Resources for Serving Dyslexic Youth

Dyslexia is a learning disability that specifically effects reading comprehension, spelling, and writing. Although it is a lifelong disability, there are teaching strategies, tactics, and resources to create a fostering environment to serve patrons.

Background Information

Zettler-Greeley, C. M. (Ed.). (2022, May). Understanding dyslexia (for parents) - nemours kidshealth. KidsHealth. Retrieved from https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/dyslexia.html

Understanding dyslexia is the vital first step to working with the user group. This type of learning disability effects 10-15% of the population and is a condition people are born with.

Creating an Inclusive Environment

Grassi, R. (2018, August 30). Guidelines for Library Services to Individuals with Dyslexia [web log]. Retrieved from https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2018/08/guidelines-for-library-services-to-individuals-with-dyslexia/.

A roadmap is outlined with the best practices to ease the library experience for children with dyslexia. The main components are through the space, presentation, library staff, partnerships, and marketing to create a comfortable environment with resources such as the Daisy app.

Mintz, B. (2018, July 11). Creating dyslexic-friendly children's libraries. Everyday Advocacy. Retrieved from https://www.ala.org/everyday-advocacy/creating-dyslexic-friendly-children%E2%80%99s-libraries

The initiative of the Association for Library Service to Children expresses the importance of designated dyslexic-friendly areas within the public library setting. Programming, targeted collections, and redesigned departments all foster this inclusivity for dyslexic patrons.

Rutledge, H. (2002). Dyslexia: challenges and opportunities for public libraries. Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, 34(3), 135–144. https://doi.org/10.1177/096100060203400302

The importance of catering to the needs of dyslexic patrons is included in the libraries mission statement to facilitate access to information in a variety of media. To overcome reading obstacles, public libraries are not offering enough resources to accommodate to dyslexic needs.

The Best Practices

Lauren, J. (2021). Dyslexia and our public libraries. Perspectives on Language and Literacy, 47(1), 27-30. Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/dyslexia-our-public-libraries/docview/2671903238/se-2?accountid=14608

Readers advisory, early literacy programs, and assistive technology and print, are a few of the methods that public libraries serve as a lifeline for dyslexic patrons. Behaviors that are considered as red flags include late talking, poor memory, slow/confused leaner, and more.

Huffman, Stephanie, Erin Shaw, and Amy Thompaon. "Meeting the Needs of Students With Dyslexia: Librarians, Teachers, and Students Working Together Hand-in-Hand." Reading improvement 57.4 (2020): 161–172. Print.

To help support learners struggling in the reading development process, this article covers the LAFE model (L look/listen, A assistance/accessibility, F format/fit, and E engagement/environment) to have the most positive and accurate impact on dyslexia treatment.

Dyslexia Fonts as a Resource

Laddusaw, S., & Brett, J. (2019). Dyslexia-friendly fonts: Using Open Dyslexic to increase exhibit access. College & Research Libraries News, 80(1), 33. doi:https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.80.1.33
This case study from Texas A&M presents ways to adapt texts through public programming to meet the needs of dyslexic patrons. The experiment involves Open Dyslexic (OD) which increases readability and adapting fonts, which allow organizations to become more aware of cognitive disorders. The letters have a heavy base/bottom to help distinguish letters.

Ari, O. (2022). Dyslexia fonts: What postsecondary instructors need to know. Journal of College Reading and Learning, 52(1), 64-71. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/10790195.2021.1986430
Specifically helpful for educators, there is growing popularity of specific font uses for dyslexic readers. The use of the OD(OpenDyslexic) and Dyslexie font types provides equal accessibility and opportunity for all users which reduces errors and reading effort.

Books for Dyslexic Readers

Dyslexic Friendly Font

Removing the Stigma

IFLA Library Services to People with Special Needs Section, & IFLA Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities Section. (2015, March 1). IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to persons with dyslexia – revised and extended. FLA Repository. Retrieved from https://repository.ifla.org/handle/123456789/498
Beginning with a general description of what dyslexia is, the IFLA professional report goes in depth to individuals with this learning disability and the hesitancy to speak openly about it. The significance of face-to-face contact and conversations regarding what users want and need to remove the stigma is surveyed.

Bolt, N. (1970, January 1). "but they don't look like they have a disability." serving people with dyslexia - best practices from the United States. IFLA Library. Retrieved from http://library.ifla.org/id/eprint/928/
The best practices in the United States for this "hidden disability" are often overlooked and not well executed. National programs, intentional services, and issues within the population are explored through real world, personable scenarios to educate and improve our services to provide equal access for all patrons.

Raising Awareness

October is Dyslexia Awareness month. International Dyslexia Association. (2020, September 24). Retrieved from https://dyslexiaida.org/october-is-dyslexia-awareness-month-2/
The International Dyslexia Association provides many resources including fact sheets, infographics, success stories, and more to increase awareness. By participating in dyslexia awareness month, more consciousness and up to date information can be spread around the world to support advocacy initiatives to participate in.