

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY **RESOURCES, DEFINITION & CRITERIA**

Local Resources

Churchill Center & School
314-997-4343

<http://www.churchillstl.org/>

Offers workshops, training, and speakers to educate our community about learning disabilities and strategies for success.

Miriam School/Academy/Learning Center

314-968-3893

www.miriamstl.org

Offers services to children ages 4 through high school with learning disabilities, behavior disorders, attention deficit disorder, speech and language disorders and fine and gross motor delays.

Pathways to Independence
314-863-0202

www.pathways2independence.com/

Teaches interpersonal, advocacy and community involvement skills, applying them through community-based events that help the participants feel more comfortable in their environment.

St Louis Learning Disabilities Association

314-966-3088

www.ldastl.org

Non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the understanding and acceptance of learning disabilities. Targeted solutions are developed for children, parents, and professionals in order to help students maximize their potential in the classroom and in life.

National Resources

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
www.cec.sped.org

The International Dyslexia Association
<https://dyslexiaida.org/>
Provides information, resources and publications.

Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)
www.ldaamerica.org
Resource center of publications, referral.

National Center for Learning Disabilities
www.nclld.org
Public awareness, advocacy, information and resources.

William Syndrome Association
www.williams-syndrome.org

On Line Resources

LD-Online
www.ldonline.org

Common Signs of Learning Disabilities

Preschool:

- Speaks later than most children.
- Pronunciation problems.
- Slow vocabulary growth, often unable to find the right word.
- Difficulty rhyming words.
- Trouble learning numbers, the alphabet, days of the week, colors, shapes.
- Extremely restless and easily distracted.

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- Trouble interacting with peers.
- Difficult 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.
- 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 & Adults:

- Continues to spell incorrectly, frequently spells the same work 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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DEFINITION AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FROM APPENDIX A OF THE MISSOURI STATE PLAN:

Specific Learning Disability Definition

A learning disability is a disorder that impedes the understanding or use of language, either spoken or written. A learning disability may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations.

Learning disabilities are the most common type of disability among students receiving special education services in the United States.

Criteria for Initial Determination of Eligibility

A child has a specific learning disability when:

- A. The child does not achieve commensurate with his or her age and ability levels in one

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or more areas listed in B below if provided with learning experiences appropriate for the child's age and ability level;

B. The child displays observable characteristics that indicate deficits in basic psychological processing.

Basic reading skill
Mathematics reasoning
Reading comprehension
Listening comprehension
Written expression
Oral expression
Mathematics calculation

In determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, a responsible public agency may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures or may require a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability (of 1.5 standard deviation).

C. The child's learning disability is not PRIMARILY the result of:

- 1) A visual, hearing, or motor disability;
 - 2) Intellectual disability;
 - 3) Emotional disturbance;
- or,
- 4) Environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

Professional Judgment

If a responsible public agency uses a severe discrepancy method: A child who does not display a discrepancy of at least 1.5 standard deviations as defined in B above, may nonetheless be deemed to have a specific learning disability if 1) the child meets the other criteria of this rule; and 2) based upon professional judgment and review of formal and informal assessments, the evaluation team concludes that a severe discrepancy exists. In such cases, sufficient data must be presented in the evaluation report to document the existence of a specific learning disability. If the agency does not use a severe discrepancy method, professional judgment can only be used if the child does not respond to scientific, research-based intervention.