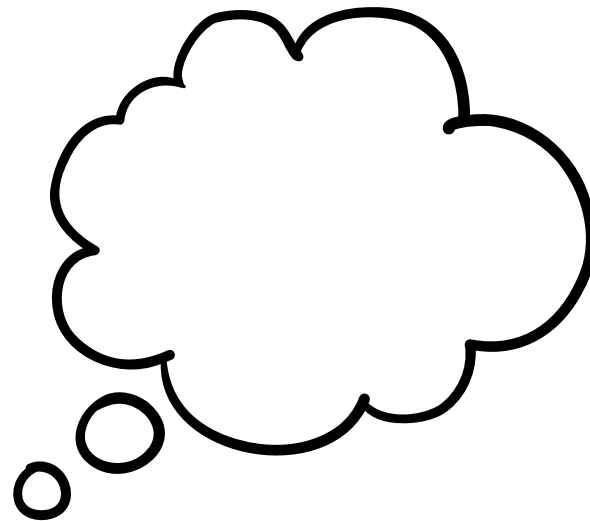
Not confident the school is providing evidence-based instruction

Want to support child in and outside of school

What can a parent mentor do?



Questions and Comments



Help us share and create!

- **4,000+** visitors to dyslexia tools page in past year
- Keep helping us identify resources and improvements needed!

“Before in my Regional Early Literacy Specialist role, I was very comfortable with the information and I didn't realize how needed these resources are within the districts. As I am trying to explain different aspects of the legislation, I am sharing and pulling up your graphics and explanations and it is making a world of difference for the leaders and teachers in my district.”

Juakita Bowens
Coordinator of Structured Literacy
Newark City Schools



Encourage Families to Subscribe

ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu/family-newsletter

Family 
to Family
NEWSLETTER



Issue 1: March 6, 2024

Welcome to the first edition of the *Family-to-Family* newsletter from the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center. This bi-monthly newsletter for parents and caregivers includes resources to support your child's education and connect you with your child's school and community from preschool through high school graduation.





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OhioSFEC@osu.edu
Wellman.87@osu.edu



@OhioEngage
@MWellmanOSU



Ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

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Share your experience and learning today on
social media using the hashtags

#ParentMentorsRock #OPMConf2024