

Managing dyslexia as a family



Dr. Helen Ross
Dyslexia/SpLD expert
and SEN practitioner

In a legislative environment that enshrines parental advocacy in so many ways and scant resources available in schools, the reality is that young people with dyslexia are heavily dependent on their families, both financially and practically, to diagnose their dyslexia and support them with it.

Whilst having a child with dyslexia is inevitably going to add an extra burden to families, and parents want to support their children to overcome this challenge like the many others common in childhood, it is currently placing a massive emotional and financial strain on families because the education system and other parts of our society are failing to take their fair share of responsibility.

As part of the work of the APPG¹ for Dyslexia and other SpLDs, the British Dyslexia Association has worked with parenting and neurodiversity coach John Hicks to gain a snapshot of familial experiences of dyslexia and its impact. Dr Helen Ross, dyslexia/SpLD expert and SEN practitioner at Helen's Place joined the project to guide data processing and analysis.

The survey was distributed through social media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn). Over 1,300 responses were received. Survey participants were self-selecting and in addition to answering short, closed questions relating to their experiences of dyslexia, they were also able to write open-ended comments giving more detail, in their own words – in excess of 2,500 comments were received.

Commenting on the findings she analysed, Dr Helen Ross, dyslexia/SpLD expert and SEN practitioner, Helen's Place, said:

"It is hugely disappointing to see the extent to which parents still feel that schools are not able to support young people effectively. As researchers and teachers, we find it is frustrating that we are still not equipped by the legislative environment to meet the needs of dyslexic children – particularly when the established strategies that support dyslexic learners work well for all learners."

¹APPG - All Party Parliamentary Group UK

Sourced from: *The Human Cost of Dyslexia - April 2019*
Modified for a global audience by: *Get into Neurodiversity*