

# Learning Disability

A learning disability is a neurological condition that affects the brain's ability to send, receive, and process information. A child with a learning disability may have difficulties in reading, writing, speaking, listening, understanding mathematical concepts, and general comprehension.

It is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty in performing everyday tasks – for example, household chores, socializing, or managing money – which affects their life in any way.

People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complicated information and interact with others.

There are different types of learning disabilities. It can be mild, moderate, severe, or profound. In all cases, a learning disability is lifelong and can be affected by a lot of factors.

Up to 10 percent of the population are affected by specific learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and autism, translating to 2 or 3 pupils in every classroom and the prevalence is higher for developing countries.



It is difficult to diagnose a mild learning disability as the individual will often mix well with others and be able to cope with most everyday tasks. However, they may need support in other areas of their life such as filling out forms or tasks which require motor skills.

## SIGNS OF A LEARNING DISABILITY

### COGNITIVE SIGNS OF A LEARNING DISABILITY:

- Often spelling the same word differently in a single assignment
- Trouble with open-ended questions on tests
- Poor reading and language comprehension
- Weak memory skills
- Difficulty in adapting skills from one setting to another
- Slow work pace
- Difficulty grasping abstract concepts
- Inattention to details
- Excessive focus on details
- Frequent misreading/misinterpretation of information
- Trouble filling out applications or forms
- Easily confused by instructions
- Poor organizational skills
- Mental health problems like depression or anxiety

### BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF A LEARNING DISABILITY:

- Not wanting to go to school
- Complaining about the teacher
- Reluctance to engage in reading/writing activities
- Saying the work is too hard
- Not wanting to show you schoolwork
- Avoiding assignments/homework
- Saying negative things about his or her academic performance, such as: "I'm dumb"
- Disobeying teacher's directions
- Frequent misreading/misinterpretation of information
- Cutting class and skipping school (in adolescents and teens)
- Bullying



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People with a severe learning disability or profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD), need more care and support in areas such as mobility, personal care, and communication. People with a moderate learning disability may also need support in these areas, but not always.

The use of the term intellectual disability in the context of the WHO initiative “Better health, better lives” includes children with autism who have intellectual impairments. It also encompasses children who have been placed in institutions because of perceived disabilities or family rejection and who consequently acquire developmental delays and psychological problems.

It is important to diagnose the child's cognitive signs early in order to provide the proper support and therapies to continue their growth. Most school counselors are trained professionals to identify the learning disability signs in a child.

Children with learning disabilities are often misunderstood by their parents and teachers because of their delay in performing tasks, not wanting to do certain things and it is interpreted as laziness, ignorance, or indiscipline. If learning disabilities are identified and treated early, children with these disabilities are more likely to learn to overcome their difficulties while maintaining a positive self-image.

For any parent, one of the biggest concerns will be their child's wellbeing and future. As a parent, you can help your child by encouraging their strengths and getting the right kind of support to help them overcome the things they find difficult.

Every child is an individual and has their own needs, but with the right support, a child with a learning disability can lead fulfilling lives in the way they choose. It is in our hands to manage their challenges with available resources and treat them with utmost care. There is a range of assistive devices, software, and applications available to cope with different types of learning disabilities. Right resources at the right time can transform a life in endless unimaginable ways!