Celebrate Dyslexia Awareness Month

This October we're celebrating Dyslexia Awareness Month! Dyslexia is a neurological condition that affects the way an individual processes language. It is characterized by unexpected difficulty with reading in relation to an individual's intelligence. Common characteristics of dyslexia include difficulty reading, difficulty with accurate and fluent word recognition, a deficit in the phonological components of language, difficulties with sequencing, and poor spelling.

It is important to know that dyslexia is not uncommon. 15–20% of Americans live with the condition and, while this is changing, many people aren't familiar with the term "dyslexia" and may not know what it is or how it affects an individual. Because dyslexia affects so many Americans, chances are you know someone with dyslexia. They could be classmates, coworkers, family members, the people and staff you interact with at the Library or at the other places you visit.

Earlier this year, a Pioneer Grant was awarded to Community Engagement Librarian Kim Baker to kickstart the development of a new service offering for dyslexic individuals, their caretakers, or people looking to learn more about dyslexia.

As a result, we're celebrating Dyslexia Awareness Month with virtual programming, book recommendations, and

staff training. This booklist is full of children's books featuring characters with dyslexia. The recommendations are a great way for individuals with dyslexia to see themselves in books and, for others, to gain a better understanding of what living with dyslexia is like. Our recently-updated children's website also features new pages on dyslexia and dyslexia resources. Additionally, signage has been updated in the Downtown Library and Ellettsville Branch children's areas to follow dyslexia-friendly guidelines.

You may notice the pqbd symbol featured on our graphics. It is a symbol for dyslexia awareness created by Rebecca Warner, founding member of Decoding Dyslexia Virginia. The logo is created with the letters p, q, b, and d, and is symbolic of letter reversal, an issue that many people with dyslexia experience.

In addition to public-facing programs and services, we're working to raise internal awareness of dyslexia by providing staff with training designed to increase understanding of dyslexia and its characteristics. Training includes discussion on actions we can take to better serve patrons with dyslexia and reading simulations so staff can gain a deeper understanding of challenges a person with dyslexia may experience.

Here are some useful library resources for readers with dyslexia:

- The library offers a large eAudiobook collection, including several resources with read-along options. This includes Tumblebooks and TeenBookCloud and Overdrive.
- Browse books-on-cd and playaway collections.
- Read eBooks with the Libby app. Libby offers options to customize font size and background color, as well as the OpenDyslexic font, which was created specifically for readers with dyslexia.

Throughout October, our social media channels will feature Dyslexia Awareness Month content. Like and share posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to help spread awareness of this common neurological condition. We'll continue to develop dyslexia resources, if you have ideas about how we can support members with dyslexia please share them here!

Posted by Aubrey D. on September 28, 2020 Adults
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