**Strategies for helping individuals experiencing specific learning disabilities**

* Parents, teachers, and employers should aim to provide a quiet area for learning and working that is away from distractions.
* Material should be presented in small units, as individuals with learning disabilities often have difficulty with long and detailed instructions but can process and follow smaller chunks of information.
* For learning disabilities affecting reading and spelling, systematic training in phonics (linking letters with sounds which has been shown to be essential to good reading) should be given to ensure that the person has a good grasp of these skills.
* Where possible, workloads and time frames should be adjusted to allow individuals to read the required information at their own pace and ensure they have adequate time to spend on any written reports.
* Schools and employers should allow alternative forms of presenting work. Individuals or their families can often negotiate with the school or the employer to see if other forms of reporting are possible such as verbal presentations or oral examinations.
* If individuals are having problems with reading or spelling they should be encouraged to use a spell check or to have someone read through any written work.
* When teaching children with learning disabilities, where possible make the tasks highly motivating by aiming them at the child's level of interest and understanding. This will promote persistence.
* Teachers should try to use examples and check that the child has understood.
* Avoid making negative comments such as labelling an individual as "lazy" or "stupid". Convey to the individual that you understand the difficulties and provide a supportive environment.
* Individuals with learning difficulties often experience low self-esteem and so it is important to notice and reward effort and any successes, even if they are small.
* Develop non-academic areas of competence, such as sports, art or music that will provide the individual with a feeling of competence and promote self-esteem.
* Remember that people with specific learning disabilities have the capacity to learn despite their difficulty. Therefore, they should be treated as individuals who, with appropriate support, can achieve and make important contributions to society.
* http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip\_sheets/learning/