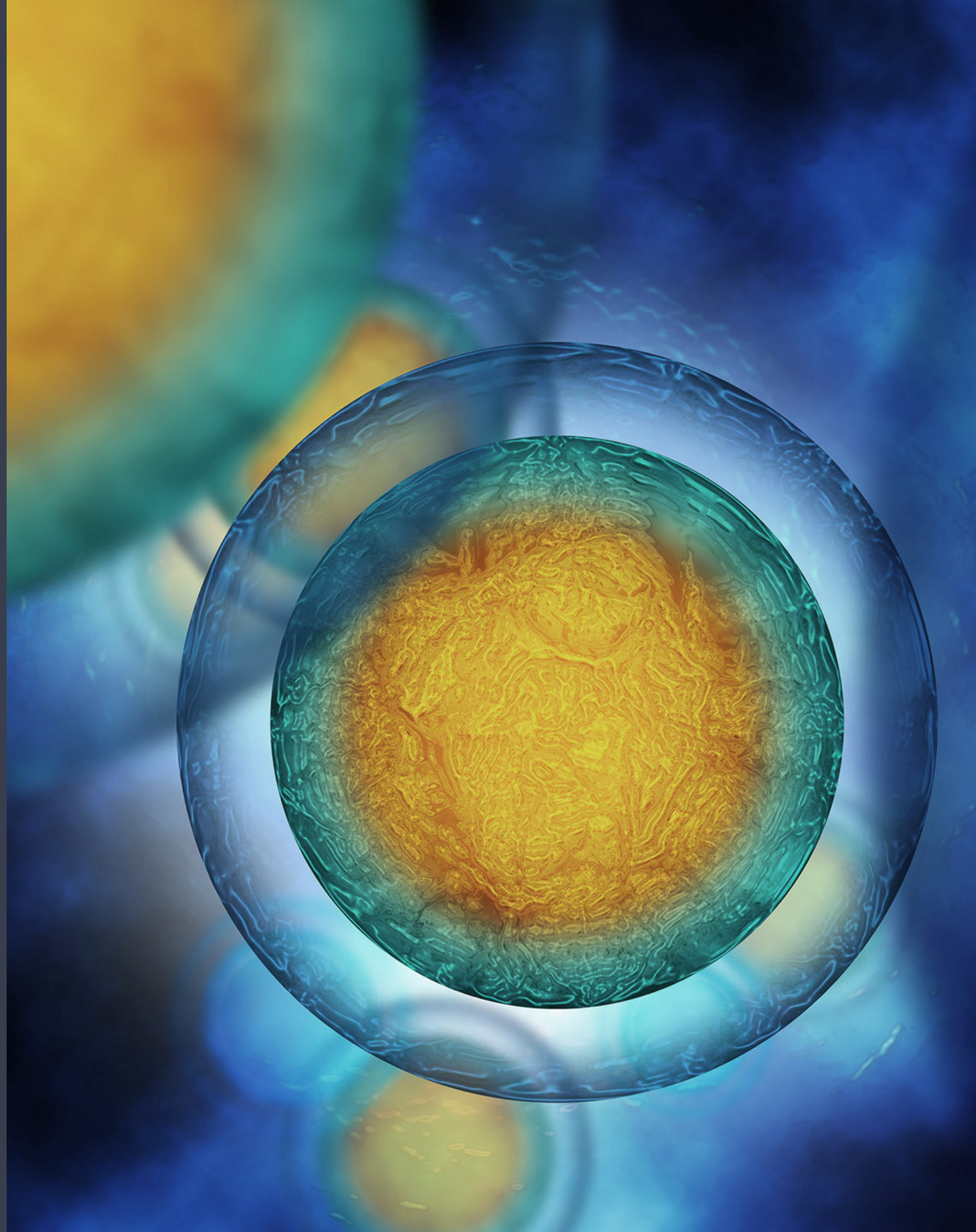
DIET, NUTRITION & DYSLEXIA



Total Wellness Empowerment Institute

AADP Accredited

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Diet, Nutrition & Dyslexia

It appears that more and more people have dyslexia, dysgraphia and other learning difficulties. Why is that? Is it because of our diets?

Take a look at the sections below, which may explain why there appear to be more people with these difficulties around.

Below you will find comprehensive information on Fatty Acids, Rosemary & Memory, Vegetarians, Iron Deficiencies & Zinc Deficiencies.

For many years there has been a lot of research to show that in some cases, dyslexia and other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) could be due to a vitamin/mineral deficit.

Many scientific studies have shown that a nutritionally complete diet is necessary to develop the vision, learning ability and co-ordination.

But, are our children getting a well-balanced diet, or should they be taking supplements?

Can take supplements of fatty acids, zinc and iron ‘cure’ dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD (ADD) and other SpLD’s?

Many parents who use these supplements say a resounding ‘yes’, and they now appear to be strong evidence to support this.

Fatty Acids

Is a deficit in essential fatty acids to blame for the four-fold increase in dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD and other specific learning difficulties that we have seen over the last 30 years?

There have been many studies that have shown that abnormal levels of fatty acids in the brain could be behind the practical and behavioral problems experienced by dyslexic children and those with dyspraxia and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Many research papers show that underachieving children improved dramatically when their diets had been supplemented with fish oils. The fish oils contain omega-3 fatty acids that are essential for brain development and function but are mostly missing from modern processed foods.

Several products contain fatty acids especially if they include long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids that play an essential role in developing the eye and brain, especially vision, coordination, memory, and concentration.

A natural approach to fatty acids

If you would like a more natural approach, the best way to consume your essential fatty acids is through your diet.

People who do not want to take fish supplements can take Flax seeds or Flaxseed oil; these are an excellent source of omega 3, (EFA's). The body transforms it into EPA and the EPA into DHA.

Many foods contain essential fatty acids, (EFA's), including:

Oily fish, for example:

*Anchovies
*Halibut
*Herring
*Mackerel
*Pilchards
*Salmon
*Sardines
*Fresh Tuna
*Trout
*Turbot and
*Whitebait.

(Salmon has an enormous positive health benefit. It is rich in iron, packed with omega-3 fatty acids.)

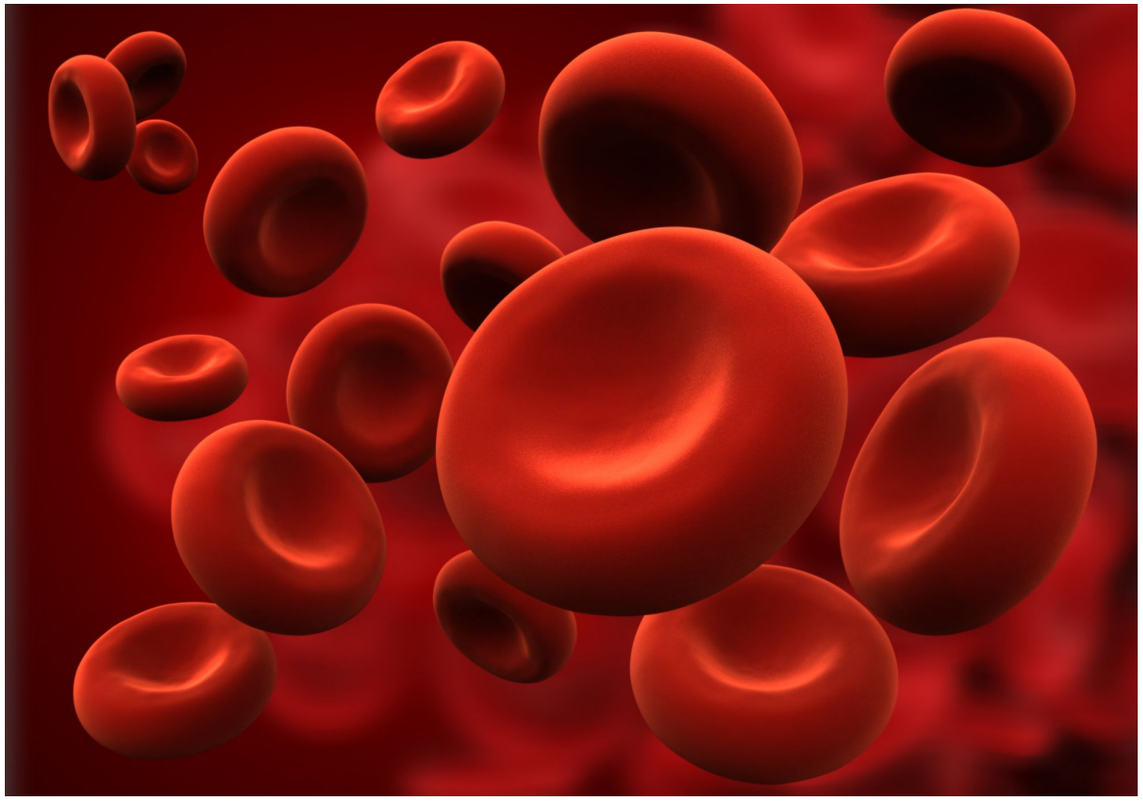
Some studies suggest that salmon could boost babies' intelligence when eaten during pregnancy. (You should only take supplements after checking with your doctor.)

Other Seafood, including:

* Eels
* New Zealand Green Lipped Mussels and
* Shark.

Vegetarian/Natural Oils etc

* Flax seeds or flaxseed oil.
* Pumpkin seeds & oil.
* Walnuts & Walnut oil.



Iron Deficiency

There is research to indicate that even minor deficiencies in iron may weaken the immune system and impair general physical performance. Iron deficiency has also been implicated in a number of conditions including, learning disabilities and ADHD.

A study in France in 2004, has identified a link between iron deficiency and ADHD. Fifty-three children with ADHD were tested at the Child and Adolescent Psychopathology Department in the European Pediatric Hospital, Paris, and 84% of them had abnormal iron levels compared to only 18% in a control group.

There appeared to be a link between the severity of the iron deficiency and the severity of the ADHD symptoms. The study suggests that iron supplements may be useful in treating ADHD.

The best way to ensure an adequate supply of iron is through diet. A diet rich in iron-containing foods is an excellent way to ensure the correct level of iron is maintained.

What foods contain good sources of iron?

Iron can be found in many foods, including

* Liver
* Red meat
* Poultry
* Fish
* Eggs
* Nuts and seeds
* Beans
* Dark green leafy vegetables
* Bread and fortified breakfast cereals

How would I know if I was iron deficient?

The most common symptoms of iron deficiency are:

* Dizziness
* Lethargy
* Tiredness.

Care must be taken when using iron supplements because iron is not eliminated well by the body and you could end up with having too much iron in the body – which can be toxic.

Before taking supplements of any kind you should always take advice from your medical practitioner.

Zinc Deficiency

Zinc is one of our body's most essential trace minerals. Some research studies have shown that people with dyslexia and other learning difficulties have been linked to a deficiency of this mineral.

What does zinc do?

Zinc is an essential mineral that plays an integral part in the body's immune system. Zinc also helps to maintain fertility in adults, growth in children and boosts the immune system. A shortage can affect the healing process because the body cannot store it; therefore, we must eat enough in our daily diet to stay healthy.

While Zinc can be found in many foods, it can be easily blocked or destroyed by various things, including tannin (found in; tea, coffee and alcohol) and food colorings and additives.

How would I know if someone was zinc deficient?

The most common symptoms of zinc deficiency are:

* Lack of appetite.
* Skin problems
* White marks on fingernails
* Dandruff
* Loss of taste sensation
* Tiredness.

Where can zinc be found?

Zinc can be found in many foods, including:

* Lean meat
* Liver
* Cheddar cheese
* Chicken
* Eggs
* Wholemeal bread, wheat germ
* Whole grain cereals
* Dried beans (black-eyed peas)
* Fish (particularly herrings)
* Oysters
* Tofu
* Seafood.

Zinc: Research and Dyslexia

There is some research to show that children with dyslexia and ADHD are zinc deficient. However, this research is still in its infancy, and a lot more work needs to be done to give us all a clearer picture.

Fatty Acids & Vegetarians

If you are a vegetarian, you can still get your fatty acids from several different things, including:

* Flaxseed Oil
* Flaxseed, Ground
* Rapeseed Oil
* Walnuts

Salicylates

In the seventies, Dr Ben Feingold, from California, came up with the idea that food was to blame for the rise in learning difficulties. As it is commonly referred to, the Feingold Hypothesis claimed that many children with ADHD were sensitive to artificial food colors, flavors, preservatives and in particular to a group of chemicals called Salicylates. When Feingold analyzed hyperactive children's diets, he found many of them had high levels of these chemicals.

Many food additives contain Salicylates, but they can also be found naturally occurring in food, such as almonds, apples, brazil nuts, broccoli, carrots, grapes, oranges, tomatoes, yeast products, cola, coffee and tea. It has been shown that naturally occurring Salicylates are not as harmful as artificial ones. Initially, it was thought that every hyperactive child was allergic to Salicylates. It has emerged that in about 70% of cases, food intolerance or true food allergy is to blame.

Stop Harming Our Children (SHOC)
SHOC is an organization set up to try to inform people, especially parents of young children, about chemicals in our food.

Nootropics

Most of us are aware that supplements may help keep us healthy and sometimes help some specific learning difficulties (SpLDs).

It is said that Nootropics can help with memory, focus, creativity, learning, stress reduction, depression, and more.

Many parents may like to look into this further, especially as it is a natural supplement rather than a medical one, such as Adderall etc.

“Nootropics” is a relatively loose term for any cognitive-enhancing supplement. These natural or synthetic compounds can help with various mental processes, from focus to memory to mood.

Some nootropics can treat issues like ADHD, depression, and anxiety, while others may have long-term benefits for brain health. Some nootropics have noticeable, immediate effects, while others are subtle and have a cumulative impact over time.

Nootropics

Caffeine is the most commonly used psychoactive substance. It can be found in coffee, tea, kola nuts, cocoa, and guarana. Caffeine blocks specific receptors in the brain, which helps you feel less tired.

Ginkgo Biloba is among the most popular herbal remedies in the world. As one of the most effective cognitive enhancers, it works by increasing circulation to the brain and balancing brain chemicals. Ginkgo helps with poor memory, lousy concentration, depression, and many other problems.

Ashwagandha grows in Asia and Africa. People usually take this plant to alleviate stress because of its corresponding chemical compounds. However, it can also help with insomnia, anxiety, and many other health issues. The long-term safety of this supplement is unknown. Large doses of ashwagandha can cause stomach problems.

Panax Ginseng, also known as Korean ginseng, should not be confused with other forms of ginseng. This specific plant grows in China, Siberia, and Korea. Panax is an adaptogen that is believed to help build resistance to pressure. It can also improve memory and cognitive function.

L-Theanine is extracted from green and black tea, as well as some mushrooms. This amino acid helps with anxiety and reduces insomnia and stress. It also has no known direct side effects. However, individuals should limit the amount of tea they consume during pregnancy and while breastfeeding.

Omega-3s are the nutrients that are contained in food or supplements, which are essential for healthy cells in the body. The FDA suggests taking no more than 3 g of Omega-3 per day, and high doses of omega-3 can increase bleeding.

Bacopa Monnieri is a plant that is used in Ayurvedic medicine. Sometimes this herb is also called Brahmi. This nootropic is known for its longevity and cognitive enhancement effects. The most reported side effect is nausea.

Rhodiola Rosea grows in Europe and Asia. This plant is often used in traditional medicine as it helps with various conditions such as fatigue, anxiety, and depression. Several special warnings to consider when using Rhodiola: Avoid it during pregnancy. Don’t use it repeatedly if you have an autoimmune disease.

Rosemary Research

Several years ago, scientists discovered the herb rosemary could improve your memory by up to 75%.

Many studies have shown that aromatic herbs, like rosemary and lavender, can improve your memory, so why don't we use them more often?

This would significantly help students study for their exams. By using rosemary, we could help so many students with;

dyslexia,

dysgraphia,

dyscalculia,

dyspraxia & other

learning difficulties.

There are many ways to use rosemary.

Plants – Rosemary, I'd go with organic.

Essential Oil – You need good quality essential oil. Make sure you buy from a reputable dealer. It may be a little dearer, but you know where it comes from, and as you only use a few drops and it lasts for ages and ages, it doesn't cost that much at the end of the day. When you have got your oil, you will need a:

Diffuser – You can use rosemary in an essential oil diffuser. Putting one of these gives a lovely smell.

Perfume Roll-On – You can buy an empty 'Perfume Roll-On' tube and make a mix-up of carrier oil (such as jojoba or coconut oil) and Rosemary oil. Never use just the pure oil, you must use a carrier oil, and be extra careful with young children.

Decorative Glass: You cannot use plastic containers for essential oils unless it explicitly says so.

Ginger Research

Studies have shown ginger extract can boost attention span and cognitive function.

Recap

If You Skip Nutrition – You've Left Out A Key Factor In The Dyslexia Equation

Early development and missed milestones are a huge part of the puzzle, but if you skip over nutritional deficiencies, you have missed key parts of the dyslexia equation.

You don't have to dig very deep into nutrition and dyslexia to learn about the 'dyslexia nutrient'. There are mountains of research on the link between reading difficulties and omega 3's and DHA which is an essential fatty acid.

Essential Fatty Acids AKA Omega 3'S

Studies as far back as thirty years ago has linked omega 3 deficiency to dyslexia. It is the number one nutrient deficiency among dyslexic children. Sometimes these kids are deficient because of a diet high in omega 6's, or insufficient intake of omega 3's during pregnancy and other times they are deficient because of a genetic component which hinders poor conversion and absorption of omega 3's into DHA in the brain and eyes.

While I am cautious with over-supplementing, omega 3's with a higher DHA to EPA is suggested when working with any clients with reading disorders. Both the research and the results in-clinic are undeniable.

B Vitamins

B6, B12 and other B vitamins are also important for brain function. Avoid supplementing with B Vitamin capsules which often contain synthetic forms (even in high quality supplements found at health food stores.)

I do recommend taking a B12 supplement (make sure it is methylcobalamin) if your child is consuming little to no red meat. I like the Methylation B Complex supplements.

Vitamin D3

In recent years vitamin D deficiency has been linked to dyslexia, ASD and ADHD. Ensuring your child is getting sufficient sunlight is critical. If you live in the northern hemisphere, supplementing with vitamin D3 is highly advised during the winter months.

Probiotics

Your gut lining has over 100 billion neurons (think brain cells). The bacteria in your child's gut not only manufactures certain vitamins and even neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine, it also contains most of your child's genetic coding. Ensuring your child's gut is packed with healthy bacteria is key to better brain function.

Folate: This is the natural form of folic acid (which is a synthetic vitamin designed to replicate folate).

Many individuals with dyslexia, ADHD and ASD carry the MTHFR gene. This gene affects folate metabolism which means these individuals require more folate in their diet for the countless biochemical processes in which folate is required.

The problem is that the synthetic version, folic acid, is very toxic to these individuals and can aggravate their problems even further.

Avoid folic acid and supplement with folate or consume plenty of dark, leafy greens to ensure your child is getting adequate levels of folate.

Magnesium: Approximately 90% of the population is deficient because most of us are not consuming mineralized well water and because of mineral depletion in soil. The importance of magnesium cannot be stated enough. It is responsible for over 300 biochemical functions in the body and brain. Magnesium deficiency affects nerve transmission and results in decreased neuromuscular control and focus all of which can be a factor in dyslexia and reading disorders. Magnesium glycinate or magnesium citrate are usually the best options. Some children will do better with magnesium glycinate especially if they have problems with diarrhea or loose stools.

Zinc

In 1989, a study found that the sweat of dyslexic children were seriously deficient in the mineral zinc. What is more is that their hair and sweat contained high concentrations of heavy metals like mercury and lead.

Why is this so significant? Because zinc is an essential mineral for the brain – for learning, memory and processing.

There is a saying 'zinc makes you think' for a reason.

Zinc is also required to properly absorb omega 3's/EFA's into DHA.

Poor conversion of zinc can also be hindered by certain 'dyslexia' genes.

Taking zinc picolinate can help to bypass this problem since zinc picolinate is the most absorbable form of zinc.

Addressing the root cause of learning and behavior difficulties is not a quick fix.

There is no magic supplement any more than there is a magic pill.

What we do know is nourished brains means brains that are better able to learn and read.

Starting to add in nourishing foods will naturally crowd out the foods that are filled with anti-nutrients.

Get functional medicine testing and gain insight into how the body is functioning and where the imbalances are to be addressed.

Never give up, there's always room for positive progress.

Slow and steady wins.