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## **Xtraordinarypeople News**

### **BREAKING NEWS!**

A new report released by Xtraordinary People today has revealed the full extent of the hidden problem of dyslexia in classrooms around the country. Read more....

Groundbreaking research released today by charitable initiative Xtraordinary People has revealed that 55 per cent of children who fail their Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) have dyslexia or specific learning difficulties (SpLD). Yet with the right diagnosis and support, dyslexic pupils can do just as well as other children.

This study finds that one in five children is affected by dyslexia or SpLD and clearly highlights that much more needs to be done to help these children reach their full potential. Xtraordinary People, supported by Sir Richard Branson, is calling for the Government to implement mandatory dyslexia awareness training for all teachers and to commit to providing specialist dyslexia training for one teacher in every school. Supporters are being urged to sign a petition on the organisation's website: [www.xtraordinarypeople.com](http://www.xtraordinarypeople.com)

Xtraordinary People compiled the research for its No to Failure project, which is backed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). More than 1300 pupils in years three and seven (Key Stages one and two) were screened for dyslexia and their SATs results were taken into consideration.

The number of children found to have dyslexia or SpLD is 21 per cent. This figure is in line with figures from the International Dyslexia Association and from the US National Institute for Health. This equates to over two million children in the UK, yet according to UK Government school census only 76,000 children were identified with SpLD on School Action Plus or with statements of Special Educational Need.

According to National Union of Teachers research, less than 14 per cent of teachers felt confident that they could recognise a dyslexic child and less than nine per cent that they could teach one, with four out of five teachers asking for dyslexia training.

The DCSF is committing billions of pounds to help support struggling children who are falling behind; £990 million has been allocated to personalised learning, and £144 million is being spent on Every Child a Reader, as well as Every Child Counts and Every Child a Writer. However none of these initiatives includes the provision of specialist dyslexia training for teachers. In December 2007 the Government announced a £3 million dyslexia pilot over three years through Every Child a Reader. The pilot focuses on just 300 children.

Kate Griggs, founder of Xtraordinary People, said: “It is good that the Government is giving dyslexia its increased attention but investing millions of pounds into pilot schemes makes no sense when there are already tried and tested methods to support dyslexics. These are already widely available in independent schools, but in very few state schools. This research shows why so many children are failing - we cannot let this continue for the sake of needless pilot schemes. Children are failing now, teachers are crying out for training now - the Government needs to re-think and act now to avoid more failure all round.

“The link between dyslexia and academic failure has been made shockingly clear in our report. This level of failure is unacceptable and unnecessary because with a correct ‘diagnosis’ and support from trained specialists, dyslexic children can flourish. There is simply no need for these children to be slipping through the academic net”.

Sir Richard Branson, one of the many famous dyslexics to support this campaign, said: “Xtraordinary People’s aim for a dyslexia specialist teacher in every school is clearly essential”

Specific learning difficulties is an umbrella term covering a range of developmental learning problems. The most common form of SpLD is dyslexia which commonly causes reading, writing and spelling problems, but which may also result in problems with maths, memory, sequencing and organisation. People with dyslexia are often very creative and innovative lateral thinkers, and include many of our nation’s top achievers. Although most children with dyslexia/SpLD typically struggle with literacy there is firm international research evidence that they respond well to specialist teaching. Other SpLD include Dyspraxia (DCD), Dyscalculia and ADHD.

[Download the report as a PDF](#)

[http://www.xtraordinarypeople.com/downloads/No-To-Failure-Interim-Report-\(2008\).pdf](http://www.xtraordinarypeople.com/downloads/No-To-Failure-Interim-Report-(2008).pdf)