

6 common myths about learning and thinking differences

By the Understood Team

We partner with [Understood.org](https://www.understood.org) to provide educators and families with expert-vetted, evidence-based resources about learning differences.

There's a lot of misunderstanding about learning and thinking differences like dyslexia and ADHD. Here are some of the most common myths — and facts to debunk them.

Myth #1: Learning and thinking differences aren't real.

Fact: Learning and thinking differences like dyslexia and ADHD are very real. They're not made-up challenges. They're caused by differences in how the brain develops and functions, and they often run in families.

Myth #2: Learning and thinking differences aren't common.

Fact: Millions of people learn and think differently. These challenges aren't always easy to spot, though, for lots of reasons. People may hide their difficulties. Or their challenges may go unnoticed by families, teachers, and employers. Chances are you know someone who learns and thinks differently.

Myth #3: People who learn and think differently aren't smart.

Fact: Having learning differences doesn't mean people aren't smart. They can be gifted, too. But they may struggle in school or at work because of their differences. And that

can lead others to wrongly assume that people with ADHD, dyslexia, or other differences aren't intelligent.

Myth #4: People who learn and think differently are “just being lazy.”

Fact: Learning and thinking differences don't just “go away” through sheer willpower. People who learn and think differently are often trying as hard as they can to work around challenges. They need the right kind of support to thrive.

Myth #5: Kids grow out of learning and thinking differently.

Fact: Kids don't outgrow these differences, so it's not just a matter of catching up. They're lifelong challenges. The sooner kids get the support they need, the sooner they start to make progress.

Myth #6: People who learn and think differently can't do well in school or at work.

Fact: With the right support, kids who learn and think differently can make great progress and thrive in school. Thriving means something different for everyone. It could mean calmly sitting through a class. Or it could mean getting A's. The same goes for jobs and careers. Look in any field and you can find examples of people who learn and think differently and are thriving.

Debunk more myths about learning and thinking differences. Get to know [common myths about dyslexia](#) and [ADHD](#).

Author

The Understood Team is made up of passionate writers and editors. Many of them have kids who learn and think differently.

Reviewer

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