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Understanding Dyslexia

What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a brain-based, often inherited, disorder that impairs a person's ability to read. It is not the result of low intelligence, lack of motivation, sensory impairment, or inadequate instruction. Researchers have determined that a number of genes may predispose individuals to developing dyslexia. The disorder is highly inheritable and tends to run in families.

In addition to assessments for learning disabilities and ADHD, LDA has recently begun to offer dyslexia testing. The Dyslexia Determination Test is a three-part assessment that tests for each of the three main types of dyslexia. It takes about 30 minutes to administer. Learning disability assessment may show indicators of reading deficits, but is not designed to identify the type or severity of a client's dyslexia. Therefore, a test designed to specifically identify this disorder is recommended by LDA. Dyslexia testing can be combined with a complete learning disability assessment or administered as a "stand alone" test. A chart on page 2 provides details on all assessments offered by LDA.

Dyslexia results from a difference in brain structure and processing. People with dyslexia have a larger right hemisphere in their brains than do normal readers. This may be one reason people with dyslexia often have significant strengths in areas controlled by the right side of the brain, such as artistic, athletic, and mechanical gifts; 3-D visualization abilities; musical talent; creative problem-solving skills; and intuitive people skills.

In addition to unique brain architecture, people with dyslexia have unusual "wiring." Neurons are found in atypical places in the brain, and are not as neatly ordered as in non-dyslexic brains. Additionally, people with dyslexia do not use the same part of their brains when reading as do others. Regular readers consistently use the same part of the brain when they read; people with dyslexia do not use that part of the brain, and there appears to be no consistent part used among dyslexic readers.

Common Among the U.S. Population

Dyslexia is not rare. According to the International Dyslexia Association, dyslexia impacts 15-20% of the U.S. population, or up to one in five people. Some experience it mildly, others more profoundly, with all degrees in between. Common characteristics among people with dyslexia are difficulty with word recognition, decoding, spelling, phonological processing (the manipulation of sounds), and/or rapid visual-verbal response.

Did You Know?

Dyslexia impacts 15-20% of the U.S. population, or up to one in five people.

In This Issue

Understanding Dyslexia	1
ADHD Corner: Interview with Sari Solden	3
NEW! Workshop Series for Adult Educators	4
Parent Corner: Blast Off for Success with LDA Summer Camp	4
LDA Agency Information	5
Spring Calendar	6

Continued on page 2

Understanding Dyslexia Continued

Most people with dyslexia can read, up to a point. Children with dyslexia usually can keep up in reading in the early grades, but by third or fourth grade, the reading strategies they have adopted due to their dyslexia begin to fail them.

Most children with dyslexia are not impaired to the point that they meet criteria for having a learning disability. In fact, only one in ten will meet that definition, which qualifies the child for special education services. The other 90 percent will continue to struggle with reading, writing, and spelling, and while teachers and parents know something is wrong, their school may be unable to offer any specialized help beyond the classroom teacher.

Timing is Important

Early diagnosis of dyslexia is critical, and a child can be reliably diagnosed as early as nine years old. Children with this disorder will not outgrow it, and research shows that waiting is the worst thing you can do. Even children who will qualify for special education often cannot be identified for services until 2nd or 3rd grade. In the meantime, or if the child does not qualify for

special education services, it will be up to the parents to provide appropriate interventions, such as LDA's specialized tutoring service.

For those with dyslexia, the prognosis is mixed. The disorder affects such a wide range of people and produces such different symptoms with varying degrees of severity that predictions are hard to make. However, the prognosis is generally good for individuals whose dyslexia is identified early, who have supportive family and friends and a strong self-image, and who are involved in an appropriate intervention program.



Assessments Available at LDA Minnesota

NEW! at LDA

	Learning Disability (LD) Assessment	ADHD Evaluation (includes LD Assessment)	Dyslexia	Adult Reading Profile (ARP)	Early Reading Profile (ERP)
Client Ages	Ages 8 & up	Ages 8 & up	Ages 9 & up	Ages 16 & up	Ages 5-9
Test Used	WISC-IV (Child) WAIS-IV (Adult) Woodcock Johnson (WJ)-III Diagnostic interview Mental status exam Psycho-social assessment	WISC-IV (Child) WAIS-IV (Adult) WJ-III Diagnostic interview Mental status exam Psycho-social assessment Behavior rating scales (child)	Dyslexia Determination Test-child (DDT) Adult Dyslexia Test (ADT)	WJ-III (reading only)	Portions of WJ-III C-Top RCBM MAZE
Testing Purpose	Rules out or identifies type of LD Reports intellectual ability and academic achievement Identifies whether LD may qualify client for special education services (child) Identifies whether client meets state guidelines for GED testing accommodations (adult) Provides recommendations to align instruction with client's learning profile Provides recommendations for organizational and study skills to support success	Rules out or identifies type of ADHD and/or LD Reports intellectual ability and academic achievement Identifies whether LD may qualify client for special education services (child) Identifies whether client meets state guidelines for GED testing accommodations (adult) Provides recommendations to align instruction with client's learning profile Provides recommendations for supplemental supportive services and 504 plan accommodations	Identifies type and severity of dyslexia Provides recommendations for interventions based on the client's particular type(s) of dyslexia Provides recommendations to align instruction with client's learning profile Provides recommendations for organizational and study skills to support success Provides recommendations for supplemental supportive services and 504 plan accommodations	Assesses reading achievement Provides recommendations to align instruction with client's learning profile May be used with ELL students for whom LD assessment is inappropriate	Assesses reading achievement Determines whether student is at risk for reading difficulties Provides recommendations to align instruction with client's learning profile
Cost per Assessment	\$985	\$1,350	\$285 \$185 (when combined with LD testing)	\$500	\$250

ADHD Corner: Interview with Sari Solden

Below are excerpts from a recent interview with Sari Solden, keynote speaker at the upcoming Regional ADHD Conference co-sponsored by LDA Minnesota, CHADD Twin Cities, and ADDitude Magazine.

Q: Sari, what should our readers know about you before coming to hear you speak at our conference?

Sari Solden: I am a psychotherapist working in the field of ADD and learning differences for 22 years. I am very interested in the emotional impact of growing up without being diagnosed. This affects self-image and can produce negative messages that last for many years and can lead to a long-term journey as an adult to seek self-acceptance and understanding.



Q: Do you note differences working with children versus working with adults who have ADHD?

SS: It can be much harder to treat adults who have grown up with negative labels, having never received explanations for their differences or awareness of their strengths. With children, the therapist has an opportunity to prevent these negative consequences. In both children and adults, developing a mindset that promotes well-being and an embrace of their differences is essential.

Q: On first receiving a diagnosis, some parents ask whether their child will outgrow their ADHD, or how long their child will need medication. What would you say to these parents?

SS: Parents need to help their child turn their thinking toward "How do I make this something I live with?" and not struggle against him- or herself. Children may outgrow their hyperactivity, but not their inattentiveness. Your brain doesn't change. Avoid the idea that there is something wrong or broken, or that treatment can help you get over who you are. That is what causes shame.

Q: How did you come to such a positive appreciation for your own differences?

SS: I had the benefit of listening to heroic, amazing stories of people with differences who learned to put their strengths into play. After my diagnosis, I started taking medication, but without support, I didn't get very far. The medications helped me to find the ability to open up and talk about myself with others. Becoming part of the ADHD community, I also met a whole world of high-functioning people with the same struggles and strengths. Having a community of people to identify with was huge, but it's been a long term road. Coming to an ADHD conference is like coming out of the messy closet. It can be the first time people feel able to let down their guard and not hide their true selves.

Q: How does ADHD play a role between partners in a relationship?

SS: There are three situations: 1) mixed marriage (one with ADHD, one without), 2) partners with the same type of ADHD, and 3) two partners each with a different type of ADHD, such as primarily inattentive or primarily impulsive. It can be an asset for two partners who have the same type of ADHD who share a perspective and acceptance of one another, but they don't have the complementary skills, so they need a lot more outside help. Partners with different types have complementary skills may have the expectation of understanding one another more than they actually do. In mixed relationships, there can be power struggles. The non-ADHD partner may be more critical or take a parental role. The partner with ADHD may assume more of the blame for conflicts, rather than knowing that both partners bring their own strengths and challenges.

Q: How does your focus on acceptance differ from just taking the easy path or giving up?

SS: Acceptance does not mean not trying. Acceptance is the precursor to change. You can't change yourself until you accept yourself. Otherwise, you are too vulnerable and fearful to change. You need to start where you are and tap into what you are good at. Self-acceptance is not passive at all; it is the most active work you can do.

To hear more from Sari, join us on Saturday, April 17, 2010. You can also visit Sari's website at addjourneys.com. Sari resides in Michigan where she maintains a private practice working with adults with ADHD.

Living, Loving, and Learning with ADHD

Conference Highlights

- Information and resources for ADHD adults, their family members, parents of children with ADHD, teachers, and other professionals
- Keynote speaker: Sari Solden, M.S., LMFT
Embracing Your Strengths and Struggles
- 24 breakout sessions by ADHD experts
- Continuing Education Credits (CEU) available
- Books available on ADHD topics for all ages

Why Attend

- Network with peers
- Learn from over 30 experts
- Bring a family member, and receive a discount rate
- Choose the topics that most interest you
- Gain information to serve your students and clients
- Meet others who share your concerns

Quick Facts

Date: Saturday, April 17, 2010

Time: 8:00 am registration begins; 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Location: Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis - Park Place,
1500 Park Place Boulevard, St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Register Several Ways:

- 1) Call 952.582.6000
- 2) Online at ldaminnesota.org
- 3) Mail/Fax registration form (available on website)

Sample Conference Breakout Session Topics

Children and Adolescents with ADHD: Diet Does Matter

ADHD in the Workplace

Executive Mis-function: Discovering the Missing Link

Positive Parenting - Igniting the Spark Within

For Better or Worse: ADHD in Couples

Never a Dull Moment - Creating a Life that Captures Your Attention

Even the Grown-ups Have it - Successfully Navigating Adult ADHD

The ADHD Checklist: Building Bridges between Home and School

Critical Conversations: Optimizing the Parent/Professional Relationship

Co-Sponsored by



and ADDitude Magazine

Additional support from conference sponsor Learning Rx

NEW! Professional Workshop Series for Educators

LDA is pleased to offer a new series of professional workshops for educators at all levels. Attendees will gain an enriched understanding of learning disabilities, ADHD, and other learning challenges. Each month's topics will be presented at both a morning and evening session. Both topics are presented at each session.

Session A April 8 and 13

Topic 1: **Assessing learning disabilities**
Topic 2: **Understanding the eligibility criteria for referral to special education services or for GED test accommodations**

Learn about learning disabilities and how they are diagnosed and treated. Gain insight into whom should be referred for assessment, the assessment process, and how report conclusions are reached and instruction and accommodation recommendations are made.

Session B May 6 and 11

Topic 1: **Interpreting the written test results of an LD assessment**
Topic 2: **Understanding how learning disabilities impact how the student learns and maximizing the benefit of LDA's individualized recommendations**

Learn how the tests used to assess learning disabilities work. Gain knowledge into how the major types of learning disabilities impact the learning process and how individualized recommendations can help the student and teacher.

Session C June 3 and 8

Topic 1: **Intelligence – the different types and how each plays a role in learning**
Topic 2: **Adult ADHD – understanding the disorder, myths vs. science, and how ADHD relates to learning disabilities**

Understand the different types of intelligence and how each can impact learning. Clarify your understanding of ADHD, focusing on how it is assessed and issues unique to adult remedial learners.

Fees are \$40 per workshop, or all three for \$95. To register, please contact client services at 952.582.6000. These workshops are offered free of charge to Minnesota ABE instructional staff, but pre-registration is requested of all attendees.

Parent Corner: *Blast Off for Success* with LDA Summer Camp!

LDA is now taking registrations for our summer camp program for students entering grades 1- 6 in Fall 2010.

Make the most of your summer break and join us for a fun and fresh approach to learning. Due to popular demand, our camp has been extended to three weeks this year. Gear up for the 2010-11 school year at LDA Minnesota.

What to Expect

- Small group tutoring for both math and reading to get those brain juices flowing and ready for a super start to the school year.
- Through creative hands-on activities and games, your child will be prepared to hit the ground running next fall.
- Our camp counselors are licensed instructors experienced in teaching students with learning challenges, including learning disabilities and ADHD.
- All *Blast Off for Success* students receive a FREE t-shirt and a book at the end of each camp week. Plus, each day is an opportunity to earn prizes for focused work and positive camp spirit!

Here's what parents say about LDA camp:

"My son felt successful! Not stupid, which he does at regular school."

"You managed to motivate my reluctant learner! He had fun doing the reading and math."

Camp weeks

August 9-13; 16-20; 23-27

Time

9:00 am- 12:00 pm

Fees

1 week \$285 per child
2 weeks \$535 per child
3 weeks \$765 per child

Pre-Camp Care: LDA offers pre-camp care beginning at 7:30 am. \$50 per week.

Early Registration Discount through June 1

Contact client services to sign-up for camp at info@ldaminnesota.org or call 952.582.6000.

Camp Blast Off for Success is appropriate for *any* student who needs an extra boost in math and/or reading.



Need a Tutor? LDA can help.

Children • Youth • Adults

LDA Minnesota provides specialized tutoring services for individuals of all ages with various levels of learning needs. Whether you or your child suffer from a severe learning disability or just need extra help in a particular area, our licensed professionals can tailor tutoring sessions to meet your needs. Our instructors help students understand how they learn, and use a variety of materials and techniques to assure success.

Benefits of LDA Tutoring

- One-to-one tutoring sessions held in private learning rooms
- LDA's tutors have experience working with students with learning disabilities, attention disorders, or other learning difficulties
- Students are matched with instructors according to their interests, skills, and needs
- Flexible scheduling
- FREE! pre-tutoring assessment included
- New student discount

Our team of educators possesses a wealth of expertise and works together to find the right solution for any learning difficulty. The cost per one-hour session is \$55. Clients who prepay for 12 sessions receive a 10% discount.

Call us today at 952.582.6000 or email info@ldaminnesota.org

Visit Us!

www.ldaminnesota.org

Learn how you learn with our interactive, online presentation on the brain.

Discover the resources you need to help your child (or you) succeed at school, on the job, and in life.

Find out more about workshops and support groups for families and individuals with ADHD.

Volunteer at LDA and learn how you can help.

Examine the benefits of membership in LDA Minnesota and LDA America.

Purchase high-quality resources for parents, teachers, and other professionals.

Learn • Dream • Achieve

The mission of LDA Minnesota is to help children, youth, and adults with learning difficulties *learn successfully, dream of possibilities, and achieve their goals.*

Whom We Serve

LDA Minnesota serves individuals of all ages who are experiencing learning difficulties, their families, teachers, and other professionals who serve them. LDA's deep expertise in serving persons with Specific Learning Disabilities, such as Dyslexia or Dyscalculia, and those with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) allows our staff to provide expert, individualized service for *any* struggling learner.

A learning disability is a lifelong neurobiological disorder that causes a person to have trouble storing, processing, and/or producing information. Often, a person with a learning disability has difficulty listening, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, reasoning, recalling, and/or organizing information. ADHD is a neurobiological disorder in which a person typically has developmentally inappropriate levels of inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity, working memory, and/or executive function problems.

Through community-based programs such as **Learning Connections**, **Parents as Partners**, **Early Literacy**, and statewide **Adult Connections**, LDA Minnesota provides services to children, youth, and adults with learning disabilities, attention deficits, and other learning difficulties. LDA offers public education and support and training for parents, teachers, and employers to improve the likelihood of successful outcomes for individuals with learning challenges. Many of LDA's services are offered free to the community; approximately 75% of the individuals LDA serves are economically disadvantaged.

LDA provides the following fee-based services:

- Assessments and consultations for children and adults for specific learning disabilities (SLD) or other learning difficulties
- Diagnostic assessments to determine the presence or absence of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyslexia Testing for children, youth, and adults
- GED accommodations assessments
- Early Reading Profile for children ages 5-9 with reading difficulties
- ADHD workshops and support groups for parents and affected adults
- Coaching and counseling for youth and adults with LD and/or ADHD
- Tutoring for persons of all ages with or without a diagnosed learning disability

We welcome your questions or suggestions. Please send to: info@ldaminnesota.org.



We've Moved to Golden Valley!

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www.ldaminnesota.org

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Upcoming ADHD Support Services

- Apr 5 **Monthly Evening Adult Support Group**
- NEW!** Apr 17 **ADHD Regional Conference**
Living, Loving, and Learning with ADHD
- Spring Series starts Apr 20 **Parent Support Group** - Six sessions
Tuesdays, 10:00-11:30 am
Register for individual sessions or all six.
- Spring Series starts Apr 20 **ADHD Spouses Support Group** - Six sessions
Tuesdays, 12:00-1:00 pm
Register for individual sessions or all six.

ADHD Counseling for individuals
Call to arrange hours and days.

Thursday ADHD Adult Support Groups
Daytime: 10:00am-12:00pm & **NEW! Evening group added: 7:00-8:30pm**

In addition, LDA summer camp and adult educator workshops are available. (See page 4 for more information.)

All services are located at LDA Minnesota, unless otherwise noted. See website or call for more information. **Register by phone 952.582.6000 or online at ldaminnesota.org.**

DID YOU KNOW? 6–10% of Americans have ADHD, and 30% of those with ADHD also have an LD.

Don't Delay!

LDA Minnesota · CHADD Twin Cities · *ADDitude Magazine*

co-present

Living, Loving, and Learning with ADHD

Spring Regional ADHD Conference

24 Breakout sessions to choose from!
Learn from over 30 experts

Saturday, April 17, 2010

Keynote Presenter
Sari, Solden, MS, LMFT
Author, ADHD Psychotherapist, Speaker

Time: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Location: Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis
St. Louis Park, MN

See inside for more information!

Visit ldaminnesota.org for details or to pre-register
Call 952.582.6000 or email info@ldaminnesota.org to receive conference updates.

Additional support from conference sponsor Learning Rx

LDA Minnesota Partners & Community Sites

Minneapolis Public and Non-public Schools

- Anishinabe Academy
- Bryn Mawr Elementary
- Hall Elementary
- Longfellow Elementary
- Lucy Laney Elementary
- Lyndale Elementary
- PICA Headstart
- Parkview Elementary
- Richard Green Elementary
- Risen Christ School
- San Miguel School

Metro Area Partners

- Christ's Household of Faith School
- Brooklyn Center Schools
- Robbinsdale Area Schools
- W.I.S.E (Womens Initiative for Self-Empowerment)
- Phyllis Wheatley Community Center

Statewide Partners

- Healthy Legacy Coalition
- Minnesota Department of Education – Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- Minnesota Office of Higher Education

LDA Minnesota is affiliated with these organizations:

