

Information about learning disability, mental health problems and challenging behaviour Wales

This information is for people with a learning disability, their carers and family



This is an Easy Read version of 'Learning disability, mental health and challenging behaviour. Information for individuals, carers and families.'

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What is a learning disability?

People with learning disabilities can have problems:



- learning new ways to do things



- living independently



- getting people to understand what they are saying.



A learning disability starts before you are 18 years old. It affects day to day things like coping with money or using buses.

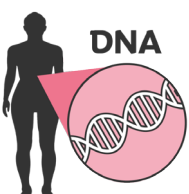
Some people have learning disabilities because:



- they were very ill when they were little



- they had problems when they were being born



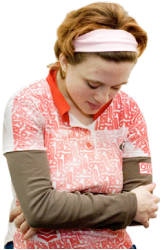
- they have something in their body passed on to them by their mother or father.



A lot of the time we do not know why people have learning disabilities.



2 people in every 100 have a learning disability.



When people have a mild learning disability others may not notice. They may not get any support.



Some people may have a more serious learning disability. They need more support. They may have more health problems than most people.

People with learning disabilities may have:



- **mental health problems.** This is where people do not feel well in their mind and thoughts.



- **challenging behaviour.** This includes things like being violent, breaking things and hurting yourself or others.



They may need special support with this.

Mental health and learning disability

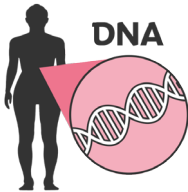


Children and adults with a learning disability can have the same **mental health problems** as anyone else.



But people with a learning disability are more likely to have **mental health problems** than anyone else.

We do not know why. It may be because:



- they have something in their body passed on to them by their mother or father



- they are ill



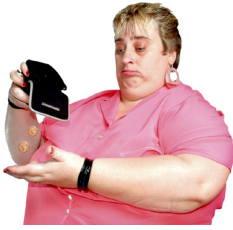
- they are stressed



- they do not have many friends



- they do not have a job



- they do not have much money.



It can be hard to know when someone has a **mental health problem**.



People with a mild learning disability may be able to explain how they feel.



People with a more serious learning disability may not be able to talk well or explain how they feel. Then we have to look for clues that they have a **mental health problem**, like:



- not sleeping well



- not wanting to eat much



- **challenging behaviours.**

Challenging behaviour and learning disability

Some people with a learning disability may have **challenging behaviour**.



People who have **challenging behaviour** may not be allowed in school or college. They may not be welcome in clubs. It can be hard for them to live independently.

People can have **challenging behaviours** for a lot of reasons. It may be because:



- others do not listen to them



- no one understands what they are trying to say



- they may be hurting or ill



- they may have **mental health problems**.



It is mostly boys and men who have **challenging behaviours**. They often have autism. They often have a serious learning disability.



Often people with a learning disability are using the behaviour to try to say something.



They may be saying they are unhappy or stressed. They may need help. Or they may need to leave the place they are in as something there is upsetting them.



Getting help



Do you have a learning disability? Do you feel you may have a **mental health problem** or **challenging behaviour**?



Are you a carer for someone with a learning disability with these problems?



Then you need to get help. First go to your doctor or learning disability team. They will check if anything physical is a problem. Such as a sore stomach or tooth ache.



If you are well you will need to meet with someone to look at all your life. They will look at how happy you are with your life. They will look at your care and support. And what you can do out of your home.

If you have a **mental health problem** you may get:



- to talk to someone about things you are unhappy about



- **medication.** medication is tablets or other medicine your doctor has given you.



- both of these things.



If you have **challenging behaviour** they will look at when it happens.



They will try and understand what causes you to behave like that.



Some people may need support over a long time to help them change things.



Tips for people with a learning disability



It can be hard to understand what you are feeling. If you worry about any changes in how you feel, tell your doctor.



Talk to friends, carers or your doctor. It is important to talk about how you feel. Talk about the things that make you feel good as well as the things that stress you.



Get out and do exercise like walking or swimming. Eat healthy. This can help when you feel bad or sad.



It is right to go and see a doctor or nurse when you do not feel good. That is what they are there for. Anyone can get help for a [mental health problem](#). The important thing is to get help.



When you are given [medication](#) ask about the [side effects](#).

Side effects are when your medication causes things like headaches or upset stomachs.



If you think you have [side effects](#) keep taking the [medication](#). Go to your doctor to tell them about the [side effects](#).

Tips for carers and family



When someone's behaviour changes it may not be a **mental health problem**. Go to the doctor to see what they think.



A person with a learning disability may show how they feel in the way they behave. So if they are depressed they may be angry, or not want anything to do with anyone.



Give the person you care for time to explain how they feel. If you get help from someone like a Doctor, tell them the best way to talk to the person you care for.



Sometimes when a person is being challenging you may worry they may hurt you or themselves. Tell someone who can help as soon as possible.



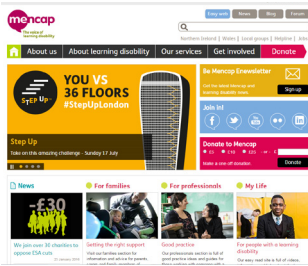
Remember to look after yourself. Being a carer is stressful and you may get **mental health problems**. Talk to your doctor about this.

Useful websites

Mencap

Information for everyone in easy read and video.

mencap.org.uk



Learning Disability Wales

Details of networks and support groups.

ldw.org.uk



Foundation for people with learning disabilities

Information on learning disabilities in easy read.

learningdisabilities.org.uk



Challenging behaviour foundation

Information and support for families and people who are affected by challenging behaviour.

challengingbehaviour.org.uk



Help us with our research

We are trying to understand more about mental health and people with a learning disability. Our **research** hopes to:



- make it easier to know when someone has a mental health problem



- show how to help someone get better



- get better support to try to make sure they do not have more mental health problems.



Research means finding things out.



We need you to help us.



It is quick and easy to help us. It will involve meeting someone from our **research** team.



They will ask you some questions about your life.



If you want you can give us some blood to test. But you do not need to do this.



Everything you tell us will be kept safely. We will not tell anyone else what you have said.



If you want to know more go to our website www.ncmh.info

Or contact us at:



- email: info@ncmh.info



- phone: 029 2068 8401



- facebook: [walesmentalhealth](https://www.facebook.com/walesmentalhealth)



- twitter: [@ncmh_wales](https://twitter.com/ncmh_wales)

Hard words

Medication

Medication is tablets or other medicine your doctor has given you.

Research

Research means finding things out

Side effects

Side effects are when medication can give you things like headaches or upset stomach as well as helping you.

Mental health problems

Mental health problems is where people do not feel well in their mind and thoughts.

Challenging behaviour

This includes things like being violent, breaking things and hurting yourself or others.

Contact us:



E-mail: info@ncmh.info



Facebook: [walesmentalhealth](https://www.facebook.com/walesmentalhealth)



Phone: **029 2068 8401**



Twitter: [@ncmh_wales](https://twitter.com/ncmh_wales)

This leaflet was written by the National Centre for Mental Health.

It was translated into Easy Read by Learning Disability Wales using Photosymbols 5.

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