



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October is Dyslexia Awareness Month

Manitoba joins Canada to **Mark it Red** as we work toward “*Empowering Voices*”

(Winnipeg, MB - October 8, 2021) Imagine trying to manage everyday life with a disability that makes it difficult to read, write or spell. This is the reality that 10 - 20% of Canadians who live with dyslexia face: that’s two to four children in every classroom across our nation.

Dyslexia is a hereditary, lifelong condition that can be managed with proper identification and remediation. Sadly, many school divisions don’t screen for dyslexia, so most kids go undiagnosed and are not given appropriate support to become proficient readers and writers like their peers. Undiagnosed, this creates an environment where the teacher’s **Red** pen is a constant reminder of the lack of awareness and support needed for them to conquer literacy challenges.

Launched by Dyslexia Canada and sponsored by IG Wealth Management, the **Mark it Red** campaign’s goal this year is “Empowering Voices”. Our mission is to get the message out to parents and teachers to consider the possibility that if their child is struggling to read and write in school, they may have undiagnosed dyslexia.

Canada's literacy gap was an issue before the pandemic. However, the ongoing educational disruptions and instability have exacerbated the problem to a crisis point for those most vulnerable, including children with dyslexia. One of the most important keys to changing outcomes and the futures of young Canadians with dyslexia is screening/diagnosis, as early as possible, followed by appropriate reading interventions and the implementation of accommodations to level the playing field. Strong advocacy by students, parents, caregivers, and teachers is especially critical now to help children be successful in the classroom and life.

The Dyslexia Champions of Manitoba know that parents in the dyslexia community have felt lost, confused, frustrated and uncertain as to how to best support their children to reach their full academic potential. The Dyslexia Champions of Manitoba will be launching an extensive Parent Toolkit resource in October which will provide Information, tools and support for parents, caregivers and students to help them advocate and navigate the school system to facilitate success.

Currently, parents and students with dyslexia may have to wait years for school assessments or, if they are able, pay tens of thousands of dollars for private assessments and to hire specialized tutors. Young Canadians with dyslexia, and their parents, can attest to how important it was for them to finally be diagnosed and supported. The Dyslexia Champions of Manitoba remain hopeful that the Province of Manitoba will implement the actions committed to in their [Proclamation of Dyslexia Awareness Month](#) when stated that, *“Manitoba Education and Training is committed to building the awareness and skills of educators in meeting the needs of students who struggle, including those with dyslexia.”*

The public can find out more online about the [Dyslexia Champions of Manitoba](#) and [Dyslexia Canada's](#) National Dyslexia Awareness Campaign **Mark it Read**. Resources to help the public get involved in Dyslexia Awareness Month can be found in our [digital toolkit](#).

For more information or arrange interviews with students and parents in October, contact:

George Kolomaya
SamSon Journey Communications
204-795-2293
george@samsonjourney.com

or

Dyslexia Champions of Manitoba
Sharon Gurney, President
Mobile: 204-801-9300
sharon.gurney10@gmail.com
Website: www.dyslexiachampions.org
Like Dyslexia Champions on [Facebook](#)
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Celebrating our 8th year of our Mission to work together to champion the gifts and support the needs of Manitobans with dyslexia

MEDIA NOTES:

The [Dyslexia Champions of Manitoba](#) have young people and families who will gladly share their stories with media to raise awareness of dyslexia and help others to be accurately diagnosed and supported earlier in life. Please reach out to us for family contact information.

Background information and a listing of events suitable for photo opportunities can be found on the next page of this release. Event listings are regularly updated [here](#) on our website.

Upcoming Dyslexia Awareness/Photo Opportunity Events in Manitoba:

- The Manitoba Legislature will be lit up **Red** on the evening of Friday, October 22.
- The City of Brandon is signing the Proclamation of Dyslexia Awareness month on Friday, October 22 at 9:00 am, at the City Hall (410-9th St).
- The Snake Statue at Inwood, RM of Armstrong will be lit up **Red** on Friday, October 22.
- The City of Winnipeg will be lighting the Winnipeg sign **Red** at the Forks on the evening of October 23, 2021.
- The World's Largest Wagon Wheel Monument in Fisher Branch is also lit **Red** in October.
- Several students are working with their teachers to **Mark it Read** in their schools this year to help spread awareness to both staff and students.

Did you know?

The dyslexia community has many brilliant and creative role models that have used their creativity and out-of-the-box thinking and complex, problem-solving skills to make our world a better place. This list includes Whoopi Goldberg, Hrithik Roshan, Agatha Christie, Richard Branson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Steven Spielberg, and Steve Jobs to name a few. Several amazing Canadians with dyslexia have joined us this year as [Ambassadors](#) for the month of October.

How do you “get” dyslexia?

Dyslexia is hereditary, it runs in the family. Rest assured that dyslexia is not something that was caused by bad parenting, lack of access to reading materials, or because a child is lazy or not trying. Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn. The exact causes of dyslexia are still not completely clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. [This PDF](#) from [Headstrong Nation](#) shows the difference in brain activity when reading of a dyslexic person vs. a non-dyslexic person. With proper identification, appropriate instruction work, and support, individuals who have dyslexia can learn to read accurately and fluently and lead a successful life. Find out the symptoms and signs of dyslexia [here](#).

Who is Dyslexia Champions of Manitoba?

Established in 2013, we are a Manitoba Registered Corporation, governed by a Board of Directors, comprised of parents, educators and clinicians.