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The Parent’s Guide to Learning Disabilities was written to help the parents and learning disabled child experience more success at home and at school. The learning and behavior intervention strategies included have been tried and tested by parents of children with learning disabilities and are presented in the most convenient and practical manner possible.

The format chosen for the guide was designed for ease of use in identifying the learning or behavior problem the child encounters and providing a selection of strategies parents may implement to successfully deal with the problem. This format reduces the need for lengthy reading exercises, indecision over how or exactly what to do, and indecision over whether the intervention strategies are appropriate for the child. Because of differences in situations and the kinds of behaviors associated with learning disabilities, the interventions take several forms. Some interventions are appropriate for the prevention of problems, while others reduce problem behavior, increase the child's self-control of his/her behavior, or help the child learn more appropriate behavior. A variety of intervention strategies is presented for each problem associated with learning disabilities so that parents will be able to choose the interventions best suited to their child, in their home.

The majority of the intervention strategies in the guide are designed to help the learning disabled child be more successful in school. By using the suggestions under Memory, Organization, Following Directions; General Academics; Reading; Written/Expressive Language and Speech; Math; Handwriting; and Self-Control; the parent will be able to help the student succeed in the regular or special education classroom. By conferring with the classroom teacher, specific areas such as math or reading can be pinpointed for the parent and student to work on at home. Teachers have been very enthusiastic about the use of the guide by parents to supplement the learning experiences in the classroom.

You will notice that, for some problems, there are as many as 50 possible solutions to the particular situation. The reason for this is that we believe there is no one best way to help children and youth be successful. We offer a variety of possible solutions in order that you will be able to find a solution that will work in your unique situation, based on all variables related to your family and considering the age, gender, maturity, abilities, etc., of your child. The variety is there in order for you to choose the interventions that are best for you and your child.

We believe it is extremely important that the intervention strategies employed to help a child succeed are those with which parents are most comfortable. Parents are likely to be more successful implementing those interventions they think are best for themselves and their child rather than attempting to implement interventions suggested by a third party who would not have the same insight the parents have relative to their child’s behavior.

SBM
II. Behaviors & Solutions

1. Has to have several reminders

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Establish rules for following directions (e.g., listen carefully to the directions; ask questions if you do not understand; follow the directions without having to be reminded; etc.). These rules should be consistent and followed by everyone in the home. Talk about the rules often.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Reward your child for not requiring reminders to do what he/she is told to do. Possible rewards include verbal praise (e.g., “Thank you for making your bed without having to be reminded.”), a kiss on the cheek, a hug, having a friend over to play, staying up late, watching a favorite TV show, or playing a game with a parent. (See Appendix for Reward Menu.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>If there are other children or adolescents in the home, reward them for doing what they are told to do without requiring reminders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Carefully consider your child’s age and experience when giving your child a job to do or telling him/her to do something.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Demonstrate for your child what he/she should do when given a chore (e.g., show your child how to take out the trash when told to do so).</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>When your child requires a reminder(s) to do something, explain what he/she did wrong, what should have been done, and why. For example: You told your child to set the table before dinner. It is now five minutes until dinner time and the table is not set. Go to your child, tell him/her that this is a reminder to set the table and that it needs to be done immediately because dinner is ready.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Make sure your child is paying attention to you when you tell him/her to do something. Have your child look directly at you to know he/she is listening and have your child repeat the direction to check for understanding.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Do not give directions to your child from another room. Go to your child, get his/her undivided attention, and tell him/her what should be done.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Write a contract with your child. For example: I, William, will make my bed without having to be reminded to do so for 5 days in a row. When I accomplish this, I can watch 30 extra minutes of TV. The contract should be written within the ability level of your child and should focus on only one behavior at a time. (See Appendix for an example of a Behavior Contract.)</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Allow natural consequences to occur as a result of your child’s failure to do what he/she is told (e.g., forgetting to put a bike in the garage may result in it being stolen, leaving a toy in the street may result in it being run over by a car, etc.).</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Make certain that your child sees the relationship between his/her behavior and the consequences which follow (e.g., failing to retrieve a toy from the street results in having a broken toy).</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Along with a directive, provide an incentive statement (e.g., “You may have a bowl of ice cream after you get ready for bed.”).</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Do not give your child more than two or three steps to follow in one direction. Directions that involve several steps can be confusing and cause your child to have difficulty following them. An example of a two-step direction is: “Please brush your teeth and go to bed.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Deliver directions in a supportive, rather than threatening, manner (e.g., “Please take out the trash.” rather than “You had better take out the trash or else!”).</td>
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