

Education and Employment: Community Resources for Adults with Learning Difficulties

Adults with Learning Disabilities

“Learning disabilities are not a prescription for failure. With the right kind of instruction, guidance, and support, there are no limits to what individuals with LD can achieve.” (Sheldon H. Horwitz, Director of LD Resources, NCLD 2014) The potential for success for individuals with learning disabilities underscores the need for identification of learning disabilities, understanding of the disability, appropriate instruction, and advocacy at every level.

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About Learning Disabilities

More than a “difference” or “difficulty” with learning, a learning disability is a neurological disorder that affects the brain’s ability to receive, process, store and respond to information. Learning disabilities most often fall into three broad categories: reading, language, and math. A range of other related categories include disabilities that affect areas such as memory, visual and auditory processing, and executive functions such as initiating or shifting from one task to another. LD will vary in how it impacts each individual child, adolescent and adult.

Current attention to Autism and Asperger’s Syndrome as well as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) has brought much needed focus on how to identify those disorders and help individuals meet the challenges they present. Although they are separate from learning disabilities, they have many shared characteristics; and assessments and strategies for accommodation address the distinct and sometimes overlapping features of each.

Learning disabilities are lifelong issues even though those affected can learn to maximize their strengths and accommodate the difficulties. Stephen Spielberg, who was diagnosed with dyslexia in adulthood, reflected, **“You are not alone, and while you will have dyslexia for the rest of your life, you can dart between the raindrops to get where you want to go. It will not hold you back.”** (retrieved from <http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/9809.html>)

Testing for Learning Disabilities

Testing for learning disabilities usually involves three primary types of assessment:

1. Testing of intellectual or cognitive potential;
2. Testing of information processing or sensory motor abilities that are indicative of a learning disability;
3. Assessment of current educational achievement.

The Learning Center of North Texas offers comprehensive evaluation for adults. Most adults in community education or employment programs will likely qualify for sliding-scale assistance.

Most agencies that grant accommodations have a specific policy on the documentation needed to attest to the presence of a learning disability. It is important to check with an agency before requesting accommodations to assure that you have the needed documentation. Applying without the required documentation slows your application process. This applies to both employment and educational settings.

For more information on this process, read more at <http://www.ldonline.org/article/6021/>.

Adult Education Programs

For adults who need to complete a *high school education*....

Tarrant Literacy Coalition (817-870-0082)

<http://www.tarrantliteracycoalition.org>



The **Tarrant Literacy Coalition** is the community resource for adults who need to locate an instructional program that fits their schedule and needs. The coalition also works with community and faith-based literacy programs by offering training and technical support to build quality adult education classes at every level including GED preparation.

School Districts in Tarrant County

Most of the school districts in Tarrant County offer Adult Education classes. Each district lists services on its website. Among the services provided are the following:

1. **Adult Literacy ABE/GED Classes** (Adult Basic Education/General Education Development)
2. **Adult ESL Classes** (English as Second Language)
3. **EL Civics** (English Literacy & Civics)
4. **TISESL** (Texas Industry Specific English as Second Language)

Fort Worth Independent School District <http://www.fwisd.org/adulted/>

Birdville Independent School District 817-547-5768 or 817-547-2081

Arlington Independent School District (817- 867-7267) <http://www.aisd.net/aisd/title1/FamilyLiteracy/tabid/10137/Default.aspx>

Tarrant County College Workforce Services (817-515-2585)

http://www.tccd.edu/Continuing_Education/Workforce_Services.html

Workforce Services offers a variety of adult education services at varying levels from beginning to advanced to assist learners in attaining education goals. Among their services are the following:

- English as a second language
- Basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics
- Skills to return to high school
- General Educational Development (GED) Diploma
- Transition to college or other training

Library Programs

Fort Worth Public Library 817-392-6621 <http://fortworthtexas.gov/library/info/default.aspx?id=5584>

Arlington READS, Arlington Public Library <http://www.arlingtonlibrary.org/literacy-resources>

Education Programs for Adults with Special Needs

Each campus at **Tarrant County College** offers education and employment training for adults with developmental challenges. The goal of these programs is to successfully prepare students to make the transition from codependency to independent living. Each is designed to prepare students for vocational training and job readiness through the enrichment of academic skills and the enhancement of critical life skills. The programs on different campuses are designed to meet specific needs. For information, follow the path on the TCC website ([Home](#) > [Continuing Education](#) > Developmentally Challenged Students) or link directly (https://www.tccd.edu/Continuing_Education/Dev_Challenged_Students.html).

Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities

Rights and Responsibilities

How the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Applies to Accommodations in College and Employment

Documentation and Identification for Education

- **Disclosure**—Students must self-identify (disclose) as having a disability in order to receive accommodations. By law, after high school graduation, parents are no longer allowed to advocate on a student's behalf, nor is the college required to be proactive in offering accommodations.
- **Documentation**—Students must present documentation of their disability. Requirements differ among schools, but are likely to include a recent evaluation (no older than 3 years), a current IEP or Section 504 plan, and a Summary of Performance (SOP), sometimes called "History of Use."
- **Evaluation**- If the college requires a more updated evaluation, a qualified professional can do the right kind of testing. Every college has different requirements, so ask them lots of questions and start gathering this information as soon as you can.

Read more on the website of the **National Center for Learning Disabilities** (<http://nclid.org/adults-learning-disabilities/post-high-school/getting-access-assistive-technology-college>)

GED Accommodations

Individuals who need formal accommodations for the GED Test can access information at the following link:

<http://www.gedtestingservice.com/testers/computer-accommodations>.

Accommodation requests must be accompanied by documentation. The article available at the link gives specific information about the types of accommodations allowed for each type of disability, the documentation needed, and the process of applying for accommodation.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Texas

[Home | LD Info | About LDATE | Resources | Contact LDATE]

LD Info

What is a Learning Disability?

Related Disorders

Children with LD

Know Your Rights

Homework

Accommodations

Behavior

Transcripts

GED

College

Adult Issues

COLLEGE INFORMATION

The following information is organized under four headings:

- College Admission Requirements
- ACT, GED and SAT Testing Information
- Resource Links
- Texas Colleges/Universities that Provide Services for Students with Learning Disabilities

College Admission Requirements

According to **Texas House Bill 3826**, high school students with learning disabilities who would like to attend college must meet the following criteria:

- Students must complete the recommended high school or distinguished diploma, or its equivalent, to be considered for admission to any general academic teaching institution, including those with open enrollment policies.
- The student must have received a grade of 70 in each course.
- The student must have satisfactory performance on the exit level assessment instrument.
- Accommodations are allowed, but not modifications. The student is not eligible to enroll in a state academic college/university upon graduation from high school if modified exit level assessments (TAKS tests) were taken.

http://www.ldat.org/ld_info/colle

GED Testing Service Accommodations

GED Testing Service is committed to ensuring access to the GED® test for all individuals with disabilities and supports the intention of the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA).

Questions? Email accommodations@GEDtestingservice.com.

[WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?](#)

[WHAT ACCOMMODATIONS ARE RIGHT FOR ME?](#)

[HOW DO I REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS?](#)

[WHAT IF I ALREADY WAS APPROVED FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FOR A PAPER BASED TESTING?](#)

[HOW DO I SCHEDULE AN ACCOMMODATED EXAM?](#)

[GET THE FORMS](#)

[SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION](#)

[APPEAL A DECISION](#)

[ADDITIONAL RESOURCES](#)

Employment Services: Getting Started

The **first step** is often the most important. There are “**gatekeeper**” services that may open up access to training and employment programs in every county in Texas. **DARS** and **Workforce** have programs throughout the state. You may be able to access extra help in getting a job or accessing training in Tarrant County through the following links:

Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

Often referred to as Vocational Rehabilitation, this agency serves people who have any type of **disability** (including learning disabilities). For eligible clients, it can be a key to accessing community programs.

<http://www.dars.state.tx.us/>

1-800-628-5115 (Call this number; give your zip code; ask for the DARS office nearest your home. Call to make an appointment with a career consultant.)

Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County 817-413-4400

Workforce is our primary community employment services provider. It offers training and employment services for eligible adults. Further, it offers services for individuals with **disabilities** and **background issues**.



Easter Seals North Texas (817-332-7171)

<http://ntx.easterseals.com>

Easter Seals North Texas has a longstanding history in our community of providing unique programs and services for individuals with a wide variety of disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Alzheimer’s disease, Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Mental and Developmental Delays.

Women’s Center Career Development Employment Program

(817-927-4050) <http://www.womenscentertc.org/>

The Women’s Center Career Development Program is offered as part of the United Way Program for Financial Self-Security/ Sustainability.



Career Navigators assist participants in enrolling in skills training and obtaining employment in high demand jobs such as health care, manufacturing, and logistics. Orientations are held weekly with evening sessions available. High school diploma or GED is required; applicants must be 18 years or older.

More Local Programs for Job Training and Employment

Women's Center Employment Program (817-927-4050)

<http://www.womenscentertc.org/>

The **Jobs Now** program offers interactive workshops that teach the latest job search techniques and self-marketing strategies to women and men with transferable skills who want to begin working immediately. This no-cost program offers tools for employment:

- Ways to concisely and effectively communicate value to potential employers,
- Tips on marketing skills and abilities,
- Weekly job search and networking clinics, as well as exclusive industry specific job fairs, and
- One year of individualized Career Coaching for job retention & advancement .

Tarrant County College Workforce Services (817-515-2585)

Workforce Services offers a variety of educational opportunities for individuals seeking to improve their ability to succeed personally and professionally in the 21st century. Adult education services offered at varying levels from beginning to advanced can assist learners in attaining educational, citizenship, and economic goals:

Most classes are FREE or may offer scholarships or financial assistance.

Classes are offered at six community-based [learning centers](#) in Fort Worth and Arlington:

Additional classes may be offered at other sites in partnership with United Way, employers, school districts, faith-based and community-based organizations.

- General Education Development (GED) Test Prep
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Workplace literacy
- Civic engagement
- Life skills
- Job advancement skills
- College preparation

Finding Help- Job Accommodation Network

<http://askjan.org/links/about.htm>

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) offers free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace. JAN offers guidance on workplace accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related legislation, and self-employment and entrepreneurship options for people with disabilities. JAN is one of several services provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

United Way
Help Network

Call **211** for
other services.

Online Resources

Re-entry Services

<http://tcweb.tarrantcounty.com/egov/cwp/view.asp?a=711>

Re-entry Resources

The following directories and websites provide information on service providers serving the reentry population of Tarrant County. Service providers interested in being added to one of the resource directories should send their information to lsmith@tarrantcounty.com

General Services

[Reentry Service Providers](#)

This directory provides information on the types of services offered by Tarrant County service providers working with the reentry population. Services listed in this directory include basic needs, education, employment, financial assistance, and healthcare. Please contact the individual provider to determine eligibility requirements.

Substance Abuse

[Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities](#)

Organized by city, this directory provides information on the types of services offered by substance abuse treatment facilities in Tarrant County and contact information.

Knowledge is power, as a person in recovery from alcohol or drug problems, you need to know:

- Your rights under Federal law that protect you from discrimination
- The consequences of substance abuse that may limit your rights and opportunities

[Know Your Rights](#)

Mental Health

[Mental Health Resources](#)

Provides contact, service, and fee information for mental health resources in Tarrant County.

Housing

General

- National Council for Learning Disabilities <http://www.ncl.org/>
- LD Online <http://www.ldonline.org>
- DARS, call 1-800-628-5115

Education

- LD online
- Literacy Texas
- Tarrant Literacy Coalition
- Goodwill Community Foundation <http://www.GCFlearnfree.org>

Employment

- Job Accommodation Network <http://www.jan.org>
- Goodwill Industries
- Easter Seals 817-332-7171 <http://ntx.easterseals.com>
- Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County

About The Learning Center of North Texas

Is your home outside Tarrant County?

If so, some of these resources apply. For others, contact the corresponding agency in your community to see what resources are available.



The Learning Center of North Texas
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www.tlcnt.org

817-336-0808