

Learning Disabilities (LD)

What is it?	<p>A learning disability is a neurological disorder that affects one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. The disability may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. (LDA, 2004).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with learning disabilities are generally of average or above average intelligence. There seems to be a gap between the person’s potential and actual achievement (LDA, 2004). • There is no cure for a learning disability. Most people with learning disabilities learn to adapt to their learning differences, and they learn strategies that help them accomplish their goals and dreams. • LD is an “umbrella” term referring to the following more specific conditions: <u>Dyslexia</u>: a language and reading disability; <u>Dyscalculia</u>: Problems with arithmetic and math concepts; <u>Dysgraphia</u>: A writing disorder; <u>Dyspraxia (Sensory Integration Disorder)</u>: Problems with motor coordination; <u>Central Auditory Processing Disorder</u>: Difficulty processing and remembering language-related tasks; <u>Non-verbal learning Disorders</u>: Trouble with nonverbal cues, e.g., body language; poor coordination, clumsy; <u>Visual Perceptual/Visual Motor Deficit</u>: Reverses letters; cannot copy accurately; eyes hurt and itch; loses place; struggles with cutting; <u>Language Disorders (Aphasia/Dysphasia)</u>: Trouble understanding spoken language; poor reading comprehension (LDA, 2004). • Some people develop sophisticated ways of covering up their learning issues, so learning disabilities are often not diagnosed until the teen years when schoolwork – and life – gets more complicated. • There are no medications for a learning disability. Learning disabilities are often found in combination with attention difficulties such as ADD/ADHD. Medication is often prescribed to a person with ADHD to help improve their attention span and ability to focus as well as to help control impulses and other hyperactive behavior.
Common Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Uneven areas of ability • Short attention span • Poor memory • Difficulty following directions • Inability to discriminate between/among letters, numerals, or sounds • Poor reading and/or writing ability • Eye-hand coordination problems; poorly coordinated • Difficulties with sequencing • Disorganization and other sensory difficulties” (LDA, 2004).
Strategies for working with person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning strategy instruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ break learning into small steps; ○ probe to determine if the student is understanding; ○ provide regular quality feedback; ○ use diagrams, graphics and pictures to support your words; ○ provide independent practice; ○ model what you wanted students to do; ○ provide prompts of strategies to use; and ○ engage students in process-type questions like “How is that strategy working? or Where else might you apply it?”

Strategies for working with person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct instruction • Provide simple instructions • Sequence slowly, using examples • Use lots of visual tools • Speak clearly and turn so the students can see your face • Allow time to process requests and allow them to ask questions • Teach study skills, note-taking strategies, or organizational techniques • Use adaptive equipment if appropriate (books on tape, laptop computers, etc.)
For more information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Corps Disability Website http://jcdisability.jobcorps.gov/html/common_cognitive.htm This site, operated by Humanitas, provides the Job Corps community with information and resources that will allow them to better support and meet the needs of applicants and students with disabilities. • Learning Disabilities Association of America http://www.ldanatl.org. The purpose of this national nonprofit organization is to advance the education and general welfare of children and adults of normal or potentially normal intelligence who manifest disabilities of a perceptual, conceptual, or coordinative nature. • National Center for Learning Disabilities http://www.nclld.org. This group provides information, resources, and referral services, develops and supports innovative educational programs, seminars, and workshops, and advocates for more effective policies and legislation to help individuals with learning disabilities. • International Dyslexia Association (IDA) http://www.interdys.org. IDA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the study and treatment of dyslexia. • Children and Adults with Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) http://www.chadd.org. CHADD is a national nonprofit organization representing children and adults with ADHD. • National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) http://www.nimh.nih.gov. NIMH offers information about the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illnesses, and supports research to help those with mental illness.
References	<p>Learning Disabilities Association of America (2004). Learning disabilities: signs, symptoms and strategies. www.ldaamerica.org (Retrieved December 1, 2006).</p> <p>Learning Disabilities Association of America (2004). Symptoms of learning disabilities. www.ldaamerica.org (Retrieved December 1, 2006).</p> <p>Teens Health (2006). http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/learning/learning_disabilities.html Nemours Foundation (Retrieved December 1, 2006).</p>

NDCPD Job Corps Disability Resource Center



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