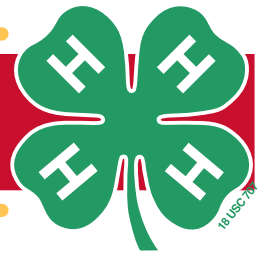


LEARNING DISABILITIES



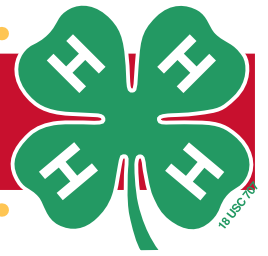
Disclaimer: No two individuals with learning disabilities are the same. Symptoms or even the severity of symptoms will not be the same. What works for one individual may not work for another.

Definition and Statistics (Mayo Clinic, 2019)

- Group of varying disorders resulting in negative impact on learning
- Affects the brain's ability to store, process, and communicate information
- Affects one's ability to speak, listen, think, read, write, spell, and compute
- Important to note people with learning disabilities are average or above average intelligence
- Lifelong
- Estimated 8-10% of children in the US have a type of learning disability
- Several types: Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, Nonverbal Learning Disorder, Apraxia of Speech, Dyspraxia, Auditory Processing Disorder

Symptoms/Characteristics (Mayo Clinic, 2019)

- Reading
 - Difficulty reading- inaccurate or slowly and with effort
 - Difficulty understanding the meaning of what was read
 - Difficulty with spelling
 - Difficulty with recalling accurately what they read
- Written expression
 - Slow and labor-intensive handwriting
 - Trouble with grammar, spelling, and punctuation
 - Handwriting which is hard to read
 - Letter reversal (b and d, p and q)
- Math
 - Difficulty with understanding numbers, word problems, or calculation
 - Difficulty with symbols
 - Number reversal (6 and 9)
- Socialization, attention, and behavior
 - Few positive interactions, difficulty making friends, and appear lonely
 - May not follow social rules of conversation
 - Poor memory, short attention span, and difficulty following directions
- Difficulty with sequencing of thoughts, events, or activities
- Difficulty with eye-hand coordination or physical coordination



Adaptation Considerations

*If youth needs reasonable accommodations, please work with county Extension staff. Details are outlined on the Reasonable Accommodation Practices website: <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/reasonable-accommodation-practices>

- Show rather than explain (modeling how to do something will benefit ALL youth)
- Give directions one step at a time, give cues such as “ready?”
- Develop graphs/charts to document progress
- Supplement with more intact senses (use visual cues, signals, handouts, manipulatives, pictures)
- Reword or help decipher confusing oral and/or written directions
- Ask specific questions to find out if the youth understands
- Avoid asking the youth to listen and write at the same time
- Minimize transitions and give several verbal cues before transitions
- Avoid assuming the youth will automatically generalize instructions
- Prepare youth in advance for anything that deviates from the normal schedule
- Allow youth to choose from a variety of activities
- Encourage youth to choose their own materials for a project
- Have the youth take step-by-step approaches to tasks; rely on visual organizational aids
- Help youth use tools like time organizers, computers, or watches with alarms
- Help youth prepare visual schedules and review them frequently
- Allow typing over writing goal sheets or other forms
- Utilize recordings over written, but have the written one there to follow along
- Limit distractions
- Highlight the important parts prior to handing out

Additional Resources

There are numerous websites that provide valuable information related to learning disabilities.

- National Center for Learning Disabilities: www.nclld.org
- LD Online: www.ldonline.org
- Learning Disabilities Association of America: www.lidaamerica.org
- National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities: www.nichcy.org

References

1. Mayo Clinic. (2019). *Learning disorders: Know the signs, and how to help*. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/learning-disorders/art-20046105>

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