

Learning to Achieve: A Research-Based Training on Serving Adults with Learning Disabilities

The purposes of the training are:

1. To encourage and support adult education programs' efforts to affect change in the delivery of services to adults with learning disabilities.
2. To provide tools for local adult education staff to improve services to adults with learning disabilities.

▶ **What can participants expect from *Learning to Achieve*?**

Learning to Achieve is a five-day training program designed to help adult education and vocational training practitioners, social workers, and other human service providers understand learning disabilities (LD) in adults and learn how to actively support adults with LD in educational and workplace settings. The training will also prepare participants to share what they have learned with interested colleagues who did not attend the training.

▶ **What are the training objectives?**

By the end of this course, participants will:

- Be knowledgeable about the most recent rigorous research as it relates to adults with LD, including the basics as well as latest advances in neuroscience
- Have strengthened their training skills through practice with *Learning to Achieve* materials
- Know the definitions of LD
- Understand the concept of self-determination and how it can help adults with LD
- Know the LD-related legal, confidentiality, and self-disclosure issues
- Be able to identify the testing and instructional accommodations appropriate for adults with LD
- Understand the testing and accommodation considerations for English language learners
- Be able to discuss tutoring issues and instructional approaches for individuals with LD
- Be able to describe considerations and strategies on how to teach basic reading and writing to individuals with LD
- Understand the instructional approaches specific to assisting adults with LD in learning academic content
- Be able to identify issues adults with LD may face in the workforce

▶ **Module Overview:**

- **Trainer Skills** – Learn skills and techniques associated with effective training
- **Definition of Learning Disabilities** – Discuss differences in the definitions of learning disabilities and the consequences for adults with LD
- **Self-determination** – Consider ways in which service providers can support adults with LD in developing self-determination to achieve their goals
- **Legal Issues** – Identify the legal, confidentiality, and self-disclosure issues that apply to service providers working with adults with LD
- **Accommodations (online)** – Describe testing and instructional accommodations appropriate for individuals with LD
- **English Language Learners (online)** – Identify testing and accommodation considerations for English language learners
- **Tutoring** – Review issues tutors can face as well as instructional approaches that can assist adults with LD in becoming successful learners
- **Basic Reading** – Describe considerations and strategies for working with adults with LD who struggle with word recognition
- **Content** – Learn instructional approaches that can assist adults with LD learn academic content
- **Writing** – Identify issues adults with LD may face in writing and methods to help adults structure their writing
- **Neuroscience (online)** – Learn about the underlying neurobiology of LD
- **Workforce readiness** - Review issues adults with LD may face in the workforce

▶ **What materials will participants receive?**

Participants will receive a hard copy and electronic version of the training with scripted trainer notes, and other related training materials.

▶ **Who will pay for the training?**

The training will be at no cost to the participants. The National Institute for Literacy will pay for the trainers, facilities and materials, as well as participants' travel costs, hotel, and per diem. States will make arrangements for substitutes, if necessary, during the five-day *Learning to Achieve* training and subsequent follow-up training given by participants to their colleagues.

▶ **How is this training different from *Bridges to Practice* or STAR?**

Learning to Achieve has replaced *Bridges to Practice*, the National Institute for Literacy's previous training for practitioners who work with adults with LD. *Learning to Achieve* is based on the most recent rigorous research on LD, addresses new topics such as English language learners and LD, provides a standard set of materials, and offers numerous opportunities to practice training techniques.

The U.S. Department of Education's Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) project focuses exclusively on helping practitioners teach reading more effectively while *Learning to Achieve* covers a wide range of issues relevant to adults with LD. The portion of *Learning to Achieve* that addresses reading instruction uses the same foundational reading research used in STAR so a consistent message is delivered. States may choose to participate in STAR or *Learning to Achieve* or both or neither. Participation in the two programs is not linked, but is complementary and reinforces the same reading research findings.

Participant Requirements Overview:

- **Obtain permission from their program administrator to participate in the training.**
- **Be available to attend all five days of training.**
- **Prepare in the evenings of training for brief daily presentations by the participant.**
- **Complete 3 online modules prior to attending the face-to-face training.**
- **Enter this agreement with the National Institute for Literacy to disseminate the *Learning to Achieve* materials by conducting local follow-up trainings (minimum of one) to at least 20 colleagues, covering 4-5 modules (not counting online modules) from the *Learning to Achieve* materials. Follow-up trainings should take place within 6 months from the completion of the original training. This can be accomplished in a single or in multiple training sessions.**
- **Participate in a follow-up evaluation, and administer L2A evaluations in the follow-up trainings.**

Please note that this is an intense course requiring full attendance for five days, preparation time in the evenings, daily presentations by each participant on *Learning to Achieve* materials covered the previous day, preparation before the training (3 online modules), as well as passing on the materials within one's state by conducting follow-up trainings to colleagues.

After attending the *Learning to Achieve* training and fulfilling all follow-up requirements, participants will receive a certificate of completion from the National Institute for Literacy.