

Learning Disability Crib Sheets

Dyslexia

Definition:

Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty which mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be lifelong in its effects.

It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual's other cognitive abilities.

It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effects can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counselling.

Possible Difficulties:

- Reading hesitantly
- Misreading, making understanding difficult
- Difficulty with sequences, e.g. getting dates in order
- Poor organisation or time management
- Difficulty organising thoughts clearly
- Erratic spelling

Possible strengths:

- Innovative thinkers
- Excellent trouble shooters
- Intuitive problem solving

- Creative in many different ways
- Lateral thinkers

Dyspraxia – LDPRX

Definition:

Dyspraxia can affect any or all areas of development - intellectual, emotional, physical, language, social and sensory - and may impair a person's normal process of learning. Usually, it's said to be an impairment or immaturity of the organisation of movement, but associated with this may be problems of language, perception and thought.

Problems arise in the process of forming ideas, motor planning and execution, since people with dyspraxia have poor understanding of the messages their senses convey and difficulty relating those messages to actions.

This means physical activities are hard to learn, difficult to retain, and hesitant and awkward in performance.

Dyspraxia affects each person in different ways and at different stages of development. How an individual is affected is inconsistent, too. For example, one day they may be able to perform a specific task, the next day they can't.

Possible Difficulties:

- Clumsiness
- Poor hand-eye coordination
- Speech and language difficulties
- Poor sense of direction and spatial awareness
- Short-term memory problems
- Poor writing and drawing abilities
- Reading and spelling difficulties

- Difficulty executing tasks with a belief that they can do them well
- Difficulty making decisions

Possible strengths:

- Creative
- Determined
- Good at problem solving
- Inquisitive
- People oriented
- Hard working

Dyscalculia – LDCAL

Definition:

Dyscalculia is a term referring to a wide range of life-long learning disabilities involving maths. There is no single form of maths disability, and difficulties vary from person to person and affect people differently in school and throughout life.

Dyscalculia occurs in people across the whole IQ range and sufferers often, but not always, also have difficulties with time, measurement, and spatial reasoning.

Possible Difficulties:

- Slow to develop counting and math problem-solving skills
- Difficulty reading numbers, or recalling numbers in sequence
- Trouble with the concept of time- difficulty remembering schedules, trouble with approximating how long something will take
- Poor sense of direction, easily disoriented and easily confused by changes

in routine

- Poor long term memory of concepts
- Poor mental math ability-trouble estimating grocery costs or counting days until vacation
- Difficulty playing strategy games like chess, bridge or role-playing video games
- Difficulty keeping score when playing board and card games

Possible strengths:

- Good at speaking, reading, and writing
- Good memory for printed words
- Good with general math concepts

Dysgraphia – LDGPH

Definition:

Dysgraphia is a learning disability that affects written expression. It makes the act of writing difficult. Individuals with dysgraphia can have difficulty organizing letters, numbers and words on a line or page.

Visual-spatial difficulties - which result in a person having trouble processing what the eye sees.

Language processing difficulty - which result in a person having trouble processing and making sense of what the ear hears.

Possible Difficulties:

- Difficulty organizing thoughts on paper
- Trouble keeping track of thoughts already written down
- Difficulty with syntax structure and grammar

- Large gap between written ideas and understanding demonstrated through speech
- Unfinished or omitted words in sentences
- Difficulty thinking of words to write
- Concentrate on writing so much that they don't comprehend what they've written

Possible strengths:

- Often have a higher than average IQ

Autism – LDAUT

Definition:

The term autism is used to describe a spectrum of neurodevelopmental conditions that are present from very early life. It is part of the autism spectrum and is sometimes referred to as an autism spectrum disorder or an ASD and causes communication and emotional problems. To people with these disorders the world can appear chaotic with no clear boundaries, order or meaning.

Possible Difficulties:

- Poor or no instinctive social behaviour
- Struggles to communicate effectively
- Repetitive behaviour
- Obsessions with particular objects or routines
- Sensory processing problems
- Seizures and physical disorders
- Depression
- High levels of anxiety

- Imagination impairments

Possible strengths:

- Good memory
- Attention to detail
- Autistic individuals are sometimes found to have an exceptional skill, such as an aptitude for drawing, mathematics, or playing a musical instrument.

Asperger – LDASP

Definition:

Asperger is a form of autism and causes communication and emotional problems. People with Asperger syndrome can find it harder to read the signals that most of us take for granted. This means they find it more difficult to communicate and interact with others which can lead to high levels of anxiety and confusion.

It is mostly a 'hidden disability', which means that you can't tell that someone has the condition from their outward appearance, but it affects how a person makes sense of the world, processes information and relates to other people.

Possible Difficulties:

- Poor or no instinctive social behaviour
- Difficulty understanding gestures, facial expressions or tone of voice
- Difficulty understanding jokes, metaphor and sarcasm
- Obsessions with particular objects or routines
- Behave in what may seem an inappropriate manner
- High levels of anxiety

- Needs routine
- Sensory processing problems

Possible strengths:

- Logical thinkers
- Good common sense
- Good at understanding reasoning

ADHD & ADD – LDAD

Definition:

ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and ADD – Attention Deficit Disorder refer to a range of problem behaviours associated with poor attention span. These may include impulsiveness, restlessness and hyperactivity, as well as inattentiveness, and often prevent children from learning and socialising well.

Possible Difficulties:

- Fails to pay close attention to detail
- Fails to finish tasks or sustain attention
- Avoids tasks like homework that require sustained mental effort
- Blurts out answers before the questions have been completed
- Talks excessively without appropriate response to social restraint
- Fails to wait in lines or await turns in group situations
- Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms on seat
- Leaves seat in classroom or in other situations where remaining seated is expected

Possible strengths:

- Attention to detail
- Exceptionally knowledgeable in their chosen field of interest
- Good long term memory

Aphasia – LDAPH

Definition:

Aphasia also known as rhyrnasia, is a loss of the ability to produce and/or comprehend language, due to injury to brain areas specialized for these functions, such as Broca's area, which governs language production, or Wernicke's area, which governs the interpretation of language. It is not a result of deficits in sensory, intellectual, or psychiatric functioning nor due to muscle weakness or a cognitive disorder.

Depending on the area and extent of the damage, someone suffering from aphasia may be able to speak but not write, or vice versa, or display any of a wide variety of other deficiencies in language comprehension and production, such as being able to sing but not speak. Aphasia may co-occur with speech disorders such as dysarthria or apraxia of speech, which also result from brain damage.

Possible Difficulties:

- Inability to comprehend language
- Inability to pronounce
- Inability to speak spontaneously
- Inability to form words
- Inability to name objects
- Inability to repeat a phrase

- Persistent repetition of phrases
- Paraphasia - substituting letters, syllables or words)
- Agrammatism - inability to speak in a grammatically correct fashion
- Incomplete sentences
- Inability to read and/or write

Possible strengths:

- Often good at performing mathematical calculations
- Process visual information very well

Temporal Processing Deficit - LDTP

Definition:

Temporal processing - sensory and motor processing. Temporal processing is required for simple sensory problems, such as interval, duration, and motion discrimination, as well as complex forms of sensory processing, such as speech recognition. Timing is also required for a wide range of motor tasks from eyelid conditioning to playing the piano.

Audio temporal processing refers to the processing of acoustic stimuli over time. Temporal processing is very important for us to be able to understand speech in quiet and in background noise, since speech stimuli and other background sounds vary over time. Speech and hearing professionals need to be familiar with the various aspects of temporal processing for two reasons. Some children with auditory processing problems have difficulty in temporal processing of auditory stimuli. Such difficulties can hinder the acquisition of speech, language and reading. Older individuals can also have temporal processing deficits which can affect their ability to understand speech and to benefit from amplification in the presence of hearing loss.

Possible Difficulties:

- Listening difficulties
- Difficulty following instructions
- Behavioural problems
- Academic underperformance