



Learning Disability (LD)

General Description of the Population

Learning disability (LD) is a term used to describe a person who has a significant learning problem in one or more of the basic processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language. These problems may become evident in the person's writing, math, spelling, listening, and speaking skills. Also, learning disabilities affect the way the brain processes information.

Learning Disabled students demonstrate the potential to learn at their own intellectual level, however, academic achievement in a specific area is below that potential. These students may also have problems with vision, hearing, motor skills or in the affective or cognitive areas; but these problems usually are not the main cause of the child's learning disability.

Common Characteristics

- Short-term memory
- Deficient social interactions
- Low level language skills
- Easily distracted
- Low math reasoning
- Letter reversals and transposals
- Difficulty with retrieval & transfer of information
- Copying from the board
- Completing timed tasks
- Overly large handwriting
- Confuse look-alike words
- Poor inter-personal skills
- Must have special education support to function in general education successfully
 - Difficulty with spoken instructions
 - Weak visual memory for symbols (letters)
 - Difficulty with phonics
 - Can be impulsive
 - Perceptual problems
 - Math word problems
 - Illegible writing
 - Identifying the main idea
 - Low self-esteem
- Shy
- Knowing left from right
- Cannot be attributed to another disability
- Lack of planning & organizing skills
- Difficulty with distinguishing sounds
- Poor eye-hand coordination

Difficulty with:

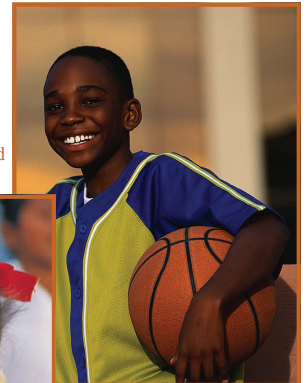
- Abstract reasoning
- Sequencing
- Attention
- Coordination
- Spelling
- Note taking
- Time management
- Proper grammar
- Study skills
- Writing
- Motivation
- Planning
- Expressing ideas
- Understanding sarcasm

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Instructional Strategies

- Plan ahead and be flexible
- Shorten assignments
- Praise in public; correct in private
- Provide tactile-kinesthetic support
- Set goals with student
- Recognize student skills
- Allow student to use technology
- Give student clearly typed words
- Provide student with note-taking format
- Arrange a place where student can keep notes
- Teach student to outline work by providing a format
- Adapt curriculum and materials to match learning style
- Encourage summarizing, outlining, and note taking
- Teach in logical format and use concrete methods
- Assist students with writing and spelling answers
- Arrange for students supporting students (cooperative learning)
- Review instruction with students through prepared study sheets
- Share progress with students through prepared study sheets
- Share progress with student and emphasize strengths whenever possible
- Offer instructional options; read tests, allow extra time for test taking, tape class, let students work together
- Give clear directions, stand and speak in front of student, and write clearly
- Be diplomatic regarding students mistakes, reward and encourage often
- Provide visual help via chalkboard, overhead projector, and other visual devices
- Provide visuals for emphasizing important points; encourage visual imagery
- Allow more time for work
- Use multi-sensory approach
- Use color coding or highlighting

Information taken from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders



Behavioral Strategies

- Praise Often
- Be consistent
- Establish a calm-structured classroom
- Assure student knows class rules
- Communicate with family
- Provide time-out option
- Clarify often with student
- Be sure student knows reason for discipline
- Demonstrate that you care for the student
- Set limits
- Constantly recognize student achievement
- Give clear and precise directions
- Be firm but fair
- Send notes home
- Be positive with affirmations
- Structure new situation for student
- Have classroom rules and procedures clearly posted

THE PATH PROJECT

Partners Resource Network, Inc.
1090 Longfellow Drive
Beaumont, TX 77706

Phone: 409-898-4684
Toll Free: 800-866-4726
Fax: 409-898-4869

Email: partnersresource@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.PartnersTx.org



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