

Overcoming Dyslexia With the Help of Audio

How One Person Overcame Dyslexia to Become a Children's Book Author



TORONTO, Ontario Nov. 4, 2014 – A common myth about dyslexia is that “dyslexics will not succeed in life” (**Canadian Dyslexia Association**, www.dyslexiaassociation.ca), but author and entertainer **Khalilah Brooks** would beg to differ. She grew up with dyslexia and has now made it her mission through her company **B-AM Children's Entertainment** (www.auntyb.ca) to instill children and youth with tools to build their confidence, self-respect and respect for others.

Her Passion to Help Children Came From Her Own Experiences as a Child

Growing up in Nova Scotia, dyslexia affected her because she thought she was the only one who was “different.” At one point she even considered herself to be “stupid.” Little did she know that she was not the only one with dyslexia, because according to the Canadian Dyslexia Association, “dyslexia touches about 23% of the [Canadian] population.”

She overcame her learning disability by being encouraged to never give up and to keep trying. Her foster mother Emily encouraged her to make the honour roll at school and to get at least 75% in each subject. That pushed Brooks to really focus on her studies and to make the honour roll every semester.

Beyond her foster mother's push, Khalilah found that audio books also helped her with her learning. “While dealing with my dyslexia it was books [with] tapes [included] that allowed me to really see the words clearer on the page, while reading and listening at the same time.”

Audio books seem to have an affect on dyslexics; in fact, **Louise Ward** from the Canadian Dyslexia Association says, “Audio books are a necessity for dyslexia learning.”

When Brooks decided to write and publish her first children's book, *Feels Good to Be Kind* she was adamant in making it an audio book.

"The reason why I wanted Aunty B books to come with a CD was to help others who also may struggle with reading and recognizing words."

Using Audio Books With the Orton-Gillingham Approach

A technique that studies have shown to be effective for children with dyslexia is the **Orton-Gillingham Approach**.

"The Orton-Gillingham Approach is a great way to help with dyslexia," says Louise Ward, and audiobooks are a great compliment to this approach. The Orton-Gillingham Approach is a combination of using "multi-sensory, kinesthetic, and phonics-based" methods and helps with "reading, spelling, writing, and reading comprehension" (<http://www.orton-gillingham.com/>).

Some parents may worry that formal techniques may be costly, but Ward notes that, "Parents can also be trained to teach their own children," by learning Simultaneous Multisensory Teaching (SMT). "SMT is an Orton-Gillingham Approach easy for parents to learn and teach their own children," says Ward.

For more information on dyslexia and resources to help, please visit www.dyslexiaassociation.ca.

To watch Khalilah discuss growing up with dyslexia see her [interview](#) on *The Nikki Clarke Show*.

About Khalilah Brooks

After becoming the lead female performer at **Famous PEOPLE Players Theatre** in Toronto, Khalilah Brooks is now the founder of **B-AM Children's Entertainment**. Her company does musical theater story telling and she plays the lead character **Aunty B** (www.auntyb.ca). Through her character portrayal of Aunty B she teaches children how to love themselves and others. One of her plays has now been turned into the feel-good sing-along, *Feels Good to Be Kind*.

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