



Cooperative Riunite Socio Sanitarie

Empowering Parents for Support of Their Children with Dyslexia

RIGA 15th -16th of May 2014



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WHAT IS DYSLEXIA

The official definition of dyslexia is contained in the Italian National Law on Specific Learning Disabilities, n. 170/2010:

“It is a specific learning disability that impairs a person's ability to read, specifically in decoding of letters or reading accuracy and reading fluency”



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What may happens with letters:

- Mixing up
- No recognition
- Inversion
- Omission
- Fusion
- Addition



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DISGRAPHA

is a deficiency in the ability to write, primarily in terms of handwriting, but also in terms of coherence.

la nostra casa si trova nel bosco, fra le radici
di un albero circondata di piante.
Il salibro ci aiuta ad orientarci, l'alba lancia
i suoi brilli, smentitori, l'alba lancia
Mamma gnomo accende il fornello per
preparare la colazione.
La vita degli gnomi si svolge soprattutto in
cucina

Dysorthography

is an inability to learn how to spell

Some 10 years ago I had a private pupil called Tony. He was 12 years old, and after one lesson he said, "I do wish we could spell words as we say them - but you'd be out of a job then, wouldn't you?" I replied, "Tony, I wouldn't mind if it was easier for you to read and write." Now Tony had high intelligence, and after some 18 months of tuition he could read quite satisfactorily, in the sense of being average for his age though still underachieving.



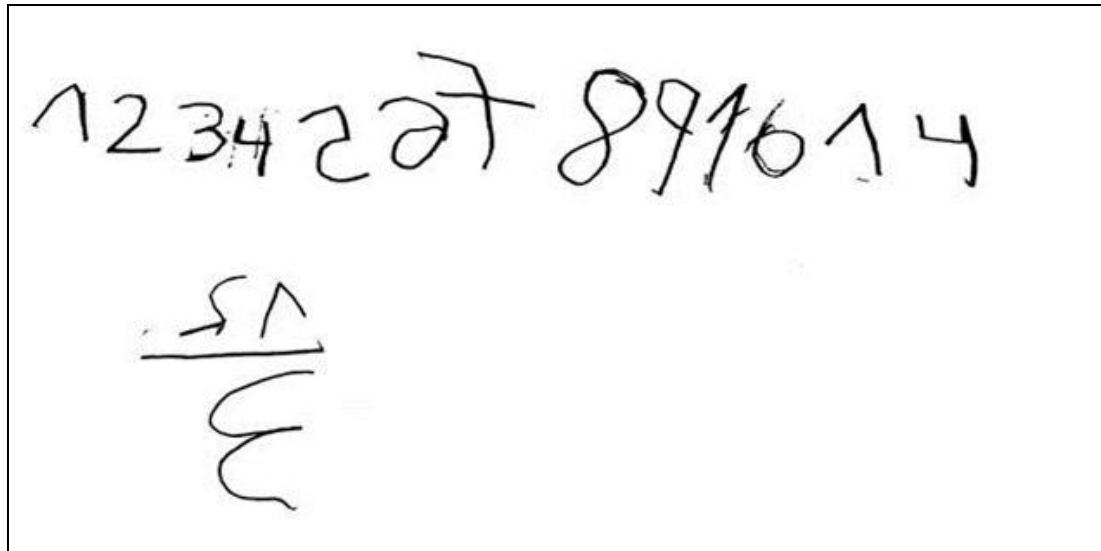
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DISCALCULIA

is a difficulty in learning or comprehending arithmetic, such as difficulty in understanding numbers, learning how to manipulate numbers, and learning math facts



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LATVIJAS
DISLEKSIJAS
BIEDRĪBA

FREQUENCY

Dyslexia is the most common learning difficulty and most recognized reading disorder

It is estimated that the prevalence of SLD is around 3–5 percent of the school population.



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THE ASSESSMENT

The assessment is the Process of identification of the learning disability = diagnosis

The diagnosis of dyslexia (and SLD) is made by a Multidisciplinary Team

at the end of the second year of the primary school.



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THE ASSESSMENT

- WHO? Multidisciplinary Team made up of a Neuropsychiatrist, a Psychologist a Speech Therapist and a Professional Educator
- WHEN? Not earlier than the second year of the primary school
- HOW? There is a procedure (a protocol) the family of a child that manifests symptom of dyslexia has to follow



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The protocol

Thanks to the information and awareness raising campaigns by the AID (Italian Dyslexia Association), a National Protocol for the SLD diagnosis has been developed.



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The protocol

1. The family ask the Public Health System, namely the Child Neuropsychiatry
2. Either the Neuropsychiatrist or the Psychologist take in charge the family and write the medical history
3. During the following sessions, the Psychologist will use some specific tests to identify the problems, namely:
 - measurement of the IQ
 - reading performance: accuracy, rapidity, lists of words (cut off -2 standard deviation)
5. Analysing the diagnosis made by other specialists, the Team will exclude that sensorial problems –or other type of disabilities- exist
6. The process ends with a talk with the family and the delivering of a report containing the diagnosis



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The protocol

Please Note: Before drafting the diagnosis, it is specifically necessary to assess that:

- There is a **Normal IQ (IQ > 85)**
- There are **No sensorial problems**
- There are **No neurological damages**
- There are **No relational problems**
- There are **Equal educational opportunity**



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The protocol

Please note:

The school is not entitled to address the Public Health System; teachers may only inform the family about a difficulty they perceived with the child. After that, the parents will decide what to do.



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HOW LONG

- Through the Public System: it takes long before getting the diagnosis (from 4 to 6 months) because the system is overloaded.
- Paying for it, there is the possibility to get the diagnosis within 2 months.



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WHO PAYS

There are several options

- The Public Health System
- The family and the Public (a system called Intramoenia in Italian)
- Entirely the family, going to Private Specialized Center authorized by the Public System



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How often (frequency)

- The percentage of assessed case of dyslexia in Calabria is about 0.2%
- The assessment is made once only



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What tests/batteries are used

- Tests for measuring the IQ (WISC_R)
- Tests for evaluating the reading, writing and comprehension ability:
 - MT test: reading and comprehension of a text (Cornoldi)
 - Sartori Battery
 - Tests for evaluating the calculation ability (Lucangeli)
 - Tests for evaluating praxic and motor abilities (Tressoldi and Cornoldi)



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Are pedagogic/teaching recommendations given
Recommendation of using compensation
strategies and relieving measures are given
in the report containing the diagnosis and
issued by the Child Neuropsychiatry to the
parents



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Legislation

Law 170/2010 New rules on Specific Learning Disabilities in the school environment

Mainly about the school inclusion of the children with dyslexia

- Every school is required to have specific compensative tools and use specific relieving measures
- Obligatory training for the school teachers
- Screening aimed to an early identification of the learning disabilities

It contains the official definitions of the different type of SLD (Dyslessia, Dysgraphia, Dysorthograpy, Dyscalculia) as well.



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Legislation

The specific Relieving and Compensative tools

- Compensative tools:

Computers and software, recorders, calculators, mind maps, diagrams

- Relieving measures:

Let off reading aloud and unsuspected tests; reducing homeworks, oral studying of foreigners languages only; avoid homework correction (with red pencil)



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Legislation

- **Ministerial Circular** – 5° of october 2004
- **Executive Decree of the Law 170/10 - July 2011-** “ Guidelines for the study rights of pupils and students with Specific Learning Disabilities”.
- **Ministerial Directive – 27° of December 2012** – “Intervention tools for pupils with special needs; territory organization for the school inclusion”.
- **Ministerial Circular n. 8 – 6° of march 2013** – Recommendation concerning the Ministerial Directive 27th of December 2012
- **Regional law n. 10 – 11° of april 2012**, implementing the National Law 170/10



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How is remediation done?

Interventions done during the education period, aimed to help the children, are listed in the IEP (in Italy PDP) of the dyslexic child.



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Who is involved and how is IEP work administered?

The Italian Law talks about a specific IEP for children with SLD, called PDP (Personalized Didactic Programme)

The pupil's teachers has to cooperate in order to write the PDP that, afterwards, will be shared with pupil's parents and approved by them.

The PDP contains all the accommodations and remediation provided for helping the child

PDP is updated every year



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PDP

L'alunno nella valutazione delle diverse discipline si avvarrà di:

Disciplina	Misure dispensative	Strumenti compensativi	Tempi aggiuntivi
Italiano			
Matematica			
Lingue straniere			
....			
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What accommodations are provided?

Accommodations for students with dyslexia help them compensating for the difficulties they have with reading, comprehension and writing.

They are:

- Use of the PC containing wordprocessing programs
- Use of the speech synthesizer
- Recording of the lessons to listen at home
- Pythagorean table
- Mind maps and Concept maps
- Schemes and diagrams
- Tables with rules (grammatical) and formulas (geometry)



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Pythagorean table

A cartoon illustration of two hands, one on the left and one on the right, holding the sides of the Pythagorean table. The hands are simple line drawings with white skin and black outlines.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

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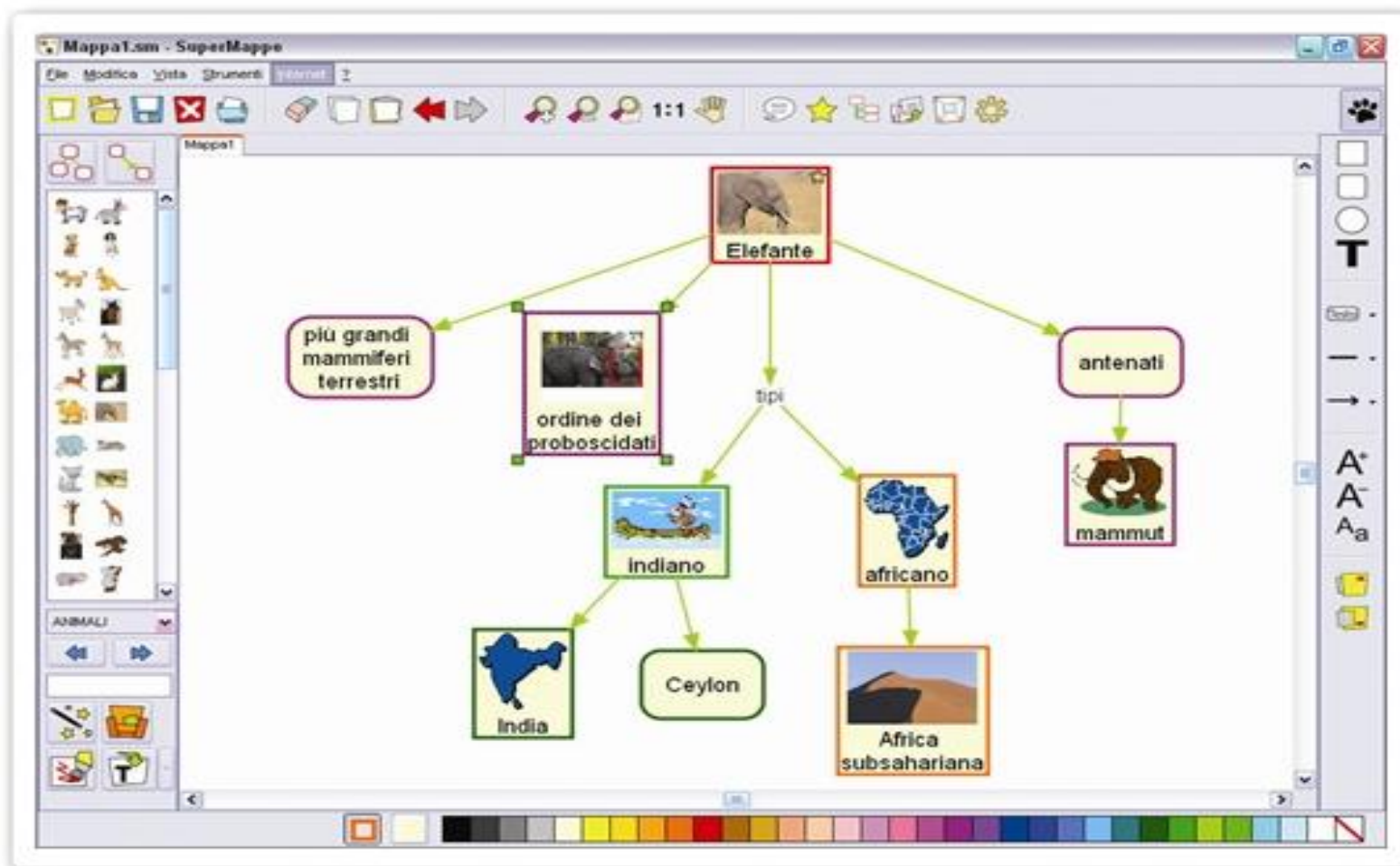


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Concept maps



Calculator



Multimedia dictionary



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ICT



The law promotes the use of ICT at school but sometimes, even if it is recommended a PC in the classrooms where a dyslexic child is present, the schools do not have a Computer at the child disposal



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How is it administered

The PC is paid by the school.

Depending on the school budget for disability area, it is possible to equip the PC with specific software



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Are students and teachers taught in use of ICT

Students and teachers are not specifically taught about ICT.

Schools have to train the teachers about SLD and the appropriate didactical methods.

However they organize very short and theoretical courses.



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Does accommodation follow to high-stakes exams ?

There are accommodations during the examinations: additional time given, use of the PC, etc.



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Is IEP mandated, who creates it (are parents involved) and what is in it?

Once the assessment is finished and the diagnosis delivered, the school is forced to create the IEP (in Italy called PDP)

Teachers write it; parents are involved and sign it (a kind of approval)



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Who pays for IEP and services?

Evaluation for success

- No extra payment for PDP services
- The services contained in the PDP are also paid by the school system (public)

Evaluation.

- The PDP is periodically monitored by teachers together with parents
- The evaluation for success is made indirectly. The PDP is successful if the student is doing well at school



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Does service/IEP/finance or other help follow the child to other schools

- The PDP (and related services) do not follow the child to other schools. Every school (its teachers) write its own PDP and offers the related services.
- The continuity is maintained through a transfer of information from the old school to the new school



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Parent involvement

The parents are informed about PDP content and approve it. Periodically they are called by teachers to discuss about the evolution of the school situation

Success of system: how is it measured?

There is not a tradition for evaluation in Italy



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One concrete story

Mattia, 11 years old.

- Diagnosis made by the Child Neuropsychiatry of Catanzaro is: Mixed Disease of school ability (cod. F81.3 ICD-10) during the 4° class of the primary school
- Particularly: Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dysorthography
- Difficulty in reading
- Much more difficulty in writing and in understanding foreigner languages (mainly written English)
- He is now attending the 5° class of the primary school

- Mattia is regularly attending the afterschool activities at the Dyslexia Center runned by CO.RI.S.S. since he was in the middle of the 4° class and during all the 5° class (this year)
- In agreement with the school, that in the beginning did not agree, Mattia got a computer he could regularly use in the classroom. Instead of forcing him doing the homework in the exercise book, he was allowed to use the PC.
- The teachers gradually started using and giving him mind maps and concept maps, specially for studying topics like geography and history.
- The results.
- At the end of the first semester of the 5° year Mattia has got a positive evaluation by teachers. Thanks to the cooperation established between all the people involved in the educational process, beside getting good marks, he reached a higher self esteem and a bigger self confidence. Furthermore, he got a higher autonomy and capability to organize his school life (studying, homeworks, etc.)



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