



Identifying Communication and Learning Disorders

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In many instances children are not being diagnosed with communication and learning disorders early on in their education - they too often go undiagnosed and untreated. Educators estimate that between 5 and 10 percent of kids between ages 6 and 17 have learning disorders. It is estimated that communication disorders (including speech, language, and hearing disorders) affect one of every 10 people in the United States.

In **communication disorders** children have significant difficulty producing speech sounds, communicating with others using language (expressive), or the ability to listen and understand language (receptive). **Learning disorders** involve difficulties with specific skills such as reading, writing, or math. With both types of disorders, children tend to have average to above-average intellect and are capable of learning quickly. Their disorder slows them down and disrupts their performance. **Communication and learning disorders are also highly connected.**



The most important place to start is with your child. If your child is struggling in school and doesn't understand why he is having such difficult time learning, he may feel cut off from his peers, anxious or ashamed. Finding the right things to say to help your child understand these feelings can make a parent feel a bit uneasy. I recently read an article,

[“Talking to Your Child About Differences and Disabilities”](#) which I found to be a very

insightful tool for parents. The article addresses how to communicate with your child regarding differences and disabilities, as well as remembering to acknowledge their anxieties and fears.

If you feel your child may struggle with a communication disorder, a great place to start is the [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#). Here you will find the definitions of communication disorders and their variations. For resources visit the [Center for Parent Information and Resources](#)

If you feel your child may struggle with a learning disorder, a great place to start is [Understood](#). Here you will learn about different types of learning disorder and resources to help assist you.

It can be tough to face the possibility that your child has a communication or learning disorder. You may worry about your child being labeled or that they won't be challenged enough in school. Communication and learning disorders look differently in each child. They just need to be taught in ways that are tailored to their unique learning styles. By learning more about communication and learning disorders in general, and your child's difficulties in particular, you can help pave the way for success at school and beyond.