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Surrey Communication and
Language in Education Study

Professor Courtenay Norbury
University College London
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Enormous thanks to teachers, school staff, children and parents in Surrey – especially Jennifer Charters, Virginia Martin, Cheryl Dyer, Wendy Mumford, Barbara Paulger



Shaun Goh



Gillian
Baird



Tony
Charman



Debbie Gooch



Sarah Griffiths



Emily
Simonoff



Andrew
Pickles



George
Vamvakas



Chatrin
Suskasilp



2012-2013
Claire Corser, Becca Lucas, Tanya Hayman, Charlotte Wray, Naomi Swain, Charlotte Nason, Debbie Gooch, Hayley White



2014-2015
Katie Whiteside, Charlotte Wray, Claire Corser, Natalie Kenney, Caroline Bird, Harriet Maydew



2018-2020
Gracie New, Laura Lucas, Sarah Venn (not pictured)



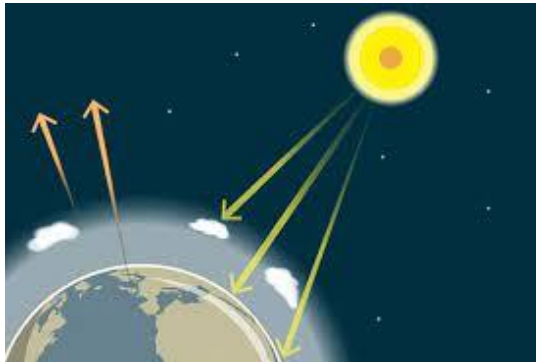
Laura Lucas



Maria Jelen

What is Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)?

Key Stage 3 Science: The **greenhouse** effect



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-orJLnCgGJw>



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwOfkj0dj_0



**Final Report -
Surrey
Communication
and Language
in Education
Study**

2011-2020



*10 year longitudinal study
following children with
and without language
disorder from reception to
secondary school*

Key messages:

- Developmental language disorder is **PREVALENT**
- Developmental language disorder is **PERSISTENT**
- Language is **essential** for **LEARNING**
- Language is **essential** for good **MENTAL HEALTH**

Language Disorder is PREVALENT and PERSISTENT:

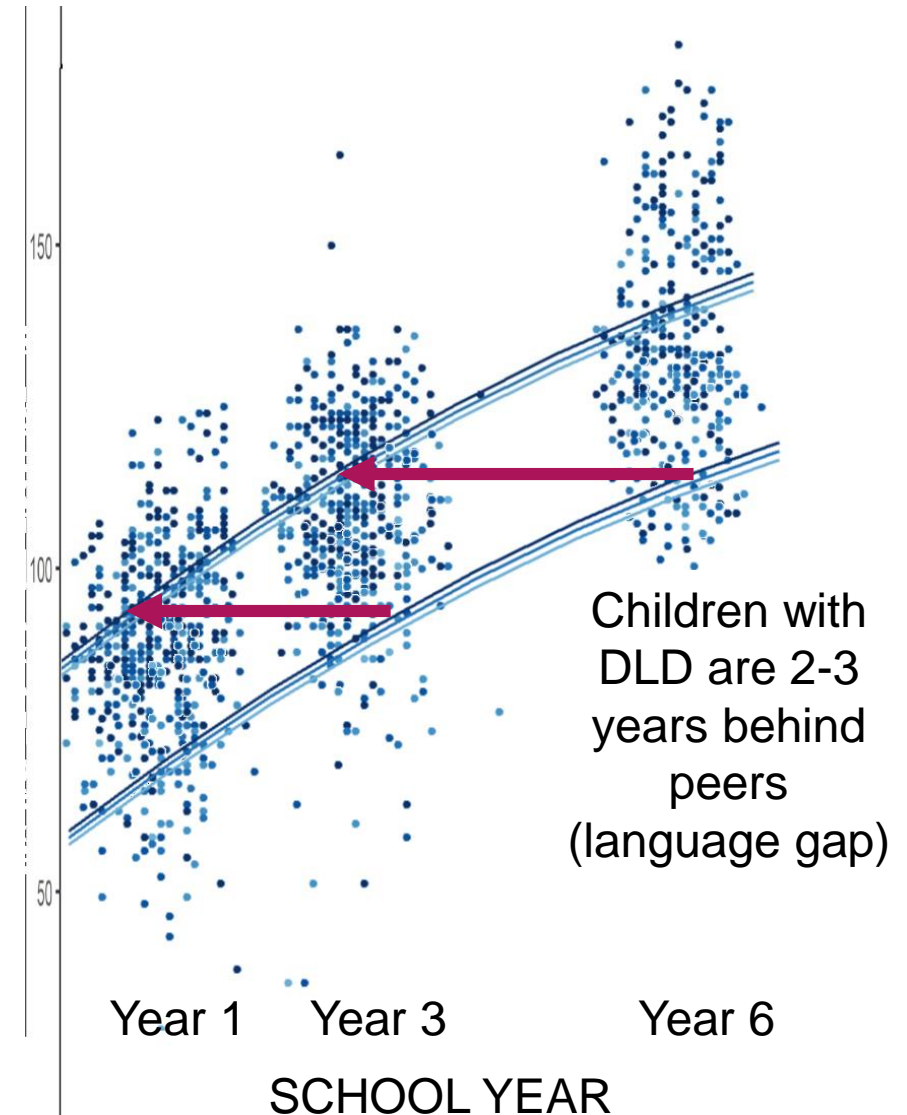


Developmental Language Disorder: The most common childhood condition you've never heard of

Professor Courtenay Norbury debunks some myths about children with this common but poorly understood condition

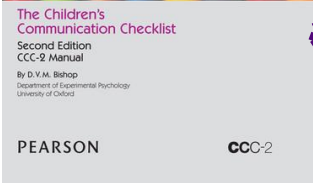


- **7.58%** had DLD with no associated condition
- **TWO CHILDREN IN EVERY CLASS**
- **2.34%** had LD with an associated condition (autism, ADHD, etc).
- Social gradient – **2.5x greater prevalence in areas of greatest deprivation** – SES attainment gaps may be language-related!



LANGUAGE is essential for LEARNING:

Teacher-rated
language at Reception



Phonics
Screen =

Year 1
.42



KS1 = .49

KS2 = .38



KS1 = .48

KS2 = .36



KS1 = .45

KS2 = .40



Strength of association similar for
reading and maths

Strength of association similar for
monolinguals and those with English as
an additional language

Despite this persistent need,
~half of children with an SLCN in Year 6
have no SEN registration in secondary
school

LANGUAGE is important for MENTAL HEALTH:

Language abilities in Year 1 uniquely predict emotion recognition and regulation in Year 6



Language



Emotion processing



Emotion processing in Year 6 predicts parent-rated mental health symptoms in Year 8



Mental health

- (1) Language skills are essential to accessing 'talking therapies'
- (2) Language interventions that target emotion processes should have positive impacts on mental health

Improving language outcomes is (a bit) like losing/maintaining a healthy weight...

Early AND on-going intervention



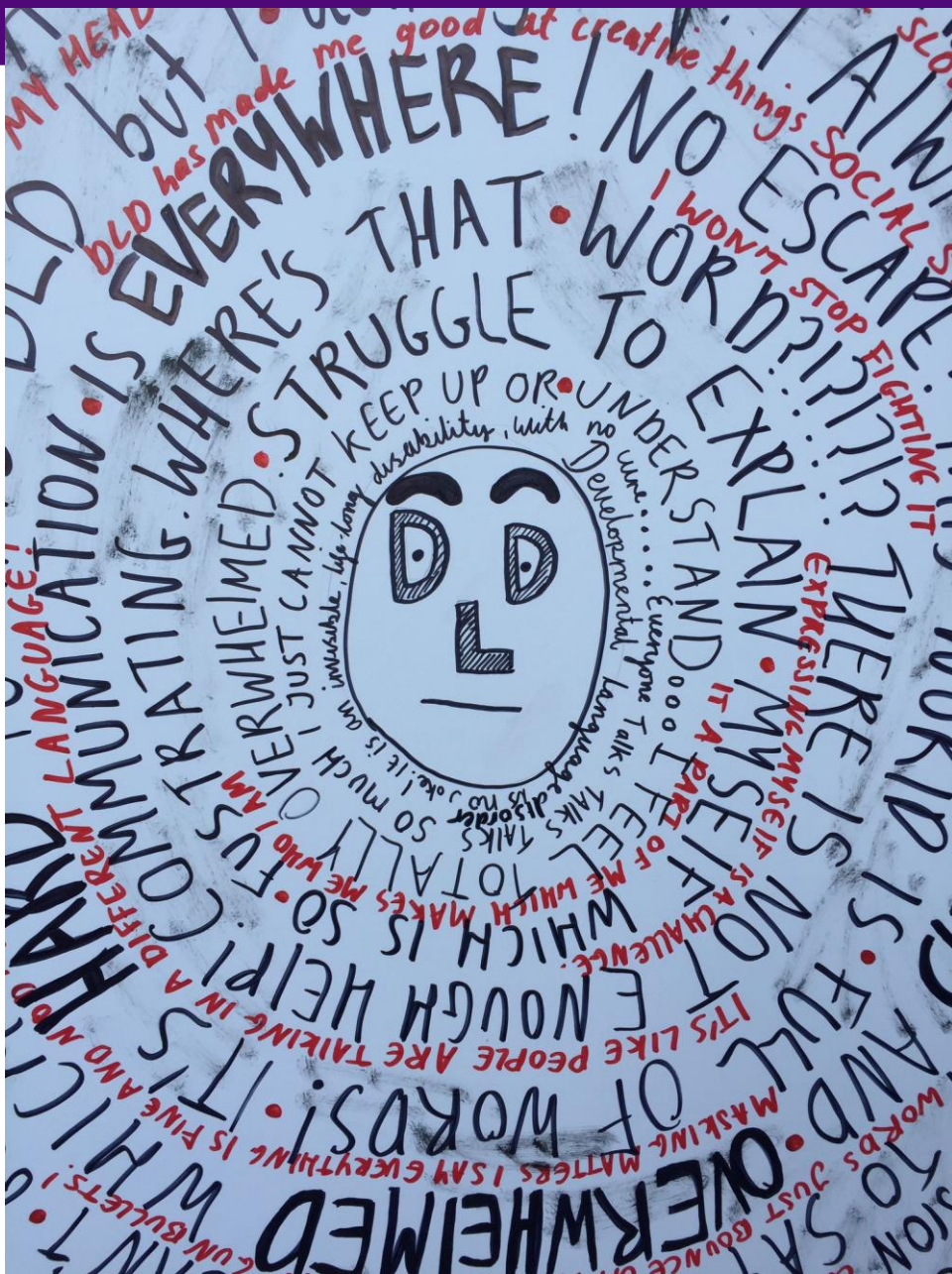
Short-term interventions have immediate benefits, but fade over time & challenging to implement

- **Workforce planning**
 - Plan for all the settings in which speech-language therapists can make a difference, including education
- **Oral language at the heart of the education**
 - Designated oracy co-ordinators
 - Improved teacher training
 - Improved access to specialist speech-language therapy (School SLC Teams?)
- **Better awareness of DLD** and it is taken seriously
 - Health inequality, levelling up, youth justice, SEND, NEETs – huge personal and societal cost of DLD
- **Accessible mental health provision**
 - School mental health teams /CAMHS services with integrated with speech-language therapy

Longer term goals:

- Language intervention as **preventative** health measure
 - NHS strategy for speech, language and communication (SLCN), including DLD
 - increased funding & access to speech-language therapy, focus on vulnerable families/young people
- Health and social care support for **adults with DLD**
- Improved **research funding**
 - UKRI spending £140million on mental health research – very little considers the needs of children with SLCN
 - Little research funding for DLD – evidence of what works, for whom, when, and what the downstream effects are on education, health and well-being





“The world is full of words!”

“struggle”

“overwhelmed”

“frustrating”

“There is not enough help”



Surrey Communication and
Language in Education Study

- Scale of need over longer term
- Impact of poor language on education and well-being
- Potential intervention targets

Thank you for listening!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-orJLnCgGJw>



Two children in the average classroom have DLD





#ThinkLanguage #ThinkDLD

DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER AWARENESS DAY | FRIDAY 14 OCTOBER 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/RADLD>

<https://radld.org>

Selected SCALES publications:

- Griffiths, S., et al. (2021). Mutualistic coupling of vocabulary and non-verbal reasoning in children with and without language disorder. *Developmental Science*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.13208>
- Norbury, C., et al. (2021). Socioeconomic disadvantage is associated with prevalence of developmental language disorders, but not rate of language or literacy growth in children from 4 to 11 years. (preprint) <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/nyv7z>
- Griffiths, S., et al. (2021). Relationship between early language competence and cognitive emotion regulation in adolescence. *Royal Society Open Science*, <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.210742>
- Goh, S.K.Y., et al. (2021). Sources of Variability in the Prospective Relation of Language to Social, Emotional, and Behavior Problem Symptoms: Implications for Developmental Language Disorder. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, <https://doi.org/10.1037/abn0000691>
- Griffiths, S., et al. (2020). Early language competence, but not general cognitive ability, predicts children's recognition of emotion from facial and vocal cues. *PeerJ*. <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.9118>
- Suksasilp, C., et al. (2020). Reliability and validity of a temporal distancing emotion regulation task in adolescence. *Emotion*. <https://doi:10.1037/emo0000744>
- Gooch, D., et al. (2019). Does Inattention and Hyperactivity Moderate the Relation Between Speed of Processing and Language Skills?. *Child Development*. <https://doi:10.1111/cdev.13220>
- Norbury, C., et al. (2017). Language growth in children with heterogeneous language disorders: a population study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. <https://doi:10.1111/jcpp.12793>
- Whiteside, K. E., & Norbury, C. F. (2017). The Persistence and Functional Impact of English Language Difficulties Experienced by Children Learning English as an Additional Language and Monolingual Peers. *Journal of Speech Language and Hearing Research*, https://doi:10.1044/2017_JSLHR-L-16-0318
- Norbury, C., et al. (2016). The impact of nonverbal ability on prevalence and clinical presentation of language disorder: evidence from a population study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. <https://doi:10.1111/jcpp.12573>
- Norbury, C., et al. (2016). Younger children experience lower levels of language competence and academic progress in the first year of school: evidence from a population study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 57 (1), 65-73. <https://doi:10.1111/jcpp.12431>