

Shining with ADHD by The Childhood Collective

Episode #182: Decoding Dyslexia: Signs, Supports, and Strategies with Dyslexia Specialist Casey Harrison

Casey: And I think when we say dyslexia, that can be empowering. It can really mean that we have, the students can kind of have a better understanding of why it is that they're struggling. They're not dumb, they're not lazy, they're really, really smart. It's just trying to put, you know, a square into a, into a circle. You know, that's kind of how our school systems work.

Katie: Hi there. We are The Childhood Collective, and we have helped thousands of overwhelmed parents find joy and confidence in raising their child with ADHD. I'm Katie, a speech language pathologist.

Lori: And I'm Lori.

Mallory: And I'm Mallory. And we're both child psychologists.

Lori: As busy mamas ourselves, we are on a mission to support ADHD parents on this beautiful and chaotic parenting journey.

Mallory: If you are looking for honest ADHD parenting stories, a dose of empathy with a side of humor and practical tools, you are in the right place.

Katie: Let's help your family shine with ADHD.

Mallory: Today, Katie and I are interviewing an expert on a very requested topic, dyslexia. Our expert, Casey Harrison, is the founder of The Dyslexia Classroom and Wimberley Dyslexia and Learning Center.

Katie: Casey is a Certified Academic Language Therapist, Licensed Dyslexia Therapist, Certified Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialist, and a qualified teacher with over 27 years of experience.

Mallory: She works with parents, teachers, and Pre-K-12th grade students at her private practice, providing dyslexia therapy, literacy instruction, consultations, resources, and training. In addition to her private practice, she has a podcast Together in Literacy, is a

national presenter, and is the author of *Teaching Beyond the Diagnosis: Empowering Students with Dyslexia through the science of reading* which is coming in 2025.

Katie: And on a personal note, Casey resides in Texas with her husband, their three daughters, and many animals in their little slice of the country. Welcome, Casey. We're so excited to have you here.

Casey: Thank you so much, Katie and Mallory. I'm really excited to be on The Childhood Collective. I love all the work that you all do and connecting with parents and really supporting them on this journey with ADHD. So, thank you!

Katie: Thank you. So, tell us a little bit about yourself. Obviously, we heard your bio, but, yeah what brings you to the world of dyslexia? And do you have a connection to ADHD specifically?

Casey: I love that question. I get asked that often. I have been fortunate enough to teach across the country and teaching primarily in Title I schools and through that journey, you know, I was trained in a lot of different programs, with a lot of different things and I really found that there were still this group of students that were kind of falling through the cracks. And so that sent me on a journey of my own that led me into the world of dyslexia. And what I often find when working with my students with dyslexia is there is a large overlap in ADHD as well. And so, for my own practice and my own work with students, that means that I really need to have a better understanding of both dyslexia and ADHD to really support them.

Mallory: Absolutely. I love that. And I think what you do is so important. Dyslexia, I think is one of those things that's really misunderstood by just the general population. They think it's like just letter reversals, it's so much more than that, right. And like you said, this is really important for our listeners because there is a high co-occurrence of dyslexia and ADHD. So, a lot of you listeners may have a child who also has a diagnosis of dyslexia or perhaps you're wondering if your child is dyslexic, I think this is a really important topic and we're excited to have you the expert on today, Casey. So, thank you for that. And so, this really is our first podcast episode to talk specifically about dyslexia, so it would be great if we could kind of start by having you just lay the groundwork by talking about what is dyslexia. Because like I said, there a lot of confusion out there about what it truly is.

Casey: Yes, that is so true. And I think even for educators, you don't put on the educator hat there still remains some misunderstanding. So, if we kind of back dyslexia up a little bit and we have an understanding that it is a language-based learning difference. I know that it qualifies under IDEA as a disability, but when I'm talking with my families and with my students, we just call it a learning difference. And it really is characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition, spelling and reading. And so, for those with dyslexia, they're gonna have difficulties discriminating sounds within a word, which really is kind of that key factor in reading and spelling application. And so that's just a really simplified definition, but there really is a lot. And so, if we're looking at kind of the International Dyslexia Association's working definition, and I'm just going to read it because I kind of want to unpack it a little bit, if that's okay.

Katie: Absolute.

Casey: So, their definition says that dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language, that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. Now that's a lot. So, when I talk to my parents about that, I just kind of, I like to unpack it a little bit for them so that they have a better understanding. So, if we're thinking about neurobiological in origin, that means that it's a different brain processing system. And we are often seeing that there is a genetic factor. So, it tends to run in families, may not have a direct link, but there is some form of genetic factor and so does ADHD also has that genetic factor. So, you're gonna see kind of both of those having that impact. It is where we have a hard time with reading words, with spelling and what they're saying is that it resides in the phonological component of language. So that's our ability to kind of manipulate sounds. So, if you have a young child, it like a preschooler, you may kind of note, okay, if they're maybe late to talk or if they have some speech sounds that you may have concerns about, those are sort of things for you to tune into for possible dyslexia. Sometimes students, you know, they may have difficulty saying words. So, they may say like specific, they may say pacific, right, and use that as a sound substitution. They sound very similar. Or my own daughter, she will say restonnaut,

which is completely adorable, but she's trying to say restaurant. So those types of little sound errors are things that parents can note and kind of keep it the forefront because those are those phonological errors that can impact reading and writing later on. And then when we're looking at those secondary consequences, that is something that I see for those people that are on a journey with dyslexia really impacting, particularly in my older students, reading is hard, so we don't do it as often. And therefore, we're having less exposure to higher level language or some of those literary elements. And so that gap between where we are and where our peers are just widens.

Mallory: I think that is probably something that a lot of our listeners are experiencing with their kids. My child doesn't like to read, so they're having less exposure to text, so they're having less exposure to a variety of vocabulary, less opportunity to learn how to read a text and comprehend it. But then the question they're coming back to right, is like, is that because of ADHD or is that because of an underlying phonological processing difference that's making it harder to read, so they don't like to read because of that. That's a tricky one, right?

Casey: So, yes, that is tricky to kind of discern if it is ADHD that's making us not want to read, or is it perhaps difficulty with the access of reading itself? Sometimes what we see is, you know, you can look at dyslexia and have students read out loud and if they're really stumbling over their words or having a hard time decoding, those are going to be indicators to look a little bit deeper and to determine, you know, do we need to do a reading screening? Do we need to look at dyslexia? Versus ADHD, it may just be where we are hesitant to want to try, or we are like, speeding through the words, or we're just, you know, having some avoidance behaviors.

Katie: Yes. And I can personally relate to that because I know one of my kids is, well, they're both actually pretty strong readers, so I don't really have concerns around dyslexia. But one loves to read, and I'll find her, like, hold up in a chair with a book. And, you know, it's one of those things we can't get enough books from the library. We'll get eight books and within a week, she's like, I read them all. And I'm like, you couldn't, honestly, you really couldn't have read them all that fast. She's like, no, I did. And I'll sit there and ask her questions, she knows what's going on. But then my other one, you know, he is a very good reader, but he doesn't enjoy it. And so I'm always kind of curious, like, what's going on there? Is there an underlying issue? But again, with ADHD, you have this attention piece, being able to stop

and calm your body, to sit down and stay seated for a long period of time, it's maybe a little bit boring. I know for me, when I read, I might think a book isn't that interesting until I really get into it. It takes me a minute to really, like, get, and then you can't get me away from it. But that, I think, is really common for ADHD brains, where it's like the hump to get into the activity, where you're saying for a child with dyslexia, it's going to be hard for them across the board.

Casey: Yes, absolutely.

Katie: Yeah. So maybe tell us about some other early signs that families might look out for. Like, any other things they could check or kind of test with their own child?

Casey: Yeah. So, if we have early on students, may show that they have difficulty, like, learning nursery rhymes. I know we, in our society we don't maybe do as many nursery rhymes as we used to, but that is certainly something that kind of can be showing up as an early indicator, right. Difficulty remembering, sequence of things, difficulty learning the alphabet or even recognizing one's own name, sort of that sequence of letters. Looking also at following multi-step directions, kind of thinking of so all those are really rooted in language, right. And so, I often talk to the SLPs and anyone that is in receiving speech services I kind of have my eye on because there is a large carryover in that area, especially if we're looking at the phonological awareness. So like oftentimes if you, if you find that your child may have difficulty with rhyming words, right. Those are all in that phonological area that playing with language that can impact reading later on.

Katie: Yeah. I think phonological awareness is such an interesting word because we're all nodding like yeah. But I think parents are often like what does that even mean? So the one of the things that I conceptualize this, we used to look at a lot of these kind of skills in evaluations with kids and looking at can they break apart a word? Like cat. Like what are the sounds in the word cat? It's not just one chunk you can break it into c-a-t and then can you put those sounds back together? Like if I said to you like c-a-r, can you push those together in your mind and say oh, that says car. And for a kid who can't do that, that's showing they have weakness in that phonological awareness. It's kind of like how would you say it's the ability to kind of break words apart, manipulate the sounds? Am I on the right track?

Casey: You're absolutely on the right track. And really so that segmenting or that breaking the sounds apart and be able to blend them back together, that is at the heart of what we need for reading and spelling. So oftentimes when my children were younger we would play I Spy in the car, but we would do it a little differently and I'd be like oh, I Spy t-r-ee, and they're like oh, a tree. Because you can early on play with language that way and just develop some of those skills and then they translate that into their reading and writing once they get into that formal education in kindergarten.

Mallory: Interesting. So phonological awareness is a big piece of this. Where does writing letters backwards, reading backwards come into this? Like is that really even part of dyslexia?

Casey: I'm so glad you brought that up, Mallory, because I think that is probably one of the number one misunderstandings about dyslexia. So, when we test, and I know Mallory, you're someone who does the assessments, there is no test that we do for letter reversals. It really does not have anything to do with dyslexia. When we look at reading, reading is a man-made construct. And so, it's really quite amazing that our brain over time has found a way to create this circuitry system for reading with all of the different lobes that were never designed to do that. We have, you know, that frontal lobe, that's the executive function pieces and language. And we have, you know, our occipital lobe talking about the vision components and our phonological processing areas. And so, our brain has actually created this new circuitry system so that we can read and write. And what happens for students with dyslexia is there's a hypoactivated area in the phonological processing lobe. So that just means there's an area that's not firing up the way that would be expected. And again, coming back to that neurobiological piece, right. That's different from birth. So, but what that means is there's other areas that do fire up. And so, getting back to the reversal piece, you know, our brains were created for those other areas. And there's a thing called mirror invariance where when we would, you know, back in our caveman days, those with ADHD probably were the ones that were like the warriors and always on the lookout, they could sense that something was wrong and they could see that. And so, no matter what we looked at, the orientation of that image didn't matter. But now we have this man-made construct of letters where orientation does in fact matter. Where that b and b, how that's oriented changes it, its sound and its usage. And so what's happens, young learners have to figure out this mirror invariances and basically unlearn it so that they are now recognizing that, oh, when I see a straight line and

then a circle that's representing b. But if I have the circle and then a line that's representing d. And so, it's very common for students to have those reversals even into second grade.

Mallory: Okay, I think that's really great for parents to hear. I know personally, my friends are asking me all the time questions like that. At what age do I become concerned? And correct me if I'm wrong, but it's sounding like if your child is making these letter reversals, that doesn't mean 100% your child has dyslexia. If your child isn't making letter reversals, that doesn't mean 100% that your child doesn't have dyslexia. They might, they might be dyslexic, but not have reversals.

Casey: Absolutely, yes. You do not have to have reversals to have dyslexia. It's really not even, reversals are not even, noted in one of the characteristics of dyslexia. What that always brings me back to is what is the letter formation that we are teaching our children? Are we making sure that they're forming the letters the same way each time so that we're building this connection, this neural pathway in the brain to link the sound and the letter and that formation to solidify that. So as parents, that's something we can, you know, work on at home, is making sure that they're forming the letters the same way each time to help with those reversals.

Katie: A lot of times if you look at preschoolers writing, they've made those symbols, but they do them in completely random ways, like a circle with a stick or a line, and they do it in different orders. They might even, one of my kids would always go right to left if they were copying their name because they just don't, it doesn't mean anything to them. So, when we say making it the same way, you know, one of those maybe like little books or something where you teach kids to trace so that they have a kind of a motor plan of how they create each letter and they do at the same way each time.

Casey: Yes, absolutely. Yep.

Katie: So, I'm sure there's listeners today that are kind of questioning now, like, is my child dyslexic? And what would you recommend for a family who's questioning that? Should they go to the school? Can the school test for dyslexia, treat dyslexia? Tell us about what their plan should be.

Casey: I think that's a great question, and one that parents often ask. So, for students that may have ADHD, that inattention, they're really, we want to be mindful that they may be at greater potential for problems with later reading achievements. The overlap of dyslexia is about 20 to 40%, so those with dyslexia do tend to have ADHD about 20 to 40% of the time. And that, you know, really most effective instruction can occur within our schools, if our educators are knowledgeable about how to teach students reading. We are seeing some shifts in that as we start to have more and more conversations. Your listeners may be familiar with the terms like the science of reading, or may have listened to the podcast, *Sold a Story*. So, most schools across the US are starting to conduct what we would call universal reading screeners or early reading screeners. And those really are designed to identify students in need of supplemental instruction or that reading intervention. And so for parents, I think it's important for us as parents to understand that that may be occurring in your schools and to ask like, hey, did we do a reading screener? Where is my child in that reading screener? So that they can kind of start to have those conversations and then to have an understanding as well that a reading screener differs from dyslexia identification process. Those are two different things and sometimes I think it can get a little bit muddled in conversations. So, your reading screener is done by your schools to help them identify those students that within their classroom may need some extra supports, may need what's called tier 2 intervention or working with a specialist, things like that. And then the dyslexia identification process is going to be where that is your testing that would occur. One of the things, you know, in that early definition from IDEA, it did say that dyslexia is a specific learning disability. And I think that is something that parents should have an awareness of that specific learning disability and you'll see it's often noted as SLD, and so that is your testing identification process. And so, dyslexia falls under specific learning disability. And that really does require a full psycho-educational evaluation per IDEA, which is our national federal law, in which the student should be identified or, you know, should have multiple measures in any area that is a possible disability or any area in which the child is having some difficulties with. And it really should be a comprehensive evaluation to really consider the possible exclusionary factors, like is it vision, is it ADHD, is it some other things, or is it this area of dyslexia? so those are kind of two big distinct areas, the screening versus the actual identification process. The other thing that I always like to tell parents is to have awareness that SLD under the DSM-5, which is one of the testing that we do, it states dyslexia. So oftentimes I'll hear from parents, well, the school said we can't, they don't identify dyslexia or they can't say dyslexia.

In 2015, the US Department of Education actually issued a letter stating that there is nothing in IDEA that prevents schools from using dyslexia, the word dyslexia in IEPs or any of their documentation. So, I'm a big proponent of actually saying the word dyslexia. I think there is power in the words that we use. And also, just like how ADHD is neurobiological, that is something that the child, it's a different brain processing system. There's nothing wrong with the child. It just means that we have to have a better understanding of dyslexia, of what that means for learning, of what that means is a journey for the child in their academic setting and beyond. And I think when we say dyslexia, that can be empowering. It can really mean that we have, the students can kind of have a better understanding of why it is that they're struggling. They're not dumb, they're not lazy, they're really, really smart. It's just trying to put, you know, a square into a circle. You know, that's kind of how our school systems work. And it can be really enlightening for families and for students when they understand what dyslexia is and then they can really start to work with that.

Mallory: I think this is really important for families to hear that kids with dyslexia can learn to read. They can be successful. It's not a reflection of their intelligence at all. So, and I feel like everything you're saying, like, to these families that are, you know, raising kids with dyslexia is what we're also trying to tell families that are raising kids with ADHD, like, your brain works differently. It's not bad, it's just different. And when we figure that out, we know how to support you better. So, when it comes to dyslexia, when we figure out that that's what we're looking at, there are very specific tools that we need to use to teach you to learn to read, and you can learn to read. And I think that's really important for our listeners to hear and kind of bringing it back to what you were talking about, the difference between the screener and then the psycho-educational evaluation. So theoretically, most schools now are doing with the screener, all students are getting that, but then the psycho-educational evaluation that the school might be doing, or a private psychologist might be doing, or maybe a developmental pediatrician even in some cases might be doing or reading specialist, that's a really comprehensive evaluation. And we talk about that with our listeners when it comes to also getting support at school if your child has ADHD. So, it's the school going through this full assessment process where, especially if dyslexia is concerned, there's some standardized tests that the school often is using. They're doing cognitive assessment. They're looking specifically at academic skills, reading, math, writing. They're having those rating skills filled out by teachers and by parents, so that's what that psycho-educational evaluation is. And that's helping us kind of get that more in depth information about is your child really

struggling with reading? Could it be dyslexia or could it be that specific learning disorder that the school might want to call it and if it is, then do they need the support of an IEP at school to get them that specialized instruction that they need?

Katie: Yeah, and I think as a quick clarification point too, that testing at the school is free. So if you go through the school, if the screener comes up and says, hey, your child is delayed in these areas, we want to look further. You know, they can choose to test or you can request testing. And we actually have a bunch of episodes that go into this because this is such a process for families to understand and it is complicated. But it is, those are federal rights. And so, we will link a couple episodes in the show notes to kind of explain more about that testing process and how you would get that started, but that is free. And then as an alternative option, as Mallory was saying, families can go outside of the school and do more private work, which I believe, Casey, that's what you do, right? You're more on the private side. So families can go and basically hire you to do an evaluation and to do treatment. And that's something that's amazing because you have so much more control at that point over the schedule, the frequency, how that looks, but obviously that is something that some families that's not realistic for them. And that's, so you do have the option of going through the school to get that support and that's a really important takeaway for families.

Casey: Yeah, I agree. And I think also that comprehensive and understanding that there's no one test for dyslexia. Like, I know you can go online and take like a checklist or some kind of thing like, does my child have dyslexia? Just know for families that that comprehensive piece means that we're looking at multiple areas. There is no one test for dyslexia. And because of that, that's why we'll say that the prevalence of dyslexia across the population ranges from 7 to 20%. So, you may see it's partly because of how people are interpreting data and what assessments they're giving, but what you'll see in organizations that your families may be interested in, such as Decoding Dyslexia, which is a grassroots organization that was started by parents really trying to get the support for their families, is they'll say 1 in 5. And what that means is, you know, that's at 20% of the population. The other big thing that I think is empowering, and I always tell my families and students is that students with dyslexia have so many strengths. They are really outside of the box thinkers. When I work with them, it's amazing to see how they solve problems and just how they kind of look at the world. And when we, when I also talk to parents, you know, 35% of entrepreneurs in the United States identify as dyslexic. That's a really large number. And it makes sense to me working with

these students, because the way that their brains work are amazing. They just can see things and can find patterns and things and just have this larger awareness than perhaps other people do. And so, it's really cool to see now in today's day and age that adults are starting to share their journey more and more and encouraging students with dyslexia, and starting to highlight, we're all human, we all have areas of strength, and we all have areas of need. And I think it's important for us to all kind of note that balance.

Katie: I love that so much. I think that is just something that all parents need to hear about their own kids. And those struggles don't have to define them, but they can also really teach a lot of things too. That when you have struggled and you have really worked so hard to overcome, this is going to help set you up for a lot of great things. But when you're in it and you're trudging, you're like, oh, this is just so hard. And I wanted to just quickly, I know that we appreciate your time so much, so I don't want to keep you forever, but one thing that I am curious about is can you give us just a few parameters for parents? Let's say they get the diagnosis their child has dyslexia, and it's sort of like a, what now? What am I doing here? And can you just talk through that, what that might look like? You know, maybe what kind of interventions are appropriate? Also, accommodations that you love that are really helpful. Maybe just give us an overview. I think honestly this could be a whole separate episode and it probably should be, because that's a whole story, right. But just high level, what would parents need to look for? Because again, you said some schools are doing it, but some schools are not yet, and what do they need to know?

Casey: Yeah, that's a great question. And you're right, there's a lot to unpack there. So I'll try to keep it as succinct as I can. One of the things that I think is really important is making sure that the person that's working with your child has a deep enough knowledge of reading and dyslexia. And so we have varying levels of training out there and so I think it's appropriate to ask, you know, what are, what is the training that the person has? What is the level that they have? You know, there's some people that may go to like four days of training and then other people that go to like what I had to do, which was, you know, two plus years plus 700 clinical hours. Like there's a vast difference. And that's not to say that people who went to the less intensive training can't do it, but I do think having conversations to have a deeper understanding of the knowledge and to come at it as a team approach, I think that is always best for the children if we can work together, what are ways that we can support one another? And that especially brings me into accommodations because really accommodations are only

going to be helpful if the student knows how to use them. And that's something nicely often is I'll pull up IEPs or 504's and there's like a whole list of accommodations and when I ask the students like, hey, how is this accommodation working and they have no idea what's even on there.

Mallory: Oh, I didn't know I had that accommodation.

Casey: What is that? I don't know what is I'm supposed to do with it. So, I think we have to be really mindful and intentional that implementation of accommodations and I think parents have a really important role in that because accommodations should also be used at home with homework assignments. And so really for that kind of knowing the student's learning profile, having that intentional plan for those accommodations that are going to address and support those needs. And then what I tell teachers that I work with is intentionally integrating those accommodations into lessons so that they don't feel like, oh, you have to go get your notes from the back of the room in front of everybody, like no kids going to do that.

Katie: What are some other accommodations you that you might recommend for a child with dyslexia?

Casey: Yeah, my number one thing that I tell parents is audiobooks. Audiobooks are going to provide access to grade level reading as we work on those interventions to close the gap. So, I don't ever want students to feel like they can't read Harry Potter and have conversations with their peers. Yes, you absolutely. You can access that through an audiobook and we're working on that, those intervention pieces that are needed to help the students break the reading code. Plus, that's going to provide access to vocabulary and all of those things that we want to make sure students are having. So, I think accommodations are great. There's some great resources out there you can use for audiobooks such as, Learning Allies a great one, Bookshare is a great one, there's a lot of apps, plus your computer systems now have a lot of audiobook access just built in.

Katie: Yeah. I love what you said that the accommodations are we're making it easier for kids to access it, right, like in the meantime while we're doing this intervention. So we don't just say, oh, you know, you have dyslexia and it's going to take a year of intensive intervention, so in the meantime you're going to read level first grade readers. No, we don't, we don't say

that, we let them use an audiobook or different ways to access that material so they can stay grade level or stay, like you said, with their peers. I think that's a huge piece of it.

Casey: Yeah. Accommodation should never negate, interventions. So, if your child still needs those interventions, accommodations are not a substitute for that.

Mallory: Yeah. So, what you mean is that these kids need to be having, you know, specific tailored reading instructions to help them learn to read in addition to the accommodations which are basically just making it, making it easier to kind of access that instruction, access other parts of their educational experience.

Casey: Yes. And the instruction that you're going to want to be looking for as parents is you want to ask, you know, is this systematic? Is it really structured in a way where skills are building upon foundational skills in a very logical sequence and are the students reaching that mastery as they move up? You know, we don't want students just being pushed through programs, we really, we want it to be focused on the learning and closing that gap. So, it needs to be that explicit instruction, systematic, sequential, so that they are making those gains in the areas of need.

Mallory: Excellent. And kind of coming back to the point that we've already touched on that a lot of our listeners, they have kids with ADHD, a lot of them are also going to have kids with this co-occurring dyslexia. Do you have specific recommendations for these families just above and beyond what you would typically recommend to a family that has a child with dyslexia. Just kind of this unique combination of the two?

Casey: Yeah, I think when we're working with students that have both coexisting dyslexia and ADHD, there are some unique factors that kind of come into play, particularly in the area of some of those executive function skills. What we'll see often is students with both having some challenges maybe in that verbal working memory where the student may experience kind of difficulty accessing or retrieving those words. For example, I had a student and she's like, oh, you know that thing that you used to drive the car? It's like a circle and it's like, oh, I can't remember what's it called? And she was trying to pull up the word steering wheel, but for the life of her she could not get that out. She knew what she was trying to say, but that retrieval of that actual word was, was just stuck. Inhibition is also another one, right. That ability to control those automatic responses, and then processing speed. And so oftentimes

with processing speed, which is, you know, that time it takes for an individual to complete a mental task, that one in particular we see for students that have both dyslexia and ADHD oftentimes that's what I see as really impacting their learning. And that there's a slower processing speed, which speaks to the intensity that's needed, the intentional practice and retrieval opportunities within that. That would be like in that instructional piece. But as parents we may be like, why do I have to repeat that again? Yes, it's just, and giving them time to, to think of it and giving them some of those cues so that they can retrieve that. But that processing speed compared to students that may have only ADHD or only dyslexia is what I see being impacted probably the most.

Mallory: So, like this core challenge for ADHDers with the executive functioning skills, it's important for parents to keep in mind how these are also impacting the process of learning to read and how they need to be taught good things for parents to keep in mind. It's a lot.

Katie: Right! Just keep that in mind.

Mallory: Yeah, we have to lean, parents need to lean on the professionals in a lot of cases when it comes to this because it is a lot to kind of keep track of. And I know if, you know, for our listeners out there, if this feels stressful, it is stressful when your kid is not learning to read as expected. When they're struggling to learn to read, because that does impact all the other academic areas too. But you know, again, I want parents to hear like your child can learn to read with the right kind of support, with the right kind of teaching, with the right kind of intervention. But you, as we always say with ADHD, like, you have to be the advocate. You kind of have to step into this role and make sure that your child is getting that support they need. Of course, easier said than done.

Casey: Yeah. One thing I think it's important for educators to keep in mind is the heritability of dyslexia. And with that in mind, really being sensitive to conversations. So a lot of our parents may have themselves experience maybe challenges in learning to read or to write and they maybe make comments like, oh, I don't even read books anymore. I can't remember the last time I read a book. Or I'm a terrible speller. And just to have that awareness, we're all in this journey and dyslexia exists on a continuum so that the impacts are going to vary from person to person. Which is one of the reasons why we talk about sort of that individualized instruction and really knowing the student's learning profile. But for

working with parents and having, you know, that team approach, it is important to have an awareness of that genetic component and how that comes into dyslexia.

Katie: Yeah. Such an important thing for us to keep in mind. So, Casey this has been so helpful. I feel like families are going to absolutely want to follow you and kind of just understand more on maybe the intervention side and just continue to understand and learn from you. So, what's the best way for our listeners to find you?

Casey: Yeah, absolutely. You can get me on my website, thedyslexiaclassroom.com and really that's my handle across socials as well, The Dyslexia Classroom.

Mallory: Awesome. And we'll be sure to put that link in the show notes and the other information that you have for families, they can find all that information in the show notes, stay connected with you, keep on this dyslexia learning journey. And we just really appreciate your time today. Thank you, Casey.

Casey: Thank you so much.

Katie: Thanks for listening to Shining with ADHD by your hosts, Lori, Katie, and Mallory of The Childhood Collective.

Mallory: If you enjoyed this episode, please leave us a review and hit subscribe so you can be the first to know when a new episode airs.

Lori: If you are looking for links and resources mentioned in this episode, you can always find those in the show notes. See you next time!