

Recognizing Reading Problems

By: Reading Rockets (2007)

Learning to read is a challenge for many kids, but most can become good readers if they get the right help. Parents have an important job in recognizing when a child is struggling and knowing how to find help.

Learning to read is a challenge for many kids, but most can become good readers if they get the right help. Parents have an important job in recognizing when a child is struggling and knowing how to find help.

What to look for:

- Difficulty rhyming
- Difficulty hearing individual sounds
- Difficulty following directions
- Difficulty re-telling a story
- Struggles to sound out most words
- Avoids reading aloud

What to do:

Step 1: Meet with your child's teacher

Gather examples of your child's work that reflects your concerns. Ask the teacher for his/her observations and discuss what can be done at school and at home. Stay in touch with the teacher to monitor your child's progress.

Step 2: Meet with the principal and/or reading specialist

If your child's performance does not improve, meet with other professionals in the building to see if there are classes, services, or other interventions available.

Step 3: Get a referral for special education

If you have tried all interventions, request an evaluation. Talk to the principal to schedule this.

Step 4: Get an evaluation

A professional team — which may include a school psychologist, a speech-language pathologist, or a reading specialist — gives your child a series of tests and determines whether s/he is eligible to receive special education services.

Step 5: Determine eligibility

If your child is found eligible for services, you and the school develop your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP), a plan that sets goals based on your child's specific learning needs and offers special services like small group instruction, tutoring, and assistive technology. If your child is not eligible, stay involved and keep talking to the teacher about your child's progress. You can also turn to private tutoring for extra support.