

# From the Mouths of Babes....Or, Gabe in This Instance

by Tracy Block-Zaretsky

Dyslexia Training Institute

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One of the things I do at [DTI](#) is speak to parents who are calling looking for help. By the time they are calling us they are usually pretty frustrated. I hear so many stories, but at their core they are really similar. Our schools are failing our kids with dyslexia. But, we all know that already. What keeps me passionate about what I am doing is listening to the pain and frustration that the parent is experiencing because they are watching their child continue to struggle and their self esteem going down the drain. I know at the core of this story is a kid who is suffering to some degree everyday at school. Being a parent of a child with learning disabilities, I have a lot of empathy for the parents that call us. However, I don't think any of us can really know what it is like to live in the heads of our kids as they sit in school all day and then come home to do even more of what is so difficult for them. That is what is killing me. I know they are struggling, but I can only image what it is like to live their lives everyday.

I do get little peeks inside my son's head and some of my student's tutor when they will share about a particularly difficult day. In one of our [online classes](#), Enid, a parent introduced herself and shared that she was taking the class because of her 10 year old son, Gabe. She shared the struggles from year to year of trying to get him help, but his third grade year was the tipping point for Gabe. This is what she shared, "His third grade year was an absolute nightmare, with a cruel teacher and a lot of wasted time with the administrators of "the best elementary school in the county". Gabe was denied recess on a regular basis, humiliated by his teacher and so distraught about school that he would tell me he saw no purpose to be on this earth. " Reading that ripped at my heart. Then, I read the letter that Gabe had given his mother permission to share. That was my tipping point. I cried and yelled at my computer, "This is enough! Something has got to change!" I knew what Gabe wrote was what so many of our kids feel.

Below is the letter, but get a box of tissues first and make sure you have a few minute to recover. I think after you read it you will feel even more compelled to help make change. As Dr. Kelli Sandman-Hurley stated in one of her blog posts, WE NEED TO ROAR! We need to roar so more people become aware, but I

believe we need to start roaring at our universities that are failing our educators, school psychologists and administrators by not teaching them about dyslexia, how to identify it and what to do to help students with dyslexia. I believe our universities are at the root of our problem. Imagine how different it would be for all of our students if our educators, school psychologists and administrators were all well informed about dyslexia.

Read Gabe's letter below. Then, get involved! Many states have a [Decoding Dyslexia](#) chapter, or [Literate Nation](#) chapter, or [International Dyslexia Association](#) branch. Reach out to them, see what they are doing to facilitate change, offer to help out and become a player in this growing trend in our country that is slowly making awareness and change happen.

Translation: I once walked on a beach. I saw fish jumping. I caught a fish on my rod. It was a red fish. I let it go. I was thinking about how sad that fish might be, just like me in school. I keep on thinking there is something out there for me. But now, I have tried Learning Rx, home schooling, and just school. Nothing seemed to work, but Ms. Judy\*, but she's not even a school. Right now, during school, everytime I think about school and I just don't understand. I am in 4th grade and I have dyslexia and dyscalculia but some of that explains why I am so good at sports. Everytime I think about school or math I just start flopping and I say "I wish you could feel the way I feel." Sometimes, I feel like there are some things that cure my anger but for only ten seconds. My teachers don't understand and they tell me I am lazy and dumb. But that does not make sense because I can run a 5:32 minute mile It feels like we will be doing work and I don't get it and then they just move on. And I know there are other people out there who have dyslexia and I just want to tell you that you aren't stupid or dumb. So just don't listen to your teachers.

\*Ms. Judy is an angel we discovered in our small city, a retired speech specialist trained in Lindamood Bell