

Learning Disability Overview

Learning disabilities are real. A person can be of average or above average intelligence and have difficulty keeping up with people of the same age in learning and regular functioning.

WHAT IS A LEARNING DISABILITY?

A learning disability is a neurological disorder that affects the brain's ability to receive process, store and respond to information. The term learning disability is used to describe the unexplained difficulty of a person of at least average intelligence in acquiring basic academic skills. These skills are essential for success at school and work, and for coping with life in general.

Learning disabilities can affect a person's ability in the areas of:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Mathematics

Other features of a learning disability are:

- A distinct gap between the level of achievement that is expected and what is actually being achieved
- Difficulties that can become apparent in different ways with different people
- Difficulties that manifest themselves differently throughout development

- Difficulties with socio-emotional skills and behavior.

A learning disability is not a disease, so there is no cure, but there are ways to overcome the challenges it poses through identification and accommodation.



IDENTIFICATION AND HELP

If there is a reason to think a child might have a learning disability, it is important to collect observations by parents, teachers, doctors, and others who may have regular contact with that child. If the difficulty is not isolated an evaluation should be conducted by the school or a learning specialist.

Depending on the type of learning disability and its severity, different kinds of assistance can be provided to help a child learn in school. Under the nation's special education law IDEA, qualifying children can receive special education and related services individually designed to assist the child in all educational environments.



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Learning Disabilities are lifelong and don't go away. But they don't have to stop a person from being successful in school and life.

Learning Disabilities affect each person differently. It can range from mild to severe. Sometimes people have more than one Learning Disability. In addition, one third of individuals with Learning Disabilities may also have AD/HD which makes it difficult for them to concentrate; stay focused, or manage their attention to specific tasks.

Early Identification is vital in helping a child to succeed academically as well as socially. If you think your child may have a Learning Disability, share them with your child's teacher and school staff and request that your child be evaluated. If your child does have a Learning Disability, early intervention with specialized teaching strategies can help to overcome difficulties. As a parent it is important to learn as much as you can and to help your child understand that he or she is not alone and adults are there to help.

APEC IS HERE TO HELP

APEC provides free training, information, and consultation to families. Visit our training calendar for more information about learning opportunities at www.alabamaparentcenter.com or call our center.



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Disability V.2 Learning Disability Overview



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