

WHAT ARE LEARNING DISABILITIES?

Learning disabilities are lifelong disorders that interfere with a person's ability to receive, express or process information. People are often identified as having a learning disability in childhood, when they begin having difficulty with reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and doing math. Although they may have trouble learning and using these skills, the truth is, most people with learning disabilities have average or above-average intelligence. In fact, you may not even realize that the person has a disability.

Learning disabilities vary from person to person. One person with a learning disability may not have the same kind of learning problems as another person who has been similarly diagnosed. One may have trouble with reading and writing, while another may have problems with understanding math. Still another person may have trouble in each of these areas, as well as with understanding what people are saying.

There are three major styles of learning:

- Visual learners learn best through seeing. These learners need to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of a lesson. They tend to prefer sitting at the front of the classroom to avoid visual distractions. They may think in pictures and learn best from visual displays including: diagrams, illustrated text books, videos, charts and handouts.
- Auditory learners learn best through listening. They gain the most through verbal lectures, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say.
- Kinesthetic/tactile learners learn best through moving, doing and touching. They access information through a hands-on approach, actively exploring the physical world around them.