



**FREMANTLE LANGUAGE
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**
AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL



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We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land upon which we meet. We aim to honour and respect cultural heritage, customs and beliefs of all Indigenous people of Australia.

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What is language?

Receptive language refers to the comprehension or understanding of incoming information.

- Understanding single words, sentences and discourse
- Understanding what others say
- Understanding what is read
- Understanding concepts (size, shape, colour, time)
- Understanding grammar
- Understanding / following directions and instructions

Expressive language refers to the ability to express your own ideas, thoughts, wants and needs.

- Being able to put words into sentences
- Being able to label objects, describe actions / events
- Being able to use grammar correctly
- Being able to retell a story & answer questions
- Both verbal (talking) & non-verbal skills (gestures, facial expressions)

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What is Developmental Language Disorder?

- Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is when a child (over 5) or adult has difficulties talking and/or understanding language.
- These difficulties impact on education and social interactions
- The difficulties exist without another biomedical condition such as autism or intellectual disability.

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DLD[™]



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Noticing Developmental Language Disorder

- You might notice that a student speaks in shorter sentences or uses less sophisticated vocabulary than other classmates.
- Less obvious is when students are not understanding what is said. They often get told 'you weren't paying attention' when in fact they were paying attention, but could not understand the language.
- Some students with DLD may be over literal or have difficulties with conversational skills



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How many children have DLD?

- One study found that 7.5% of all children had DLD. In an average class of 30, two children have DLD. Reference: Norbury et al 2016
- Do a quick calculation to estimate how many students in this school might have DLD. Divide total by 10, and then $\frac{3}{4}$ of this. How many?
- <https://radld.org/about/dld/population-calculator/>





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The impacts of DLD

DLD is a life long condition: children don't grow out of it.
It impacts on:

- Reading
- Learning
- Social interaction
- Behaviour
- Mental health

A purple square logo with the letters 'RA' in yellow and 'DLD' in white, positioned over a background of stylized leaves.

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DLD and reading

- To become a good reader students need good language skills
- Students need to know the vocabulary and grammar, and to be able to understand how it fits together.
- That student that is struggling to read may have DLD.

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DLD impacts directly on learning

- Following instructions
- Engaging in class discussion
- Answering questions
- Group work

All of the above require language skills, so a student with DLD will struggle with learning also.

That student who is struggling to keep up may have DLD.

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Social impacts of DLD

- Students with DLD may struggle to keep up with the nuances of peer interactions and so get left out
- One study found 81% of all students with SEMH (social, emotional and mental health) needs had language needs. Reference: Hollo et al 2014
- And a student who does not know they have DLD may think of themselves as 'stupid', which may then
in turn impact on mental health.

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What a language problem looks like



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xN--gGkS8aU>

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What can you do?

- Take a closer look at students with reading, learning or social difficulties
- Just ask 'could it be language?'
- Chat to the student one to one
- Observe their responses to whole class instructions
 - Students with DLD may be good at copying others' leads, and so their difficulties may NOT be obvious

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Learn more

- Radld.org
- Dldandme.org
- naplic.org.uk/dld
- <https://fremantleldc.wa.edu.au/>

RADLD



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References

- Norbury, C. F., Gooch, D., Wray, C., Baird, G., Charman, T., Simonoff, E., ... Pickles, A. (2016). The impact of nonverbal ability on prevalence and clinical presentation of language disorder: evidence from a population study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12573>
- Hollo A, Wehby JH, Oliver RM. (2011) Unidentified Language Deficits in Children with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

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