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Get the Jump on Back-to-School Reading with These Top Tips

*This article, written by Lauren Holstein, appeared in the **International Dyslexia Association's** August 2013 newsletter.*

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The back-to-school season can be chaotic for any family. Between buying new books, clothes and school supplies, there is a lot to get ready. For families of children with dyslexia, extra preparation is needed to deal with increased amounts of reading, new teachers, or even an entire new school as a child rises in grade level. To help you get a head start so your child can begin the year strong, we've come up with this list of top tips for parents preparing for back-to-school.



Talk to any new teachers about your child's learning disability. Make sure they know the [facts about dyslexia](#) and understand that your child may need to do things a little differently.

Find an Orton-Gillingham-based program that offers formal instruction on core reading and decoding skills. Supplement with [audiobook usage](#) to improve your child's reading ability.

Get your child's IEP or 504 Plan in place and up-to-date so it can go into effect on the first day of class. Don't let your child fall behind while you negotiate whether or not they can use a keyboard to take notes—sort it out ahead of time.

Make sure your child has the right resources. If you know they'll be using a recorder for class lectures or dictation software for papers, have them practice and learn how to use the tool before school starts.

Get your child's textbooks in audio format. Audiobooks are a powerful tool that can save students with dyslexia time on schoolwork, lead to better grades, and build vocabulary. Download books from [Learning Ally](#), which provides the world's largest human-read audio textbook library, or [Bookshare](#), which provides computer-read audiobooks.

Talk to other parents. Connecting with other parents of dyslexic children can be empowering. You can share information and resources, learn how to advocate for your child, and build a support network. Consider joining a [Decoding Dyslexia](#) parent group in your state, or having a one-on-one phone consultation with a Parent Support Specialist, an experienced professional and parent who has successfully raised a dyslexic child of their own, available through the [Parent Ally](#) service.

Stay current on research and news regarding dyslexia. Check credible sites such as the [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#), [Learning Ally](#), and [The International Dyslexia Association](#) for up-to-date information, and also attend [webinars](#) presented by learning disability industry leaders.

IDA is partnering with like-minded organizations to further promote literacy, advocacy and provide services for people with dyslexia. Recently, IDA began a partnership with Learning Ally, who specializes in making reading accessible for all! [Click here](#) for more information about Learning Ally.