



# AN INTRODUCTION TO LEARNING DISABILITIES

## What is a Learning Disability?

If your child is struggling in school and you aren't sure why, a learning disability may be the cause. Think of it as a gap between what you would expect from your child and what she can actually do. Sometimes known as invisible disabilities, learning disabilities affect how a person's brain works – how it processes information in areas like reading, writing and math.

### Processing

Processing is what your brain does with information, it:

- Receives
- Stores
- Processes
- Responds and communicates what comes in

**Differences in processing** can affect one, some or all of these tasks. Having more than one type of processing difficulty is common. These are some of the tasks that can be affected by LD:

- Trouble learning the alphabet and organizing the words in writing
- Mistakes in reading aloud
- Not understanding what is read
- Forgetting sounds that letters make
- Confusing math symbols
- Misreading numbers

### Common difficulties occur in:

- Reading (Dyslexia)
- Writing (Dysgraphia)
- Doing Math (Dyscalculia)
- Reasoning
- Listening
- Speaking

### “Co-occurring” disabilities

Your child may have a combination of issues with learning. The ones listed below are not called LD, but they also impact a child's learning. A child may have one or more of these along with his learning disability.

- Auditory processing
- Visual processing
- Non-verbal learning disabilities
- Problems with planning and organizing
- ADHD



Individuals with LD can learn strategies to compensate for their challenges and maximize their potential. Learn more about LD, starting with the resources listed below, provide positive support at home and communicate with your child's teachers.

2.4 million students are diagnosed with LD and receive special education services.

Intellectual disability, autism, deafness, blindness, behavioral disorders and ADD or ADHD are **not** learning disabilities; however, these conditions are frequently confused with LD.

67% of students with LD graduate from high school with a regular diploma vs. 74% of students in the general population.

References and information provided by:

- [www.nld.org](http://www.nld.org)
- [ldaamerica.org](http://ldaamerica.org)
- [nichcy.org](http://nichcy.org)
- [ldonline.org](http://ldonline.org)
- [pbs.org](http://pbs.org)

Visit [parentnetworkwny.org](http://parentnetworkwny.org) for more info.



The contents of this document were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #H325160003. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer, Carmen Sanchez.