



## Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

“Developmental Language Disorder affects every individual differently and there are a wide variety of ways in which language problems may present and evolve over time”

(RCSLT, 2018)

### What is DLD?

- It is an ongoing difficulty with understanding of language and/or talking.
- It creates barriers which can impact on learning, friendships and emotional well-being.
- It is not associated with a known biomedical condition (such as an Autistic Spectrum Disorder or hearing loss). However, those with these difficulties may also have a Language Disorder.
- There are no known causes, only risk factors.
- It affects approximately 2 children in every classroom.

### Children with DLD may have difficulty with:

- Attending and listening to spoken information (e.g., looking ‘blank’ or like they are not listening).
- Following spoken instructions, understanding vocabulary and questions.
- Understanding non-literal language and inferencing (e.g., struggling to understand another person’s viewpoint, jokes or sayings such as ‘it’s raining cats and dogs’).
- Learning and storing words. This can make it very hard to ‘find’ the words they need and to express themselves well.
- Building full sentences and sequencing ideas.
- Social interactions and conversation ‘rules’ (e.g., interrupting / talking over others)

### How to support children and young/people with DLD

- Reduce distractions to help the child/young person focus on what is being said.

- Use visuals such as pictures, objects, demonstration, and gestures to back up what has been said.
- Give the child/young person time to process what has been said and time to think about what they want to say.
- Chunk instructions into shorter sentences
- Repeat instructions/questions. If this hasn't helped, then reword the instruction/question.
- Emphasise key words by repeating them, saying them slower and/or writing them down.
- If a child can't 'find' a word then encourage them to describe it, draw it, act it and/or point to the object.
- Encourage the child/young person to say when they have not understood.

### **Find out more**

Lily Farrington's Amazing Developmental Language Disorder Animation:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwOfkj0dj\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwOfkj0dj_0)

DLD and Me website:

<https://dldandme.org/>

Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder Website

<https://radld.org/>

Speech and Language UK website with a link to resources for education settings

<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/help-for-families/developmental-language-disorder-awareness/>