

The Written Word Center for Dyslexia and Learning



- Celebrating 10 Years of Impact in Wheaton, Illinois -

This year marks a meaningful milestone for The Written Word Center for Dyslexia and Learning - 10 years of empowering students, equipping educators, and strengthening communities across Illinois and beyond.

Founded by Tara Chapman, a Certified Academic Language Therapist and Qualified Instructor, The Written Word began with a simple but powerful mission: to change the trajectory for students with dyslexia through evidence-based instruction. What started as one-on-one therapy has grown into an IMSLEC-accredited training center recognized for both student intervention and educator development.

Tara's journey began two decades ago at Southern Methodist University, where her training in academic language therapy reshaped her understanding of how students learn to read. After relocating to Illinois, she identified a critical gap: limited access to high-quality dyslexia intervention and virtually no awareness of comprehensive programs such as *Take Flight: A Comprehensive Intervention for Students with Dyslexia*. Determined to change that, she pursued advanced training and, under the mentorship of Dr. Pamela Shanahan Bazis, became a Qualified Instructor, bringing both expertise and opportunity back to the Midwest.

Today, The Written Word is a hub for literacy transformation. Tara not only provides individualized dyslexia therapy for students but also trains educators across the United States on all curricula developed by Scottish Rite for Children. Through professional development, mentorship, and accredited training pathways, educators leave equipped to build sustainable support systems for struggling readers and make a lasting difference in their classrooms and communities.

Beyond direct instruction, The Written Word is deeply committed to advocacy and access. Through training scholarships for educators in the Diocese of Joliet, partnerships with local organizations such as the Wheaton and Winfield Public Libraries, and ongoing contributions during Dyslexia Awareness Month, the center works to remove barriers and expand opportunity. Even students' creativity plays a role. During Dyslexia Awareness Month in October, fundraising through the sale of student-designed t-shirts and posters provides an opportunity to give back to the broader community by donating books about dyslexia to enhance the library's collection.

The center's impact also extends to families. Literacy and Learning Workshops provide parents with practical tools to support their children's development, while summer programs offer students opportunities to build both academic skills and confidence. Whether strengthening reading foundations or celebrating the unique strengths of learners with dyslexia, the work remains rooted in a belief that every student can succeed with the right support.

As The Written Word looks ahead, its mission remains unchanged: to bring high-quality dyslexia interventions to students and to provide educator training to more teachers in more communities. Ten years later, the impact is clear, and the work is just getting started.

Learn more about The Written Word: www.thewrittenwordtw.com

