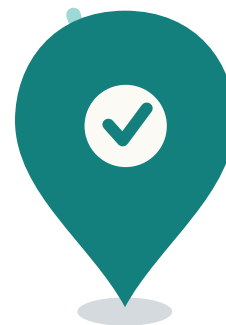


A GUIDE TO

NAVIGATING DYSLEXIA

in Public Schools

● FOR MILITARY FAMILIES



National Center on Improving Literacy



WELCOME

Your Guide to Navigating Dyslexia in Public Schools

Whether you're preparing for an upcoming move or looking for answers after arriving at a new school, this guide is designed to be a practical resource you can return to whenever questions arise.

Inside, you'll find straightforward explanations, checklists, trusted resources, and practical tips to help you navigate school transitions and make informed decisions about your child's literacy support.

IN THIS GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING

- Understanding Dyslexia
- Frequent Relocation

PLANNING

- IEPs and 504 Plans
- What Happens When You Move?
- Go-Binder Checklist

ADVOCATING

- Evidence-based Instruction
- Advocate Early and Clearly
- Dyslexia Laws Exist in Each State

RESOURCES

- Military-specific Organizations
- Common Pitfalls to Avoid
- Four Moves that Win

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Military families face a unique mix of challenges when navigating dyslexia in public schools—especially with frequent moves, varying state policies, and inconsistent support systems. Here’s a clear, practical guide to what matters most.



START HERE

Understanding Dyslexia in Schools

Dyslexia is a brain-based learning disability that specifically impairs a person’s ability to read.

 [NCIL Resource: Defining Dyslexia ›](#)



KEY CHALLENGE

Frequent Relocation

Military moves can disrupt:

- Evaluations
- Continuity of services
- Progress in reading growth

Each state—and even school district—may have different policies and procedures for identifying and supporting students with dyslexia. However, all public schools must follow the federal requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).





KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Plans for Support



Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- ✓ Falls under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- ✓ Provides specialized instruction (e.g., structured literacy approaches)
- ✓ Includes measurable goals and legal protections

Tip: A child with dyslexia may qualify for an IEP if dyslexia significantly impacts reading and the child needs specialized instruction.



504 Plan

- ✓ Falls under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- ✓ Provides accommodations (e.g., extra time and audiobooks)

Tip: A 504 Plan may be a good fit for a child with dyslexia who can access the general curriculum but needs accommodations to learn and demonstrate their knowledge effectively.



ON THE MOVE

What Happens When You Move?

Under the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children:

Schools **must provide comparable services** when you transfer in.

But they **can re-evaluate** and adjust services later on.

Caution: There's often a lag or downgrade in support.

Action: Advocate early for your child!

Use these resources to prepare for school transitions and learn more about your child's educational rights.

- [Military Child Education Coalition](#) ›
- [MCEC Back-to-School Toolkit](#) ›



CARRY IT WITH YOU

The Go-Binder

Create a “go binder” (digital + paper):

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Most recent IEP / 504 plan | ☐ Placement testing data |
| ☐ Evaluation reports (psychoeducational testing) | ☐ Classroom assessment data |
| ☐ Progress monitoring data | ☐ Work samples |
| ☐ Screening data | ☐ Communication logs with teachers |
| ☐ State testing data | |



This reduces delays when enrolling in a new school.

Use these resources to learn about school transition protections and prepare for your child's next school.

- [Parent Center Hub: Military Families Resources ›](#)
- [MIC3 Parent & Administrator Guide ›](#)
- [MIC3 Step-by-Step Checklist ›](#)



ASK BY NAME

Evidence-Based Instruction Matters

Ask specifically for evidence-based literacy approaches. These are shown to be effective for dyslexia.



What Do We Mean by Evidence-Based Literacy Resources? ›



Watch for vague terms like “reading support” without specifics.



SPEAK UP

Advocate Early and Clearly

When you enroll:

- Request a meeting immediately
- Ask how dyslexia is identified and supported in that district
- Clarify whether they use evidence-based reading interventions



You can request an evaluation at any time in writing.

[Advocating for My Child's Literacy Needs ›](#)

[Key Roles for Children's Literacy Success ›](#)

[Why Early Intervention Matters for Kids with Dyslexia ›](#)

[Parent Center Hub: Evaluation ›](#)



KNOW THE TERRAIN

Dyslexia Laws Exist in Every State

Some states have strong dyslexia laws and screening mandates; others don't.

- Identification criteria may change
- Available services may vary widely



[State of Dyslexia Website ›](#)





YOUR SUPPORT SQUAD

Military-Specific Support Resources

EFMP

Exceptional Family Member Program

Helps coordinate services and assignments for families with special needs

militaryonesource.mil ›

MIC3

Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission

Oversees school transition protections

mic3.net ›

DD

Decoding Dyslexia

State-based advocacy groups with local insight.

decodingdyslexia.net ›



STEER CLEAR

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- Assuming services will automatically transfer unchanged
- Accepting generic reading help instead of evidence-based intervention
- Waiting for the school to initiate support
- Not keeping your own records



THE BOTTOM LINE

Four Moves for Success

For military families, success with dyslexia in public schools comes down to:

1

Preparation

Carry your documentation

2

Speed

Act immediately after a move

3

Advocacy

Ask for evidence-based instruction

4

Persistence

Follow up when services lag





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