

# **Learning Disabilities**

## **What are Learning Disabilities?**

Learning disabilities are disorders that affect the ability to understand or use spoken or written language, do mathematical calculations, coordinate movements, or direct attention. Although learning disabilities occur in very young children, the disorders are usually not recognized until the child reaches school age. Research shows that 8 to 10 percent of American children under 18 years of age have some type of learning disability.

## **Is there any treatment?**

The most common treatment for learning disabilities is special education. Specially trained educators may perform a diagnostic educational evaluation assessing the child's academic and intellectual potential and level of academic performance. Once the evaluation is complete, the basic approach is to teach learning skills by building on the child's abilities and strengths while correcting and compensating for disabilities and weaknesses. Other professionals such as speech and language therapists also may be involved. Some medications may be effective in helping the child learn by enhancing attention and concentration. Psychological therapies may also be used.

## **What is the prognosis?**

Learning disabilities can be lifelong conditions. In some people, several overlapping learning disabilities may be apparent. Other people may have a single, isolated learning problem that has little impact on their lives.

## **What research is being done?**

The NINDS and other institutes of the National Institutes of Health including the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, and the National Institute of Mental Health support research on learning disabilities. Current research avenues focus on

developing techniques to diagnose and treat learning disabilities and increase understanding of the biological basis of learning disabilities.

[Go to the Clinical Trials website](#) to view a list of studies currently seeking patients.

## Organizations

### **CHADD - Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**

8181 Professional Place

Suite 150

Landover, MD 20785

<https://chadd.org/>

Tel: 301-306-7070 800-233-4050

Fax: 301-306-7090

### **Learning Disabilities Association of America**

4156 Library Road

Suite 1

Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349

[info@ldaamerica.org](mailto:info@ldaamerica.org)

<https://ldaamerica.org/>

Tel: 412-341-1515

Fax: 412-344-0224

### **International Dyslexia Association**

8600 LaSalle Road

Chester Building, Ste. 382

Baltimore, MD 21286-2044

[info@interdys.org](mailto:info@interdys.org)

<https://dyslexiaida.org/>

Tel: 410-296-0232 800-ABCD123

Fax: 410-321-5069

### **National Center for Learning Disabilities**

381 Park Avenue South

Suite 1401

New York, NY 10016

<https://www.ncld.org/>

Tel: 212-545-7510 888-575-7373

Fax: 212-545-9665

**National Institute of Child Health  
and Human Development (NICHD)**

National Institutes of Health, DHHS

31 Center Drive, Rm. 2A32 MSC 2425

Bethesda, MD 20892-2425

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov>

Tel: 301-496-5133

Fax: 301-496-7101

Article Source

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Source URL

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov>

Last Reviewed

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

**National Institute of Mental Health  
(NIMH)**

National Institutes of Health, DHHS

6001 Executive Blvd. Rm. 8184, MSC 9663

Bethesda, MD 20892-9663

[nimhinfo@nih.gov](mailto:nimhinfo@nih.gov)

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml>

Tel: 301-443-4513/866-615-NIMH (-6464)

301-443-8431 (TTY)

Fax: 301-443-4279