



**DEVELOPMENTAL
LANGUAGE
DISORDER**

DLD



Ordre des orthophonistes
et audiologistes du Québec

**IN QUEBEC, THE TERM
FOR WHAT IS NOW
KNOWN AS
DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE
DISORDER (DLD)
HAS CHANGED OVER
THE YEARS.**

**CONGENITAL
APHASIA**

DYSPHASIA

**PRIMARY
LANGUAGE DISORDER
SPECIFIC LANGUAGE
IMPAIRMENT
(SLI)**

**DEVELOPMENT
LANGUAGE
DISORDER
(DLD)
SINCE 2017**



WHY THE CHANGE?

- To be consistent with the international consensus of experts in language disorders.
- So that researchers and clinicians can agree on the same terminology to:
 - Promote clearer recognition of this language disorder;
 - Identify more accurately individuals experiencing a developmental language disorder.

For those previously called dysphasic, with primary language disorder or with specific language impairment, this change in terminology:

- refers to the same type of disorder. If a person is known as dysphasic or with primary language disorder, or specific language impairment, this means that they have a developmental language disorder;
- does not require any specific action on your part;
- should not affect already-existing services.

ABOUT DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER

- › The disorder involves significant difficulties with language development, learning and proficiency.
- › The difficulties are significant enough to interfere with daily life and have a significant impact on everyday social and educational progress.
- › It is present at birth.
- › It is a hidden disability, thus difficult to recognize.
- › Children are more at risk of having a DLD if other family members have language or learning disorders.
- › No medical or genetic testing can detect a DLD.
- › Multilingual children with a DLD will experience difficulties in any language they speak.
- › DLD is a life-long condition and therefore long-term support will be required.



DLD IS NOT CAUSED BY:

- › limited exposure to language;
- › parenting style;
- › being bilingual;
- › hearing impairment, intellectual disabilities or autism spectrum disorder.

SIGNS OF DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER

👉 Difficulties affecting language expression or comprehension; for example, someone may struggle to:

- use varied vocabulary or find words;
- structure sentences;
- apply grammatical rules;
- produce sounds;
- tell a story;
- learn and apply conversational skills and rules;
- retain information;
- understand word meaning and follow instructions.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES
AND THEIR IMPACT ON EVERYDAY
LIFE DIFFERS FROM ONE PERSON
TO ANOTHER

Developmental language disorder is also frequently associated with other difficulties, such as:

- 👉 **attention issues:** attention difficulty or deficits, with or without hyperactivity;
- 👉 **motor coordination:** difficulty coordinating body, hand or mouth movements;
- 👉 **behavioral issues:** difficulty controlling emotions.

IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER

› **Social skills:**

Communication and language are essential in order for people to get to know others and relate to them. Children with DLD may become discouraged, not being able to achieve social goals, and therefore may isolate themselves.

› **Academic learning:**

Language lies at the heart of learning. Children learn by listening to teachers, reading books, writing and participating in class. The older they grow, the higher the language expectations are; success in school therefore can become a challenge.

› **Abstraction and generalization of knowledge:**

Children with DLD may have difficulty understanding abstract notions, such as time concept. They require many examples and repetitions to be able to assimilate various concepts.

› **Self-esteem:**

Children with DLD may experience difficulties in various spheres of life, which can affect how they perceive themselves.



ADAPTATIONS REQUIRED

Young people with DLD often learn better through visual and practical methods such as by **observing, touching and experiencing**.

However, the adaptation strategies they require to learn vary, depending on each's specific needs. **Support from professionals and family members is important.**





ARE PROFESSIONALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND SCHOOL SERVICE CENTRES FAMILIAR WITH DLD?

All speech-language pathologists in Quebec have now adopted the term “developmental language disorder”.

The OOAQ works with various partners to inform them of the change in terminology. However, during the transition period, it is possible that the former terms are still being used, especially for service requests and grant applications.

SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Speech-language pathologists work together with healthcare and education professionals to meet the various needs of a person with DLD. Their services are offered at integrated health and social service centres, by school service centres or in private clinics.

There are also **community organizations** that support parents or individuals with DLD. Most of them still use the term “dysphasia”. Simply call them at 211 or visit 211.ca to consult the directory and find the resources in your region.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to discuss them with a speech-language pathologist, or a healthcare or education professional, or contact the Ordre des orthophonistes et audiologistes du Québec.





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