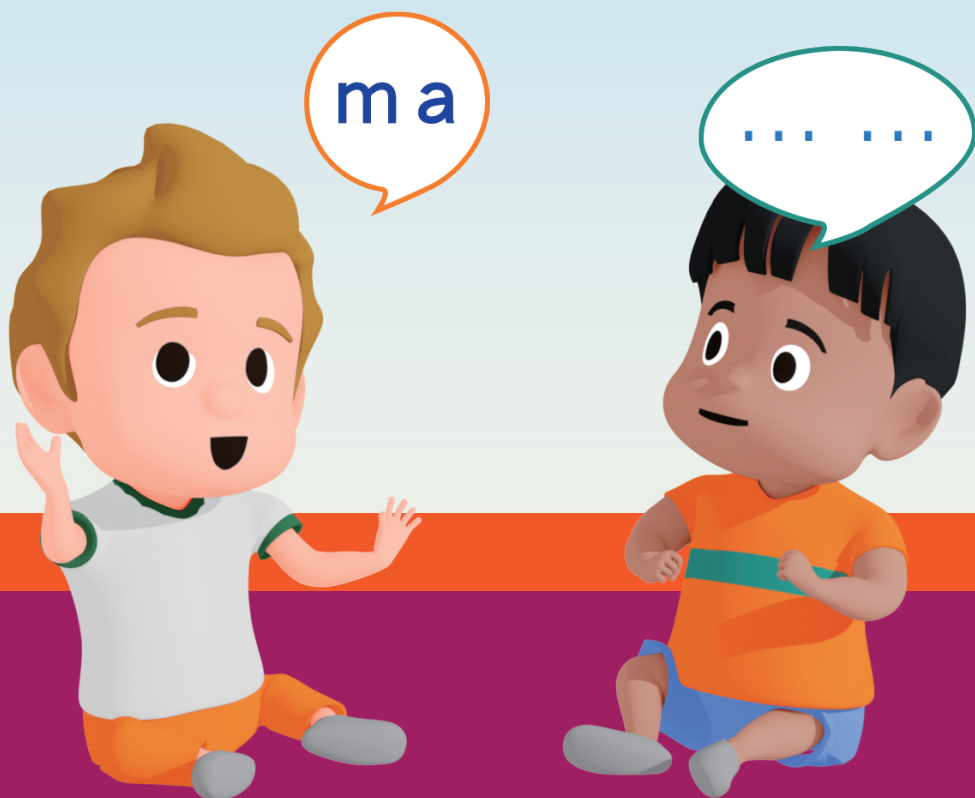


Developmental Disorders in Children

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)



Child Assessment Service

Department of Health

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

www.dhcas.gov.hk



01 What is **DLD**?



Developmental Language Disorder refers to the condition where children fail to show typical language development when compared to their peers. Children with DLD are delayed in the use of single words. They have problems in understanding questions and complex sentences. They tend to use simple sentences to express themselves. During school age, they may have difficulty in understanding complex instructions and reporting events.



02 What causes **DLD**?

DLD is not caused by illness, intellectual disability, hearing impairment, emotional disorder or neurological damage.

Its causes include genetic and environmental factors. Research showed that these factors have different degrees of influence on children.



- Biological factors - Include genetic factors, brain development and language processing system. Underlying genetic factors have been demonstrated in various studies, with clustering of cases in the families of these children. In addition, atypical development of brain systems responsible for language function may impair language development in these children.
- Environmental factors - Although inadequate language input or bilingualism is not considered to be direct cause of DLD by most investigators, it is believed that an enriched language input can facilitate language development in these children.



03 How does **DLD** affect children?



Children with DLD have impairments in verbal comprehension and expression. They face difficulties in initiating and maintaining everyday conversation, which in turn affect their social development.



As language development is a prerequisite for development of reading and writing skills, children with DLD will face difficulties in learning and acquiring knowledge through language. Hence their academic achievement will also be affected.

04 How to help children with **DLD**?



Early identification and treatment are very important for children with DLD. Parental involvement during the course of therapy is crucial for a good outcome. Parents can learn the skills to train their children at home, help them to apply newly acquired language skills into daily lives which further consolidate their language development. Support from school and teachers can also help children with DLD.





05 What is the outlook of children with **DLD**?



For most children with DLD, improvements in their language ability are seen over time after training. However in some children, weaknesses in language and communication may still be present as they grow up. Children whose language ability significantly lags behind their peers are at increased risk of emotional and behavioral problems, learning problems and academic underachievement.

Parent and teachers need to pay attention and give adequate help and support to them.



Referral and Management

Initial Check-up

Maternal and Child Health Centres / Paediatricians / General Practitioners



Further Assessment

Child Assessment Service



Training and Treatment

Professional Services

- Speech Therapy

Preschool Training Service

- Early Education and Training Centre
- Onsite Preschool Rehabilitation Service
- Integrated Programmes in KG-cum-CCC

School-based Support Services

- School-based Speech Therapy
- Learning Support and Accommodation



Related **Websites**

**Education Bureau: Integrated Education and
Special Education information Online**
<https://sense.edb.gov.hk/en/index.html>

Hong Kong Education City : Inclusion Pavilion
www.hkedcity.net/sen

Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder
www.radld.org



FOR more
information



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