

Specific Learning Difficulties

Cairns Family Therapy



WWW.CAIRNSFAMILYTHERAPY.COM



LOOKING AFTER EVERYONE

*Cairns Counselling and Therapy
helping you build confidence,
learn and grow*

Our Vision

Our vision of the counselling and therapy practice is to provide a safe, supportive and empowering space for clients to explore their challenges, strengths and goals. We believe that counseling and therapy are collaborative processes that involve building trust, respect and empathy between the therapist and the client. We use an integrative approach that draws from various theoretical frameworks and evidence-based interventions to tailor the therapy to the client's unique needs and preferences. We aim to help clients develop self-awareness, coping skills, resilience and personal growth. I value diversity, inclusion and social justice in my practice and strive to create a culturally sensitive and affirming environment for all clients.



Our Mission

The mission of our counseling and therapy practice is to provide high-quality, evidence-based, and compassionate care to individuals, couples, and families who are facing various challenges in their lives. We believe that everyone deserves to be heard, understood, and supported in a safe and respectful environment. We offer a range of services, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, acceptance commitment therapy, mindfulness-based interventions, trauma-informed care, and more. Our goal is to help our clients achieve their personal and relational goals, enhance their well-being, and cope with stress and adversity. We are committed to continuous learning and professional development, as well as to ethical and culturally sensitive practice.



WELCOME

Specific Learning Difficulties

Specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) are a group of conditions that affect how a person processes information and learns new skills. SpLDs can affect different aspects of learning, such as reading, writing, spelling, math, memory, organization, or attention.

SpLDs are not related to intelligence, but they can make learning challenging and frustrating for some people.

Some examples of SpLDs are dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and dyspraxia.



Caerus Family Therapy



Dyslexia – aka impairment in reading



Dyslexia is a learning disorder that affects the ability to read and spell words accurately and fluently.

Dyslexia is not caused by low intelligence, poor vision or hearing, eye tracking problems or lack of motivation. Dyslexia is a result of differences in the brain that affect how language sounds and symbols are processed. Dyslexia is highly hereditary and often runs in families. Dyslexia can range from mild to severe and can affect people differently.



Dyslexia is a result of differences in the brain that affect how language sounds and symbols are processed



Dyslexia can be diagnosed by a combination of tests that assess the child's development, educational issues, medical history, reading skills, neurological functioning, psychological well-being, and aptitude level. Dyslexia can be treated with specialized instruction that targets the specific areas of difficulty, such as phonological awareness, orthographic coding, and fluency.

Dyslexia does not prevent people from achieving their goals or having successful careers. Many people with dyslexia have strengths in other areas, such as creativity, problem-solving, or spatial reasoning. Dyslexia is not a disease, but a difference in the way the brain works.

Dyslexia can be helped with self-care strategies, such as using visuals, audio books, or assistive technology.

Contact us today for advice on good evidence-based Dyslexia Resources!

Dyscalculia – aka impairment in mathematics

Dyscalculia is a learning disorder that affects a person's ability to understand and perform mathematical tasks. People with dyscalculia may have difficulty with number sense, facts, calculations, and spatial reasoning.

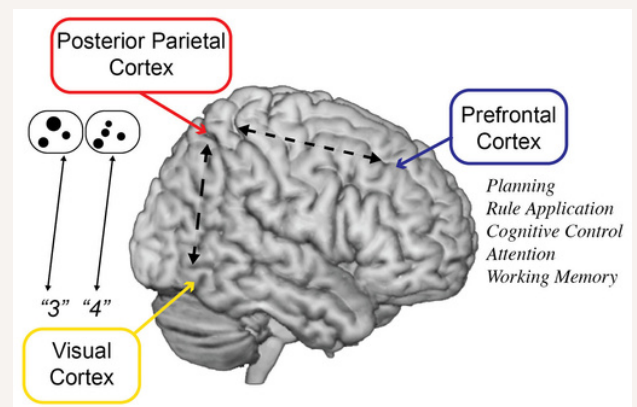
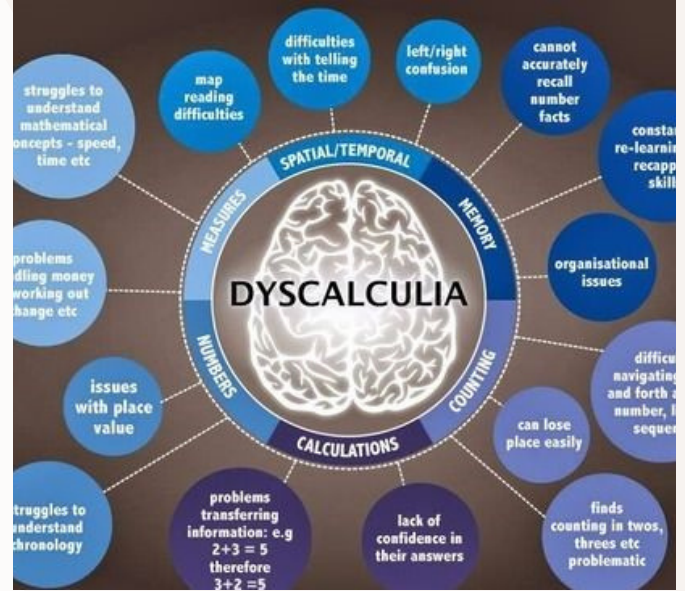
Dyscalculia is a neurological condition that is associated with dysfunction in the region around the intraparietal sulcus and potentially also the frontal lobe of the brain.

Dyscalculia is not related to intelligence or general cognitive abilities, but it can cause anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem in people who struggle with math.

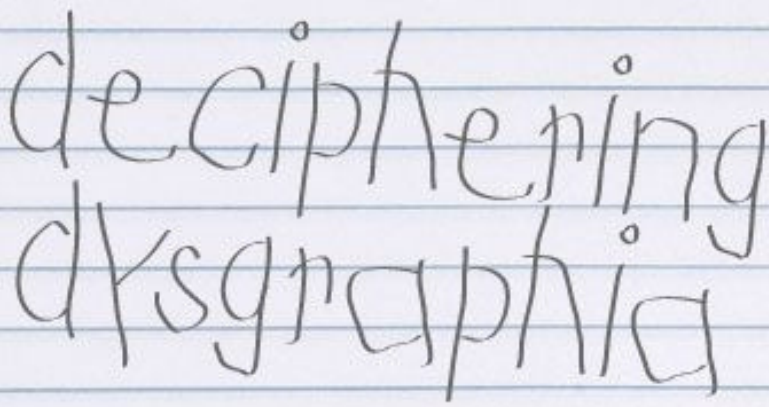
Dyscalculia can be diagnosed by a psychologist who will assess the person's strengths and difficulties in learning mathematics.

Dyscalculia can be supported by explicit and structured instruction, use of memory aids, manipulatives, and calculators, and adjustments made to the school or work environment.

Contact us today for advice on appropriate classroom adjustments, therapy to support self-esteem and learning and evidence-based Dyscalculia Resources!



Dyscalculia is a math learning disability that impairs an individual's ability to learn number-related concepts, perform accurate math calculations, reason and problem solve, and perform other basic math skills



deciphering
dysgraphia



Dysgraphia – aka impairment in writing

Dysgraphia is a neurological disorder and learning disability that affects the ability to write, primarily handwriting, but also coherence. People with dysgraphia may have difficulties with spelling, grammar, punctuation, and organisation of written tasks. **Dysgraphia is not related to intelligence, vision, or reading ability.** The cause of dysgraphia is not always known, but it may be associated with problems in orthographic coding, which is the aspect of working memory that allows one to permanently remember written words and the way to write them.

An occupational therapist can help with identifying handwriting and fine motor difficulties.

Before a diagnosis can be made, the individual must have received at least six months of intervention focused on improving their spelling and written expression. Dysgraphia can be treated with occupational therapy, explicit and structured instruction in spelling and writing, and adjustments to the school or work environment, such as using speech to text software, limiting the amount of writing required, or providing assistance with spelling and editing .

*Contact us today for advice on appropriate classroom adjustments,
therapy to support self-esteem and learning and evidence-based
Dysgraphia Resources!*



Dyspraxia is a neurological condition that affects motor planning, or the ability of the mind and body to communicate and effectively coordinate movements of the body, in addition to certain mental tasks such as planning and following sequences in the proper order.



Dyspraxia – affects motor planning

So, what is Dyspraxia exactly. It is a development disorder which affects the way different parts of the nervous system coordinate physical activities such as moving body parts and talking. It is important to specify that Dyspraxia does not affect intelligence at all, it is a purely physical disability. Many people with Dyspraxia struggle with their hand to eye coordination, it may take them longer to carry out tasks which involve using their hands. There are a multitude of different symptoms which are present in different people, not every person is affected in the same way. Dyspraxia can also affect speech. You may find it harder to pronounce words and due to this, get nervous when speaking. You may also find it hard to control the tone of your voice, etc.

Some of the most common symptoms include:

- Struggling to keep balance, such as standing on one foot.
- Unable to walk in a straight line.
- Being clumsy, frequently bumping into things or breaking things.
- Slouching while not realising it.
- Not being able to control fine motor actions such as writing, and not being able to control the level of force used, leading to messy handwriting.

If you think your child may have dyspraxia, talk to your doctor, GP, [SENCO](#) (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) at your child's school.

They can then start the referral procedure to a paediatrician. A diagnosis for dyspraxia is normally not given before 5 years old.



Co-morbid disorders and differential diagnosis

So what do those big words mean?

Co-morbid disorders are **coexisting health conditions** that affect a person at the same time. They can be physical or mental, and they may share some risk factors or causes. For example, a person with diabetes may also have high blood pressure, or a person with social anxiety disorder may also have major depressive disorder. Co-morbid disorders can pose challenges for diagnosis and treatment, as they may interact with each other or require different interventions.

A differential diagnosis is a method of analysis that helps a health professional identify the correct diagnosis for a patient's symptoms. It involves comparing the patient's history, physical examination, and diagnostic tests with a list of possible causes that have similar clinical features.

A differential diagnosis can rule out life-threatening or urgent conditions and guide medical evaluation and treatment.

ADHD and Co-morbid Conditions

A lot of individuals with ADHD experience other developmental and psychiatric disorders. These can include depression, anxiety, oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or tics.

These comorbidities can develop at the same time (for example, ADHD and ASD may occur simultaneously), or they may develop as a consequence of ADHD (for example, an adolescent might develop high levels of anxiety as a result of ongoing difficulties paying attention at school or organising their academic work).



This is why good case formulation and history gathering is very important!



*Please feel free to contact us today and
arrange a consultation for guidance on any
of the conditions listed here - take the pressure
off your family today!*

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