



## WHO ARE THE PEOPLE OF DECODING DYSLLEXIA MARYLAND?

Decoding Dyslexia Maryland is the state's local grassroots parent movement whose aim is to raise dyslexia awareness, empower families to support their children and inform policy makers on **best practices to identify educate and support students with dyslexia in Maryland public schools.**

DD-MD is part of a national network that includes 48 states and our MD members represent **hundreds of families** in cities and towns across Maryland, including but not limited to:

Aberdeen	Cumberland	Northeast
Annapolis	Easton	Reisterstown
Baltimore City	Ellicott City	Ridge
Bel Air	Hagerstown	Rising Sun
Bethesda	Havre de Grace	Rockville
Bowie	Kennedyville	Silver Spring
Charlotte Hall	Laurel	Timonium
Chestertown	Leonardtown	Towson
Crofton	Lutherville	Upper Marlboro

Since our establishment in 2013, we have close to 1,000 followers on Twitter (@dyslexiasomd), and 350 on our public Facebook pages. We have a core group of 75 active members who are willing to tell their stories in Annapolis to support policy changes. We've met with teachers, state legislators in Annapolis, the MD Department of Education, county commissioners, and school system personnel to provide information and evidence to show that students with dyslexia should be provided equal opportunity to learn in public schools.

DD-MD members belong to groups like the Special Education Parent Advisory Councils, Special Education PTAs, the International Dyslexia Association and the National Center for Learning Disabilities. In October during Dyslexia Awareness Month, DD-MD plans to host a dyslexia awareness event. We've started Dyslexia Support Groups throughout the state and set up public Facebook pages and closed Facebook support groups to provide parent support. DD-MD members are lawyers, doctors, teachers, speech pathologists, dyslexia specialists & tutors, and parents of students with dyslexia.

Many of DD-MD's tutor and teacher members work with students who are underrepresented at the policy table but who most often struggle in school. These are students with socio-economic burdens and whose parent(s) do not have the time or money to invest in a bureaucratic special education system or purchase expensive out-of-pocket tutoring. Many students who struggle to read and write drop out and are at risk for unemployment, drugs, crime and ultimately incarceration. There is a direct link between illiteracy, crime and punishment.

Our goal is to ensure that students with language learning disabilities like dyslexia are:

- Identified early
- Provided evidence-based interventions proven to work with dyslexic students
- Taught by well trained teachers with professionalism and fidelity
- Provided a **free and appropriate education at all public schools in Maryland**

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