

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)



Name: _____

Who to contact and how: _____

Notes: _____

Diana, Princess of Wales
Scarcho Road
Grimsby
DN33 2BA
03033 306999
www.nlg.nhs.uk

Scunthorpe General Hospital
Cliff Gardens
Scunthorpe
DN15 7BH
03033 306999
www.nlg.nhs.uk

Goole & District Hospital
Woodland Avenue
Goole
DN14 6RX
03033 306999
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Information for patients

Introduction

DLD stands for Developmental Language Disorder. Having DLD means your child may have difficulties with understanding and/or using all known languages. DLD can be identified in children from the age of 5 who are likely to have difficulties which may affect their academic progress and persist into adulthood. DLD is believed to affect around 2 children in every classroom. DLD is more common in boys than girls.

DLD was previously known as Specific Language Impairment (SLI).

Causes

There is **no known cause** of DLD, which can make it hard to explain. DLD is **not caused** by emotional difficulties or reduced exposure to language. However, a child or young person with DLD may or may not have difficulties in other areas. A child may or may not have medical conditions co-existing with DLD, but these **do not cause** DLD.

Signs that a child or young person may have DLD?

- Speech is difficult to understand
- Difficulty saying words or sentences
- Lower than average literacy skills e.g. reading, writing and spelling
- Difficulty understanding how and when to use language appropriately in social situations
- Difficulty understanding words or instructions that they hear from others
- Difficulty understanding or remembering what has been said to them

Remember: DLD looks different in each individual child.

How might this affect my child?

DLD is **ongoing and significant**, which means that it is a long-term condition which may affect learning and achievement. Children with DLD may present with the following difficulties:

- Joining in with other children
- Following what is going on in the playground, or in the classroom
- Making and keeping friends
- Frustration
- Difficulties with behaviour

Information for patients

How can I support my child?

Children with DLD often learn and understand information easier through **additional visual and/or practical** means. For example, a child may understand a story better if they watched it and drew it, alongside simple verbal language.

Top tips:

- Use a picture or object to represent new words and vocabulary
- Call your child's name to get their attention
- Play and talk face-to-face with your child
- Keep what you say to your child short and simple
- You may need to talk calmly and slowly
- Ask fewer questions
- Use less complicated words
- Reduce distractions, e.g. turn off the TV, computer, phone
- Check that they have understood you by asking them to repeat back your instruction
- Check your child has understood you before moving on

Remember: if your child has DLD, they are **NOT** being lazy or rude. Your child may **not understand** what you have said to them.

How can we support DLD?

If you are concerned about your child's speech or language development, you can refer your child to Speech and Language Therapy through your child's school or school nurse. You can also self-refer as a parent by using our contact details in the leaflet.

Your child will be assessed by a Speech and Language Therapist and then receive appropriate support. A child with DLD is unlikely to 'catch up' without specific help from a Speech and Language Therapist. There is no 'gold standard' treatment for DLD, as each individual child may present with different areas of difficulties and skills. A tailored package of care can be developed by a Speech and Language Therapist to support a child's individual needs.

References

Afasic (2016) Developmental Language Disorder (previously Specific language impairment).

Get Hackney Talking (2016) Developmental Language Disorder (DLD): Parent Information Leaflet. Available: www.gethackneytalking.co.uk

I CAN (n.d) Factsheet: Developmental Language Disorder. Available: www.talkingpoint.org.uk

Information for patients

Any Comments, Compliments, Concerns or Complaints

If you have any other concerns please talk to your nurse, therapist or doctor. Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) are available on 03033 306518 (Grimsby, Scunthorpe and Goole). You can also contact nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net

As a Trust we value equality of access to our information and services, therefore alternative formats available on request at nlg-tr.interpreters@nhs.net

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