

## “The Eggshell of People”: Listening to Children’s Descriptions of Dyslexia

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### Abstract

Children are often underserved because of their age, academic level, and accessibility to the processes in place to develop resources, research and policies. Being neurodivergent, or living in a neurodivergent home, can augment childhood challenges. Listening to dyslexic people, including children, offers an opportunity to respectfully visit unique dyslexic lived experiences, to explore these rich contributions, and to gain fresh insights into people’s journeys. I am a dyslexic parent of a dyslexic child, and an advocate for the wider dyslexic community. I have personally found it can be challenging to articulate how dyslexia is experienced, irrespective of age, because of the difficulties dyslexic people have with expressing themselves (Lithari, 2021). This essay describes how one ten-year-old child chose to highlight dyslexia in their own words, by creating an A4 poster. Starting by looking at what is being created in the dyslexic space in Aotearoa New Zealand, the essay then discusses dyslexic lived experiences. The essay continues with a reflection on the importance of children’s ideas – for example in planning projects and neighbourhood destinations – followed by comments on how the “eggshell of people” analogy might be used by educators to open up discussions about dyslexia and encourage inclusive, and safe, learning environments. It concludes with discussion points for further thought.

Keywords: Dyslexia, lived experience, positionality, children, neurodivergent

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