Helping a child classified 'learning disabled'



E ... McNamara and Francine J. McNamara, MSW, CSW, to wing question

from a reader.

Q. My child has been classified as "learning disabled." He will be attending a resource room at school to address his educational needs, but what can I do at home? L. N., Madi-

A. It is not unusual for a parent of a child with a learning disabili-ty to lament, "Sho's so disorgan-ized," or make other complaints

about behavior at home. Learning disabilities are not restricted to school. Because it is often thought of as a school-based disorder, parents may not recognize the ways a learning disability may show up at home.

Gatting Ready for School: In the morning you may be tired, feel rushed and have the events of the day on your mind. Add to this a learning disability, and it's no wonder that many parents find morning a difficult time.

Some children dislike going to school. They have experienced failure so much that they will finally miss their bus or ride to school. They have experienced the amount of time it takes for a specific activity, such as eating, and cause considerable turmoil. Children who have difficulty with fine motor shills may take longer to get dressed and have problems with eating breakfast, not to mention the child with perceptual

problems who frequently knocks over the milk.

At times, it may appear that your child is doing this on purpose. Not true. One way to resolve many morning problems is for the parents to get up sarlier to do what must be done before the children get up. Follow the same routine every day.

You may find using a kitchen timer helpful. Many parents set the timer for the amount of minure helpful. Many parents set the timer for the amount of minure helpful. Many parents set the timer for the amount of minutes children have to get dressed, brush teeth, wash, and so on. Only after these tasks are completed are children rewarded with learner servicies.

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tention or perceptual desicit. Assign tasks for each child and
avoid those that cause problems.
Encourage everyone to pass items
around—not acrosa—the table.
Keeping Calm: Rather than
verbally reprimanding or punishing behavior that you may find
annoying, try to determine if the
behavior comes from a learning disability. A child whe has ditticuity ripping her jacket because
of fine motor problems will never
learn how to do these tasks
through punishment.
The task needs to be broke
down into small steps. The child
should be rewarded for completion of each step. You may find
that you should soold sippers. A considering a Child using
those, you may recognize not defiance but a learning disability.
Speak to members of your
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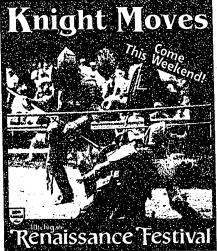


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