

Selanie M. Marte

Professor Newton Silva

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### Children with Learning Disabilities

What are the common signs of a learning Disability and how do we know if our children are showing signs of a learning disability? Well there are four categories of having a learning disability which are listening and speaking, reading, writing, and spelling, arithmetic and reasoning. Today we are discussing children with learning disabilities and the definition and reasoning behind the cause. What is a Learning Disability? “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.” A learning disability is diagnosed by the Department of Health and the reason why I know this first hand is because I was diagnosed with a learning disability and have been through the process of taking different tests to see what grade level I would be more comfortable in based on how I think. “A learning disability is defined by the Department of Health as a “significant reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), which started before adulthood”. Those who are diagnosed with a learning disability can affect the persons entire life depending on how severe their disability is and that is why it is important to do your research as a parent to find the best support system for the child so when they do get

tested by the department of health they can be put in a school that will help the child adapt to life skills. “A learning disability is a **reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities** – for example household tasks, socializing or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life.” A learning disorder is caused by family history, for example if you have a family history of an aunt, uncle, or sibling who has a learning disability on both parents side it is possible that you can pass that down to your child. “Family history and genetics. A family history of learning disorders increases the risk of a child developing a disorder.

- Prenatal and neonatal risks. ...
- Psychological trauma. ...
- Physical trauma. ...
- Environmental exposure.

The characteristics of someone with a learning disability would be poor reading, writing, and difficulty with sensory and disorganization. “**The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** is the farthest-reaching legislation approved in the United States on behalf of people with special needs. The Act covers adults and children with disabilities; it has had a profound effect on how people with special needs participate in the greater world.”

Teaching children with a learning disability is not easy but with the accommodations depending on how severe their disability is there are different strategies to help the child become motivated to learn and encourage them to ask questions. Certain accommodations would look like encouraging a child to write or read on their own. Having a child resolve a problem without you assisting them but of course being by their side for when they do need assistance. Making sure that students are giving verbal responses instead of writing them down and also making

sure that the children encourage themselves to be independent but ask for assistance if they need it. Most importantly I would make sure that the child feels comfortable and safe before proceeding with the strategies so that we can continue to provide independence as we are patient with them and their growth.

### **Academics & Organization**

1. Break learning tasks into small steps.
2. Probe regularly to check understanding.
3. Provide regular quality feedback.
4. Present information visually and verbally.
5. Use diagrams, graphics and pictures to support instruction.
6. Provide independent practice.
7. Model what you want students to do.

I would like to make sure that educators focus on the child's strengths and not weaknesses because of their learning disability they all learn at a different pace and that is okay but we need to recognize what their strengths are so we can turn their weaknesses into strengths by building better relationships with one another and making sure they see us as their biggest role model. Having a disability made me feel insecure for a long time but I am here as proof that with the right educators you can become independent and succeed your academics just as anyone else and it is important that this message is heard because of the lack in support of teaching students with a learning disability and becoming supportive as a parent or teacher. Having a disability does not

discourage others it embraces others. As an educator today I have witnessed certain students who have a learning disability that parents deny or possibly don't know yet so working individually with these children to understand them and build a bond with them is important because you are able to make a difference in these children's lives by working with them individually on what they need help with most which could be improving their thought process due to some behavioral changes. Overall having a learning disability will not affect you if you have the right support system and knowledge moving forward on how to work with children who have a learning disability.

#### **WorksCited**

**<https://www.ws.edu/student-services/disability/teaching/learning.shtm>**