9 Things Parents Should Do

by Susan Barton

Who is Susan Barton?

• Founder of Bright Solutions for Dyslexia
  www.BrightSolutions.US
• Developer of the Barton Reading & Spelling System
  www.BartonReading.com
• Creator of dyslexia professionals
  through summer seminars
  Screening for Dyslexia
  6-day graduate-level course

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  www.SusanBartonDyslexiaStories.com

I started as a tutor

• Adults
  • At an adult literacy center
• Children
  • After school dyslexia clinic

Tutoring is not enough

• A tutor is only with your child
  • 2 or 3 times a week
    • for an hour each session
• To get a child through school unscathed
  • A parent must do many things
    that only a parent can do

I assume

• You are a parent
  • You know or suspect your child has dyslexia
A parent’s goal:

- Rebuild their shattered self-esteem
- Be more successful in school
- So they end up living a good and happy life

9 things parents need to do

- Become a case manager
- Explain dyslexia to your child
- Get Orton-Gillingham tutoring
- Start homework accommodations
- Fight for classroom accommodations
- Use technology tools
- Find their gifted areas
- Network with other parents
- Help others

Become a case manager

- If your child had a medical condition such as diabetes or a peanut allergy
- You must do the same thing for dyslexia
- Most teachers have had no formal training
  - in dyslexia – or how they can help
  - You must guide them
So you need to learn a lot

- This webinar is a good start
- Later, watch my free videos
  - on dyslexia
- www.BrightSolutions.US

There is a lot more . . .

- How To Get Help tab

Task #2

Explain Dyslexia to your Child

Explain dyslexia to your child

- What we don’t talk about seems shameful
- Dyslexia is not an excuse (lazy)
  - It is an explanation
  - Such a relief
  - Hope
  - Community – identity, heroes, ordinary people

Project Eye To Eye

- Great mentoring program

David Fink
www.EyeToEyeNational.org
Explain dyslexia to your child
- What we don’t talk about seems shameful
- Dyslexia is not an excuse (lazy)
  - It is an explanation
  - Such a relief
  - Hope
  - Community – identity, heroes
- Need a way to explain it to other kids

More . . .
- Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity
  - Has a longer list of books
  - [www.dyslexia.yale.edu/EDU_YPbooks.html](http://www.dyslexia.yale.edu/EDU_YPbooks.html)
- Ask me how to explain dyslexia to a child
  - Susan@BrightSolutions.US

You also need to explain it to
- His teachers
- Siblings and relatives
- Coach, Boy Scout leader, music teacher, Sunday School teacher, etc.

Task #3
Get Orton-Gillingham Tutoring

Get Orton-Gillingham Tutoring
- Most effective
  - For children, teenagers, and adults
- Many good O-G systems
  - Barton Reading & Spelling System
  - Wilson Reading System
  - Take Flight   (original name: Alphabetic Phonics)
  - Longer list on my website

If school provides O-G, make sure
- Teacher was trained by O-G developer
  - Or by certified trainer for that O-G system
- Teacher uses it “with fidelity”
  - Right size group
  - Right frequency & session length
  - Right sequence with good lesson plans
Watch out if school claims
- We do “some” O-G
  - Along with some other programs

If school provides O-G
- What about summer?
  - Tutoring should be year round
- If no school services in the summer
  - Hire the teacher to do it during the summer
  - Or hire a private tutor to do it
    - Same system

If school does NOT provide it
- Hire a certified private tutor
  - Learning Ally National Tutor Network
    - www.LearningAlly.org, Parent Services, Find a Tutor
  - Each O-G developer can send you a list
  - Remote tutoring
  - Get trained and do it yourself
  - Barton Reading & Spelling System is ideal

Only Orton-Gillingham
- Stop any other reading intervention
  - In special ed
  - With the reading specialist
  - After school reading club
- 2 methods at the same time are confusing
  - Even if both are O-G
  - That will slow down his progress
Task #4
Start Homework Accommodations Now

Homework Accommodations
- Stop the homework wars
  - Get it done in a reasonable amount of time
  - Fewer tears, less frustration
- So your child has time
  - To be a kid
  - To find and grow his gifted areas
  - So tutoring is not an “added” burden

#1 – Read everything to him
- Textbooks, handouts, everything
  - You read it to him
  - Audio books
  - Scan it and use screen reading software
- No “reading practice” for 20 minutes a day
  - Unless text is provided by his O-G tutor

#2 – Write down his answers
- Ask each question out loud
  - Write down his answer
  - But do not change it or fix it
- Let him dictate compositions
  - Or book reports
- Do not have him copy it
  - Our kids do not learn by copying

#3 – Ignore weekly spelling test
- Our kids cannot retain the words
  - From one week to the next
- Count spelling work done with O-G tutor
  - As his spelling grade
- Or else let him flunk weekly test
  - College recruiters do not look at elementary school report cards

Math homework tips
- I shared 4 tips in my November enewsletter
  - If you need them
  - Send me an email
  - Ask for November Newsletter
  - Susan@BrightSolutions.US
Task #5

Fight for Classroom Accommodations

Classroom Accommodations
- Even if no IEP or 504 Plan
  - Ask teacher to try 4 or 5 critical ones for 60 days
- 2 types
  - Not afraid to go to school
  - Prove what he knows

Afraid to go to school
- Headaches, stomach aches, tears, anxiety
- No more
  - Read out loud in class
  - Spelling bees
  - Pass graded papers down the row
  - Students grade each others papers
  - A-R progress chart in front of the room
  - Miss recess or lunch to finish his work

Prove what he knows
- Despite not yet reading or writing at grade level
- Such as
  - Oral testing
  - Grade in-class written work on content
    - Ignore spelling, capitalization, punctuation, penmanship
  - Shorter assignments
  - Allow technology tools

How to justify accommodations
- Watch my Classroom Accommodations video
  - Use my words
  - Borrow my examples

If school refuses
- Hire an advocate
- Switch schools
- Or homeschool for a year or two
  - 30-minute video - Advice for Homeschoolers
  - Or for those thinking about it
Task #6

Technology Tools

- Bypass his weak areas
- Do more independently - right now
- Are not very expensive

Some of my favorites

- Dictation software
  - Naturally Speaking
  - Free on every iPad and Android
- Smart Pen
  - For taking notes in class or in meetings
  - www.livescribe.com
- Audio books, a calculator, word prediction

For a longer list

- Send me an email
  - Subject = Tech Tools
  - Susan@BrightSolutions.US

School might provide them

- If your child has an I.E.P.
  - Ask for an Assistive Technology Assessment
  - The Advocacy Institute
    - Wrote a good article on how to do that

If school does not provide

- Get them yourself
- Not very expensive
Task #7

Find Their Gifted Areas

Find their gifted areas
- Art
- Athletics
- Music
- Great people skills
- Amazing intuition
- Mechanical skill, good logic
- 3-D visualization
- Extremely curious
- Creative, global thinkers

To find their gifted areas

Parent on-line questionnaire

Spend as much time - or more
- Growing their gifted areas
  - as O-G tutoring
  - That is more important
    - than homework

Be sure to point out
- The many things
  - Your child does well
Network with Other Parents

- You are not alone
- Dyslexia impacts 1 in 5 children
- When you feel
  - Scared, angry, frustrated, depressed
  - Talk to someone who has “been there”

Join Decoding Dyslexia

- Parent & Teacher Activist Movement
  - in 49 states and Canada
- These folks have truly
  - “Been there” and “Done that”
- www.DecodingDyslexia.net

Goal of Decoding Dyslexia

- Share advice and provide support
- Educate, Advocate, Legislate
Task #9

Once Your Child is Safe . . .

Help others

- Tutor
- Advocate
- Dyslexia Consultant and Screener
- Speak - at conferences, churches, PTA, School Board, Rotary Clubs
- Educate teachers - in college, in-service training
- Start a parent support group
- Write articles for teacher and parent magazines
- and more . . .

Now you know

- Why tutoring alone is not enough
- 9 things parents should do
  - Over time
  - Listed in priority order
- Questions?
  - 408-559-3652 or Susan@BrightSolutions.US