
Learning Disabilities at a Glance

Learning disabilities are real. A person can be of average or above-average intelligence, not have any major sensory problems (like blindness or hearing impairment), and yet struggle to keep up with people of the same age in learning and regular functioning.

What is a learning disability?

A learning disability (LD) 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 seeming unexplained difficulty a person of at least average intelligence has in acquiring basic academic skills. These skills are essential for success at school and work, and for coping with life in general. LD is not a single disorder. It is a term that refers to a group of disorders.

How can one tell if a person has a learning disability?

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.