
Preface

Addressing *Learning Disabilities and Difficulties* was first published in 1994 as *I Can Learn: A Handbook for Parents, Teachers, and Students* with the intention that, while providing guidelines for children and youth with learning disabilities, it would also be applicable for any student. It included good teaching practices and an emphasis on the role of the classroom teacher “in creating an environment in which all students could succeed,” as the book said. To achieve those ends, the project incorporated the shared experiences of teachers and, to ensure usefulness, had teachers critique the manuscript. The book was an overwhelming success.

This revised edition preserves the original intention of the handbook; provides new information; and updates laws, strategies, and procedures. It is organized and written to be “friendly” and useful to teachers, parents, and students. It is designed as a quick reference to critical topics of instruction, learning, and special education procedures. It reflects changes in law that resulted from the 2004 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and reflects developments in effective practices with children and youth with learning disabilities and learning differences.

Learning problems seldom arrive unannounced, and they have a tendency to generalize across related areas of learning. Problems in learning can build slowly, and their progression is predictable. For instance, poor reading skills can result in limited access to the information needed to complete other assignments, such as writing, discussing, and test taking. As a result, a child with otherwise good thinking ability can develop a generalized low self-evaluation because of failures in related areas. Effective strategies can improve performance and help prevent further failure.

Addressing Learning Disabilities and Difficulties provides useful strategies and promotes procedures to improve student success and to reduce subsequent failure. This book is for those who raise or instruct children or youth who struggle to learn in school.