

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

Parent/Carer information guide



What is DLD?

DLD stands for Developmental Language Disorder. Having DLD means that you have significant, on-going difficulties understanding and/or using spoken language in all languages that you use.

There is no known cause of DLD which can make it hard to explain.

DLD is not caused by emotional difficulties, medical conditions or limited exposure to language.

A young person with DLD may also have other difficulties, such as; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and/or speech sound difficulties.

What signs may a child or young person show?

They may:

- Find it difficult to express themselves verbally - even though they have the ideas.
- Sound muddled - it can be difficult to follow what they are saying.
- Sound immature for their age regarding the language they use.
- Struggle to find words or use varied vocabulary.
- Not understand, or remember, what has been said.
- Have difficulties reading and writing.

Language difficulties may also underlie behavioural difficulties such as low self esteem, anxiety or misbehaving in class.

DLD can look different in different individuals. Difficulties can also change as children get older and they need to develop more complex skills.

How will DLD affect my child?

- DLD is a long-term condition that can have a big impact on a young person's learning and achievement at school.
- Young people with DLD won't just 'pick up' language; they will need to be taught language skills.
- They may find it difficult to maintain concentration, as all their efforts are spent making sense of the language in instructions.
- They find it more difficult to listen and work things out at the same time.
- They find it harder to learn new words and ideas.
- They usually learn and understand better through multi-sensory experiences, rather than verbal methods.
- Sometimes DLD can affect young people's social interaction skills and their ability to make and keep friends.
- Young people with DLD are at increased risk of reading difficulties.



**DLD affects
about two
children
in every
classroom.**

How to support a young person with DLD at home?

- Get your child's attention - say their name before asking questions or giving instructions so they know when to listen.
- Ensure your child can see your face to support their attention and listening.
- Use simple language and repeat if necessary to support memory and provide as many opportunities for them to hear, see and use words.
- Talk calmly and slowly to support their ability to process words.
- Give your child more time to respond to help them process information.
- Use symbols – provide a picture and/or use gestures to represent new words or concepts to support their understanding visually.
- Encourage your child to communicate with you however they can, accept gesture, pointing, facial expression.
- Check they have understood instructions or new information.
- Help them learn skills to join in with other children. For example, playing turn taking and listening games at home.

Who can I contact for further information and support?

Contact your school or nursery SENCo or Warwickshire County Council's Education Services:

**Centre and South Warwickshire
Specialist Teaching Service (STS)**
Tel: 01926 476600

**Speech and Language Therapy
(SaLT) Tel:** 01926 567139
Email: Louise.Carr@swft.nhs.uk

**North Warwickshire
STS Tel:** 01926 413777

SaLT Tel: 02476 378620
Email: bethaney.brown@swft.nhs.uk

**East Warwickshire
STS Tel:** 01788 338130

SaLT Tel: 02476 378620
Email: bethaney.brown@swft.nhs.uk

Find more information online at:

www.swft.nhs.uk/our-services/speech-and-language-therapy-children

Useful websites:

www.radld.org www.engage-dld.com
www.afasic.org.uk <https://speechandlanguage.org.uk>