

This Free E-Book is brought to you by [Natural-Aging.com](http://Natural-Aging.com).

**[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)  
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances  
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**

## 10 Ways You Can Advocate For Your Child With A Learning Disability

By Sandy Gauvin

### 10 Ways You Can Advocate For Your Child With A Learning Disability by Sandy Gauvin

Did you know that you are the most important person in your child's life? Of course you did.

But did you know that parents of children with learning disabilities can also be their child's most effective advocate.

What exactly is an advocate? An advocate is someone who speaks up for someone else, or who acts on behalf of another person. As a parent, you know your child better than anyone else, and you are in the best position to speak for him and act on his behalf.

Here are 10 ways you can do that:

1. Realize from the beginning that advocating for your child takes a lot of time. Advocating involves a great deal of research, meeting time, and communication. That's a given. But the end result will be a successful, responsible, happy young adult who will be able to survive the pitfalls of the real world.
2. Be informed. The more you know about what is going on with your child, the more comfortable you will be in helping others understand him. Here are some ways you can become informed:
  - a. Read all you can about learning disabilities (especially your child's learning disability).
  - b. Attend conferences. That's a great way to learn and make contact with other people faced with similar issues.
  - c. Ask questions – seek answers.
  - d. Join a support group if there is one available. You can learn a lot from a support group.
3. Become familiar with the rules and regulations that apply to your child's special education program. You request copies of the regulations from your local school district office (the special education office, if your district has one) or from your state Department of Education. If you have difficulty understanding these rules and regulations, don't be afraid to ask the special education director or your child's special education teacher to explain them to you.

## 10 Ways You Can Advocate For Your Child With A Learning Disability

4. Work together closely with the professionals who work with your child. This should be done in a positive, cohesive way in order for the child to gain the maximum benefit. Get to know these people – talk with them on a regular basis. Volunteer in the classroom. Don't be afraid to ask for a meeting with the teacher(s) if you see something going on at home that can be helped at school, or vice versa.

5. Keep track of the paperwork that is given to you at the team meetings. This is valuable information that should be kept in an organized place so that you can refer to it easily. If you aren't sure how to do this, talk with the special education director or special education teacher. They have a system to keep the records organized in the office. Perhaps they would share that with you.

6. Don't be afraid to communicate with the professionals. Be prepared when you go to the team meetings, and don't be afraid to calmly and assertively state your views. Take notes into the meeting

with you so you won't forget the questions you want to ask or the points you want to make. Remember, the professionals need insight from you as much as you need insight from them. The more communication you have, the more powerful the educational team to help your child.

7. Don't be afraid to ask questions. The field of special education is as complex as your child's needs. Asking questions doesn't mean that you are stupid. It just means that you are interested in your child's education and well-being and want to be an informed parent. You will most likely hear the professionals asking lots of questions as well!!!

8. Keep the lines of communication open with your child. Talk with him about his life both in and outside school. Allow him to express his frustrations, his successes, his disappointments, his hopes, his likes and his dislikes. The better you know your child and what is going on with him, the better you can help other people to work with him.

9. Know your child's strengths and weaknesses and share them with the professionals. Children with learning disabilities, although they have weaker areas, have many strong areas, too. By highlighting these areas, it makes it easier for the professionals to use them as tools to strengthen the weaker skills. It helps them see the child in a more positive light, and it helps them relate to the child. And it helps your child's self-esteem to know that the teachers sees good things in him.

10. Help your child learn to advocate for himself as early as possible. As time goes on, and your child has heard you advocate for him, he will be able to understand how to advocate for himself. If he's heard you say positive things, not only does it increase his self-esteem but it gives him the confidence to speak up for what he needs. Teach him how to communicate how he learns best, what he needs to help him get the most from his classes, and how he feels when confronted with certain issues, such as testing and peer pressure. Give him the power to make his life a success.

You can help your child be able to be a successful, happy, responsible student, well on his way to being the same kind of adult. Advocate for him.

For more plain talk about learning disabilities, please visit us at [www.ldperspectives.com](http://www.ldperspectives.com).

Sandy Gauvin is a retired educator who has seen learning disabilities from many perspectives – as the parent of a daughter with learning disabilities, as the teacher of children with learning disabilities, and as an advocate for others who have diagnosed and unrecognized learning disabilities. Sandy shares her wisdom and her resources at [www.LDPerspectives.com](http://www.LDPerspectives.com)

### **Just What Is a Learning Disability, Anyway?**

**By Sandy Gauvin**

#### **Just What Is a Learning Disability, Anyway? by Sandy Gauvin**

A learning disability is defined as a permanent problem that affects a person with average to above average intelligence, in the way that he/she receives, stores, and processes information.

There are many wrong ideas out there about learning disabilities.

1) A learning disability will go away in time.

Unfortunately, this is not true. The good news is, you can learn ways to get around the problem. For example, kids who have trouble taking notes in class, like Michele did, can record the class on audiotape. Or, other students can make copies of the notes they have taken for them. The teacher can make copies the notes they are lecturing from. Or, when the notes are written down on an overhead transparency during the lecture, they can be copied after class and given to the student.

For children who have trouble reading, tapes of many of the textbooks are made available through the publishing companies. At one school where I taught, volunteers did the taping. We also used tapes that were recorded by a company called Recordings for the Blind.

2) A person with a learning disability has a low IQ.

Again, not true. In order for a person to have a learning disability, they have to have an average or better IQ. There are many people who, although they intelligent, just cannot learn as well as their IQ suggests they should. I've told my students for a long time that having a learning disability is really a compliment because it means that they are very smart! But, since a negative by-product of a learning disability is often low self-esteem, they didn't always believe me.

Remember: the self-esteem issue is as important to deal with as the learning disability itself!

3) A person with a learning disability is just lazy.

There has to be a reason why the person with LD doesn't learn the way he should. Perhaps his brain doesn't process the information the right way. He may process information much slower than other people. Or he may not be able to process what he sees effectively. Some people can't process what they hear as well as what they see. Other people can't remember information unless it's repeated again and again, and some people have real trouble getting the information out of that filing system

## 10 Ways You Can Advocate For Your Child With A Learning Disability

they have in their brain.

Typically people with learning disabilities work harder than others – but with lesser results. It's not about hard work – it's a learning disability.

4) A person with a learning disability can't do anything right.

Even though a child may have a learning disability in one or two areas, it doesn't mean they can't do anything right. My daughter struggled with a disability in math, but what a wonderful writer she is! And she has more knowledge about how to get around a computer than many people have. I envy that ability because I think I have a learning disability in that area!

I've known students who, even though they struggled with math or reading, were excellent around heavy equipment or automobile engines or carpentry or drafting. Many could do things with a computer that seemed impossible.

The important thing is that, if your child has a learning disability, or even if you suspect he might have one, learn everything you can so that you will know what to expect and what not to expect from him as well as from his teachers and his educational program. That way you will be able to understand and help him in the best way possible.

While none of us wants to consider the fact that our child might have a learning disability, it's the intelligent approach to take. When you recognize the truth about learning disabilities, you'll know how to maximize your child's abilities and minimize their dis-abilities.

For ways to be an advocate for your child, read "Advocating For Your Child With LD" at [www.LDPerspectives.com](http://www.LDPerspectives.com).

Sandy Gauvin is a retired educator who has seen learning disabilities from many perspectives – as the parent of a daughter with learning disabilities, as the teacher of children with learning disabilities, and as an advocate for others who have diagnosed and unrecognized learning disabilities. Sandy shares her wisdom and her resources at [www.LDPerspectives.com](http://www.LDPerspectives.com)



This Free E-Book has been brought to you by [Natural-Aging.com](http://Natural-Aging.com).

**[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)**  
**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
**Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**