



## High-Incidence Disabilities

- **Specific Learning Disability**
- **Speech and Language Disorders**
- **Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**
- **Emotional and Behavior Disabilities**
- **Mental Disabilities**

3

## IDEA Definition of Learning Disabilities (LD)

- A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language
- May manifest itself in an imperfect ability to:
  - Listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do math
- Does not include learning problems that are the result of other disabilities or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage

## The NJCLD Definition of LD

- A general term that refers to a group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of **listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or math abilities**
- Problems with self-regulatory behaviors, social perception, and social interaction may **coexist** but do not themselves constitute a learning disability
- Although learning disabilities may occur with other handicapping conditions or with extrinsic influences they are not the result of those influences

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## Operationalizing the Definition

Most states require three criteria be met to receive services:

- Discrepancy between intelligence and achievement
  - An **"unexpected"** difference between general ability and achievement
- Exclusion criterion
  - LD can occur with other disabilities but the learning problems must not be **"primarily the result"** of the other disability or other condition (e.g., low SES)
- A need for special education services
  - The student shows **specific and severe learning problems**



## Educational Approaches

### Explicit instruction

- Provide a sufficient range of examples to illustrate a concept
- Provide models of proficient performance
- Have students explain how and why they make decisions
- Provide frequent, positive feedback for student performance
- Provide adequate practice opportunities

### Content enhancements

- Guided notes
- Graphic organizers and visual displays
- Mnemonics

### Learning strategies

- Students use task-specific strategies to guide themselves successfully through a learning task or problem

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## Educational Placement Alternatives

- **Regular classroom**
  - During the 99-00 school year, 45% of students with LD were educated in regular classrooms
  - Some school districts employ a collaborative teaching model to support the full inclusion of students with LD
- **Consultant teacher**
  - Provides support to regular classroom teachers who work directly with students with learning disabilities
- **Resource room**
  - A resource room is a specially staffed and equipped classroom where students with LD come for one or several periods during the school day to receive individualized instruction

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## Educational Interventions

- Keep homework assignments separate from unfinished school work
- Use homework as practice for materials that have already been taught
- Identify the minimum amount to demonstrate learning
- Provide timelines for tasks associated with long-term assignments

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## Medication as Treatment

- Stimulant medication
  - Ritalin
  - Dexadrine
  - Adderall
  - Cylert
  - Concerta
- Medication is only one aspect of a treatment plan

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