



Some Common Signs of LDs

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The good news about learning disabilities is that scientists are learning more every day. Their research provides hope and direction.

If parents, teachers, and other professionals discover a child's learning disability early and provide the right kind of help, it can give the child a chance to develop skills needed to lead a successful and productive life. A recent National Institutes of Health study showed that 67% of young students who were at risk for reading difficulties became average or above average readers after receiving help in the early grades.

Parents are often the first to notice that "something doesn't seem right." If you are aware of the common signs of learning disabilities, you will be able to recognize potential problems early. The following is a checklist of characteristics that may point to a learning disability. Most people will, from time to time, see one or more of these warning signs in their children. This is normal. If, however, you see several of these characteristics over a long period of time, consider the possibility of a learning disability.

Preschool

- Speaks later than most children
- Pronunciation problems
- Slow vocabulary growth, often unable to find the right word
- Difficulty rhyming words
- Trouble learning numbers, alphabet, days of the week, colors, shapes
- Extremely restless and easily distracted
- Trouble interacting with peers
- Difficulty following directions or routines
- Fine motor skills slow to develop

Grades K-4

- Slow to learn the connection between letters and sounds
- Confuses basic words (run, eat, want)
- Makes consistent reading and spelling errors including letter reversals (b/d), inversions (m/w), transpositions (felt/left), and substitutions (house/home)
- Transposes number sequences and confuses arithmetic signs (+, -, x, /, =)
- Slow to remember facts
- Slow to learn new skills, relies heavily on memorization
- Impulsive, difficulty planning
- Unstable pencil grip
- Trouble learning about time
- Poor coordination, unaware of physical surroundings, prone to accidents

Grades 5-8

- Reverses letter sequences (soiled/solid, left/felt)
- Slow to learn prefixes, suffixes, root words, and other spelling strategies
- Avoids reading aloud
- Trouble with word problems
- Difficulty with handwriting
- Awkward, fist-like, or tight pencil grip
- Avoids writing compositions
- Slow or poor recall of facts
- Difficulty making friends
- Trouble understanding body language and facial expressions

High School Students and Adults

- Continues to spell incorrectly, frequently spells the same word differently in a single piece of writing
- Avoids reading and writing tasks
- Trouble summarizing
- Trouble with open-ended questions on tests
- Weak memory skills
- Difficulty adjusting to new settings
- Works slowly
- Poor grasp of abstract concepts
- Either pays too little attention to details or focuses on them too much
- Misreads information

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and the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada.