

Our Dyslexia Story

We initially viewed our son as a very busy little boy who would rather play in the dirt than be sitting in a chair reading a book. We blew it off as boys will be boys. As he grew older and started school we thought again, “this was just his personality and that he would need more assistance and encouragement than his older sisters did”, as reading was not coming as easily for him as it did for them. School was hard for him and he would avoid reading and homework at all costs. His teachers assured us that it will come with time and maturity and that he will be fine. Continue to work with him at home and that will help.

As the years passed we found in 2nd & 3rd grade, that he continued to fall further and further behind his peers. This is about the time we started to realize that something was not quite right. We approached the school to ask if they were finding the same thing and they gave us a list of things that we could do at home to help him, such as more reading, flash cards, jumping rope while spelling, etc. We continued to get more frustrated, as after the hours of homework and extra help we were still not seeing any progress. The long hours of homework & extra help resulted in nightly tantrums and tears of frustration. We finally asked the school in 4th grade if they could test him for a learning disability, as we felt some of what we were seeing could possibly be dyslexic symptoms. They agreed to test him for special ed, but unfortunately he did not qualify. They said that he could follow the curriculum at a slower pace. They felt he did not exhibit dyslexia like symptoms because he does not routinely write his letters backwards. He had not met Minnesota State Standards on Reading or Math at this point, and because he did not qualify for Special Education Services, they again gave us a list of things that we could do at home to help him catch up to his peers. Some of that list consisted him being more independent and to not depend on others for assistance, and to read more at home.

It was at this point that I felt for him to have a chance I would have to look into solutions myself. After many, many, hours of research and reading I continued to come across the same list of symptoms for dyslexia that we had originally found when requesting the school to test him. Because of this we decided to pay \$1200 to have our son tested for Dyslexia the summer before 5th grade. We drove him to Minneapolis (6 hours from home) to have the testing done. After the testing was complete we went home and waited a couple weeks to find out that our son was diagnosed with moderate to severe dyslexia. We couldn't have been happier to finally have an answer!

We took this information back to the school prior to the next school year starting (2012-2013). While we were informed that our school had no one trained in the specific reading instruction recommended we were able to implement a 504 plan as suggested by the Dyslexia Specialist. Also per the recommendations, we began tutoring 2x per week using the Barton Reading & Spelling which we purchased at our cost. We have seen more progress during these last 6 months than we have in 6 years. Unfortunately, my son's self esteem from being so far behind his peers has suffered terribly and we do not see a joy for reading or learning from him on a regular basis. He views himself as stupid and worries that his peers see him this way as well. I believe if he could have been identified and had received the appropriate interventions at a younger age, he would not be so far behind which may have prevented such a poor self esteem.

Thank you for listening – Diana Krause