



# Facts about Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

- DLD is a hidden disability. Language difficulties are not always obvious to the non-specialist, especially in older children and adults.
- Possible signs of DLD include making errors with vocabulary or grammar, using simpler sentences and/or trouble participating in everyday conversation. DLD is a diagnosis based on observation and analysing children's speech and language, not brain scans or blood tests.
- Children with DLD are 12 times more likely to struggle with reading, spelling and maths, 6 times more likely to suffer from anxiety and 3 times more likely to have clinical depression.
- DLD emerges in early childhood but persists into adulthood and affects an estimated 7.5% of people.
- Like all neurodevelopmental conditions, DLD involves differences in brain development.
- It is not the case that DLD is caused by parents who don't talk or read enough to their children.
- DLD affects people around the world, no matter the language, or languages, spoken.
- Too many students with DLD are not getting the support they need to achieve their best at school and work.
- DLD often occurs alongside other conditions, e.g. ADHD and Dyslexia.
- A third of children referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health services have previously undiagnosed DLD.
- 60 per cent of young offenders present with speech, language and communication difficulties, which have not been recognised previously.
- Adults with a history of DLD tend to have less skilled employment and less full-time employment than other adults.
- Interventions provided by speech-language therapists in collaboration with parents, teachers and/or teaching assistants can improve skills like vocabulary, grammar, narratives, and phonological awareness. Children with severe DLD can benefit from more individualised intervention delivered by a speech-language therapist.
- There is poor public awareness of DLD, reflected also in low rates of clinical identification and research on the condition. The international RADLD campaign works to increase awareness of DLD via a [YouTube channel](#), [website](#) and social media as well as a yearly [DLD Awareness Day](#).