



Northamptonshire Local Offer:

Learning Disability Information Pack

What is a Learning Disability?

A learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability that leads to difficulties with everyday activities (such as household tasks, socialising, or managing money), which affects someone for their whole life.

People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn, and may need support to develop new skills, understand complicated information, and interact with other people.

Learning disabilities can be mild, moderate, severe, or multiple and profound.

For any parent, the greatest concern will be your child's wellbeing and their future. As a parent, you can help your child by encouraging their strengths and getting the right support to help them overcome the things they find difficult.

Spotting the Signs

In some cases, a learning disability may develop before birth. If concerns are raised during the standard antenatal check-ups and ultrasounds, pregnant women will be offered extra tests.

Once a child is born, the signs of a learning disability may include:

- Babies may have trouble feeding, for example sucking and digesting.
- Babies may be delayed learning to sit or stand.
- Pre-school children may be slow to talk or have difficulty pronouncing words and short sentences, or learning new words.
- School-aged children may find reading and writing difficult or have problems understanding information and instructions.
- Some children discover they have a learning disability when they become teenagers and their life becomes more complex.

Terminology

The term 'learning disability' covers a wide range of individuals, each with different strengths, capabilities and needs. Knowing the degree of intellectual impairment a person has will tell you very little about who they are. However, there are terms available that might help the person (and their carers) understand the support they may require.

The terms 'profound and multiple,' 'severe,' 'moderate,' and 'mild' are sometimes used to distinguish different levels of need. These categories are not rigid, and there are no clear dividing lines between the groups.

People with a **profound and multiple learning disability** (PMLD) tend to have an IQ of less than 20, and may have other disabilities such as visual, hearing, or movement impairments. They might have autism or epilepsy too. Most people in this group need support with mobility, and many have complex health needs requiring extensive support. They may have considerable difficulty with communication.

People with a **severe learning disability** tend to have an IQ of 20-35. They may use basic words and gestures to communicate their needs. Many need a high level of support with everyday activities, but they might be able to look after some of their own personal care needs. Some may have extra medical needs or need support with mobility.

People with a **moderate learning disability** tend to have an IQ of 35-50. They are likely to have some language skills that mean they can communicate their day-to-day needs. Some people may need more support caring for themselves.

People with a **mild learning disability** tend to have an IQ of 50-70. They can usually hold a conversation, but may need some support to understand abstract or complex ideas. People are often independent in caring for themselves and doing many everyday tasks. They usually have some basic reading and writing skills.

Associated Conditions

There are some conditions that mean you are more likely to have a learning disability.

- **Down Syndrome**

People with Down's syndrome typically have a learning disability.

- **Williams Syndrome**

Many people with Williams Syndrome will have a learning disability.

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

Around half of people with ASD may also have a learning disability.

- **Fragile X Syndrome**

Fragile X is the most common (inherited) cause of learning disability.

How are Learning Disabilities Diagnosed?

If there are concerns about a baby's development (while still in the womb), some pregnant women will be offered extra tests.

Once a baby is born, it will usually be a GP, a Health Visitor, the parents, or a teacher who first become aware that a child is having difficulties in certain areas. A learning disability might be identified:

- At a child's regular Developmental Check
- By a child's teacher
- By a clinical psychologist

For some parents, getting a diagnosis can be a struggle. Professionals can be confused by some characteristics of learning disability, and experts themselves can struggle to make an accurate diagnosis.

Getting the support of your GP is often the first step. They can offer advice and refer you to a specialist if necessary.

What's the Difference Between a Learning Disability and...

...Global Development Delay (GDD)?

This term is sometimes used when a child takes longer to reach certain development milestones than other children of the same age. For some children, the delay will be short-term, and will be overcome (in time) with additional support. In other cases, the delay will indicate the child has a learning disability.

...Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)?

The term 'learning disability' is often confused with the term 'specific learning difficulty' (SpLD). The latter is used when a person has problems processing certain forms of information. It refers to disorders such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, and dyscalculia. Unlike learning disability, SpLDs do not affect a person's intellectual ability.

Please note: It is possible for a person to have a learning disability AND a specific learning difficulty.

...Mental Health Conditions?

Learning disabilities are sometimes confused with mental health conditions. The latter do not affect intelligence and can affect anyone at any time. They might be managed with medical treatment. This is not true of learning disabilities. A person with a learning disability will have reduced intellectual abilities that affect their whole life.

Please note: It is possible for a person to have a learning disability AND a mental health condition.

...Cerebral Palsy?

Learning disabilities are sometimes confused with cerebral palsy. The latter is usually caused by an injury to the brain before, during, or shortly after birth (such as a lack of oxygen or illness). Cerebral palsy is a physical condition that affects movement, posture and coordination. It does not affect intelligence.

Please note: It is possible for a person to have a learning disability AND cerebral palsy.

Next Steps

[Mencap Learning Disability Helpline](#)

Free helpline service offering advice and support for people with a learning disability, and their families and carers.

Phone: 0808 808 1111 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

Email: helpline@mencap.org.uk

[Mencap FamilyHub](#)

Online community for parents and family carers. Whether you are a sibling of someone with a learning disability, a parent who's just had a diagnosis, or a parent of an adult with a learning disability with wisdom to share, you'll find a warm welcome in the FamilyHub. <https://www.mencap.org.uk/familyhub/>

NHFT - Northamptonshire Learning Disability Service

A healthcare professional (such as your GP) can refer your child to the following services via the relevant Referral Management Centre (RMC):

[Children's Community Team for Learning Disability \(CTPLD\)](#)

Offers specialist healthcare services for under-18s with learning disabilities.

[Community Teams for Learning Disability \(CTPLD\)](#)

Offers specialist healthcare services for adults with an IQ lower than 70.

[Northamptonshire County Council's SEND Support Service \(SSS\)](#)

The SEND Support Service (SSS) offers advice and support to children, young people, families, carers, and educational establishments for children with a range of special educational needs aged 0-19yrs. They also deliver NCC's Portage Service.

To request a consultation, simply email sss@childrenfirstnorthamptonshire.co.uk.

Services for People with Down Syndrome

[Hunny Pots Down Syndrome Group](#)

Location: Northampton **Age-Range:** 0-4yrs

Email: cdc@ngh.nhs.uk

Tel: 01604 545841

[NTFC in the Community - Down Syndrome Football](#)

Location: Northampton **Age-Range:** 16yrs+

Email: russell.lewis@ntfc.co.uk

Tel: 07887 878182

[Down Syndrome Group Northamptonshire](#)

Location: Northamptonshire **Age-Range:** All Ages

Email: davidjohnson2607@gmail.com

Tel: 01604 786320

[Ups n Downs](#)

Location: Northamptonshire **Age-Range:** All Ages

Email: info@upsndowns.co.uk

Tel: 07771 717460

[Down's Syndrome Association \(DSA\)](#)

Location: National **Age-Range:** All Ages

Email: info@downs-syndrome.org.uk

Tel: 03331 212300

Local Activities That Support Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND)

[360 Play Rushden Lakes - SEN Evening](#)

Location: Rushden **Age-Range:** 0-12yrs

Email: rushdenlakes@360play.co.uk

Tel: 01933 522360

[Riverside Hub - Special Needs Sessions](#)

Location: Northampton **Age-Range:** 0-17yrs

Email: admin@riversidehub.com

Tel: 01604 403003

[Gravity Trampoline Park - Disability Sessions](#)

Location: Corby **Age-Range:** 1.5yrs+

Email: enquiries@gravity-uk.com

Tel: 01977 529920

Local Activities That Support Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND)

Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), Wilby Group Location: Northampton Age-Range: 3-10yrs Email: angela@atdoughty.plus.com Tel: 01604 781491	Sport 4 Fitness CIC Location: Northampton Age-Range: 3yrs+ Email: info@sport4fitness-cic.co.uk Tel: 07811 371569	Boost Trampoline Park - Sensory Session Location: Northampton Age-Range: 4+yrs Email: info@boosttrampolineparks.co.uk Tel: 01604 438181
Groundwork Northamptonshire - The Free Rangers Location: Corby & Kettering Age-Range: 5-18yrs Email: amy.russell@groundwork.org.uk Tel: 01536 521555	Insight - Equine Facilitated Coaching Location: Kettering Age-Range: 5yrs+ Email: insight.equinecoaching@gmail.com Tel: 07776 206278	Homegrown Care Farm CIC Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: 5yrs+ Email: enquiry@homegrowncarefarm.co.uk Tel: 07887 750717
Kettering Football Club 2012 - Inclusive Football Team Location: Kettering Age-Range: 7-25yrs Email: infoketteringfc2012@gmail.com Tel: 07795 178817	Freedom Leisure - Young Inclusive People Club (YIP) Location: Rushden Age-Range: 8-24yrs Email: Jackie.ackroyd@freedom-leisure.co.uk Tel: 01933 350324	NTFC in the Community - Disability Clubs Location: Northampton Age-Range: 8yrs+ Email: russell.lewis@ntfc.co.uk Tel: 07887 878182
NRG Disability Sport 4 All Location: Corby Age-Range: 8yrs+ Email: Culture.Leisure@corby.gov.uk Tel: 01536 464047	NMPAT - Y-Not Arts Location: Northampton Age-Range: 9-25yrs Email: Ynot@NMPAT.co.uk Tel: 07944 296741	Friars JMs Netball Club Location: Wellingborough Age-Range: 11-18yrs (Girls) Email: admin@northantsjms.co.uk Tel: 07525 848353
Freedom Leisure - Multi Activity Club (MAC) Location: Rushden Age-Range: 11yrs+ Email: Jackie.ackroyd@freedom-leisure.co.uk Tel: 01933 352981	Picture the Difference CIC Location: Kettering Age-Range: 14-25yrs Email: admin@picthediff.com Tel: 07947 575190	Aspire Football Club Disability Team Location: Corby Age-Range: 16yrs+ Email: raymondhls@yahoo.co.uk Tel: 07834 835047
Northamptonshire People First Location: Kettering Age-Range: 16yrs+ Email: cepfnorthants@gmail.com Tel: 01536 515548	Danceability Disco Location: Corby Age-Range: 18yrs+ Email: bonnieroseyg@outlook.com Tel: 07961 078707	Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), Hillcrest Location: Grandborough Fields Age-Range: 18yrs+ Email: liz@kenworthy-browne.com Tel: 01327 340964
Club Palm Beach - Stay Up Late Karaoke and Disco Location: Wellingborough Age-Range: All Ages Email: info@clubpalmbeach.co.uk Tel: 07814 859423	Corby Radio - Discobility Location: Corby Age-Range: All Ages Email: N/A Tel: 01536 265666	Disability Inclusive Sports Club (DISC) Location: Towcester Age-Range: All Ages Email: enquiry@disc-northants.org Tel: N/A
Dolphin Disco Location: Northampton Age-Range: All Ages Email: trinarachel@sky.com Tel: 07809 618256	Gather in Sound Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: All Ages Email: gatherinsounduk@gmail.com Tel: 07566 225135	

Local Activities That Support Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND)

Northants Disability Tennis Network Location: Northampton Age-Range: All Ages Email: maddee.blair@parkstennis.co.uk Tel: 07977 753614	Northants Recreational Cricket - Disability Cricket Club Location: Northampton Age-Range: All Ages Email: Derek.Styman@nccc.co.uk Tel: 01604 609278	Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), Cottesbrooke Location: Northampton Age-Range: All Ages Email: tess@lesueur.co.uk Tel: 01604 686266
Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), Silverstone Location: Towcester Age-Range: All Ages Email: jillyb696@hotmail.com; rdasilverstone@gmail.com Tel: 07508 393340		

Parent Support

SENds 4 Dad, Corby & Northampton Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: 18yrs+ Email: sends4dad@virginmedia.com Tel: N/A	Northamptonshire Carers Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: All Ages Email: carers@northamptonshire-carers.org Tel: 01933 677907	Pen Green - Parents of Children with Additional Needs Location: Corby Age-Range: All Ages Email: SMole@northamptonshire.gov.uk Tel: 01536 400068
Time 4 Support Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: All Ages Email: N/A Tel: 07739 673597	Wellingborough Parent Support Group Location: Wellingborough Age-Range: All Ages Email: wellingboroughpsg@outlook.com Tel: 07835 535113	Different Abilities Location: Corby Age-Range: All Ages Email: Maplefieldscircleoffriends@outlook.com Tel: 01536 267873

Short Breaks

Action for Children - MLD Group, Wellingborough Location: Wellingborough Age-Range: 5-18yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553	Action for Children - PMLD Group, Corby Location: Corby Age-Range: 8-17yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553	Action for Children - PMLD Group, Daventry Location: Daventry Age-Range: 5-18yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553
Action for Children - PMLD Group, Kettering Location: Kettering Age-Range: 8-18yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553	Action for Children - PMLD Group, Northampton Location: Northampton Age-Range: 5-18yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553	Action for Children - PMLD Group, Raunds Location: Raunds Age-Range: 8-17yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553

Short Breaks

Action for Children - SEND Youth Club, Brackley Location: Brackley Age-Range: 11-18yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553	Action for Children - SEND Youth Club, Daventry Location: Daventry Age-Range: 11-18yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553	Action for Children - SEND Youth Club, Northampton Location: Northampton Age-Range: 11-25yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553
Action for Children - SEND Youth Club, Wellingborough Location: Wellingborough Age-Range: 11-25yrs Email: northants.disability@actionforchildren.org.uk Tel: 01604 752553		

Social Group

Pen Green - Let's Play Together Location: Corby Age-Range: 0-5yrs Email: SMole@northamptonshire.gov.uk Tel: 01536 400068	Daisy Chain Club Location: Northampton Age-Range: 0-16yrs Email: N/A Tel: 07881 337524	Daventry Children's Centre - SEND Drop-In Location: Daventry Age-Range: 0-19yrs Email: N/A Tel: 01604 362265
Kingsthorpe Children's Centre - SEND Drop-In Location: Northampton Age-Range: 0-19yrs Email: N/A Tel: 01604 791537	Towcester Children's Centre - Special Friends & SNUG Location: Towcester Age-Range: 0-19yrs Email: N/A Tel: 01604 362265	Rush 2 the Den - FREEdom Youth Club (SEN) Location: Rushden Age-Range: 5-14yrs Email: river.rush2theden@gmail.com Tel: 07393 432171
Children's Rights Service, Shooting Stars - NCC Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: 14-25yrs Email: lflute@childrenfirstnorthamptonshire.co.uk Tel: 0300 126 1000	Get On Board Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: 18yrs+ Email: info@getonboarduk.com Tel: 07793 407848	Feel Good Friday Group Location: Northampton Age-Range: 18yrs+ Email: feelgoodfridaygirl@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 07454 739893
Rockin' Roadrunner Club Location: Northampton Age-Range: 18yrs+ Email: N/A Tel: 08432 891334		

Support Services

Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) - NCC Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: 0-25yrs Email: contact@iassnorthants.co.uk Tel: 01604 364772	Special Needs Index (SNIX) Magazine - NCC Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: 0-25yrs Email: localoffer@northamptonshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 126 1000	Scope - Northamptonshire Sleep Right (Sleep Solutions) Location: Kettering Age-Range: 2-19yrs Email: karen.smith@scope.org.uk Tel: 07875 575377
Northamptonshire Police - Disability Access Services Location: Northampton Age-Range: 5yrs+ Email: N/A Tel: 01604 888963	Mencap - Northampton Branch Location: Northampton Age-Range: 11yrs+ Email: muriel@northamptonmencap.org.uk Tel: 01604 874710	Northamptonshire Police - Keep Safe Scheme Location: Northamptonshire Age-Range: 16yrs+ Email: N/A Tel: 07540 668297
Challenging Behaviour Foundation (CBF) Location: National Age-Range: All Ages Email: support@thecbf.org.uk Tel: 0300 666 0126	Fragile X Society Location: National Age-Range: All Ages Email: info@fragilex.org.uk Tel: 01371 875100	Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA) Location: National Age-Range: All Ages Email: chiefexecutive@ipsea.org.uk Tel: 01799 582030
Williams Syndrome Foundation Location: National Age-Range: All Ages Email: enquiries@williams-syndrome.org.uk Tel: 02085 671374		




Northamptonshire's Local Offer








This factsheet was produced by Northamptonshire County Council's Local Offer team. The Local Offer is a website for young people, families, and professionals who work with them, that sets out in one place, information about local services.

www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/localoffer

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This factsheet was co-produced with the Northants Parents' Forum Group (NPPFG)