Dyslexia is a Social Justice Issue

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization\(^1\) has identified literacy as a human right and argues literacy is required for sustainable development across the world.

Federal law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, requires schools and programs to identify children with disabilities and provide the appropriate education. A lack of the necessary supports and services limits opportunities for people with dyslexia.

Dyslexia is disproportionately underdiagnosed in children of color\(^2\) and children in poverty\(^3\).

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**Four Roles**

**Screening and Identification**

When completing a biopsychosocial intake and ongoing assessments, social workers can incorporate questions related to reading proficiency and dyslexia to facilitate early screening and communication with a child’s school.

**Referrals for Intervention**

When social workers identify risk for dyslexia, they should make referrals for interventions and further assessment.

**Education**

Social workers’ responsibilities start with educating families, children, and communities about the importance of literacy.

**Advocacy**

Advocates are needed for the availability and provision of universal screening and early intervention for dyslexia. They should advocate the specific needs of those who have been identified as at risk for dyslexia.

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