LEARNING DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

2020 Toolkit
October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month, a time when the nation turns its attention to the one in five students who learn differently because they have dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or other specific learning disabilities. Eye to Eye honors the community of people who learn differently this month and throughout the year.

What does awareness actually mean?

What would real awareness look like in our schools, homes, and workplaces? It would look like schools in which students and educators clearly define what learning differences are and are not. It would look like a community that values the diversity and strengths of different learners while understanding the challenges those learning differences present. It would mean that we all encourage empowering conversations about individual approaches to learning with an understanding of how prevalent learning differences are.

What would it mean if we could instill that awareness? It would break the stigma surrounding those who learn differently. It would create a safe space where a student could say, “I really think I could learn better if I just had this.” No one should feel ashamed to ask for what they need to learn, grow, and pursue their goals.

Owning your learning difference, then speaking it loud and proud, is the first step in breaking the stigma. Eye to Eye is an organization for people who learn differently by people who learn differently. And we believe that one of the most powerful things you can do is share your own story or the story of someone you love.

When we don’t share our stories or raise awareness, when we keep silent, we lose students. It’s not a small number of students, either. According to the Department of Education, 2.5 million students have been identified with specific learning disabilities; as many as 6 million with ADHD. Still more have not been identified and don’t get the support they need. When you share your truth, you help a student feel seen, heard, and understood. You tell them they’re not alone. They start to see their future and their potential in a whole new way.

Learning differences? Don’t you mean disabilities?

Eye to Eye uses the term learning differences to encompass specifically-diagnosed learning disabilities and attention disorders as well as areas of executive functioning. At Eye to Eye, we’re working to eliminate the stigma of learning disabilities and attention disorders by reframing and celebrating them as the learning differences that they are.
Consider participating by taking any of the following actions:

- Share your story or the story of a loved one (with their permission) who learns differently!
- Make a donation to Eye to Eye in the name of a school that should have a chapter and we will send them an acknowledgment with information about getting involved!
- Update your social media cover photos with designated graphics.
- Make a TikTok raising awareness by answering a common question about learning disabilities or ADHD.
- Follow Eye to Eye on social media and share our social media posts throughout the month. Tag three people who should see them.
- Register for Eye to Eye’s interactive introduction to learning differently—Learning Differently 101 for Educators: Building Empathy for All Learners or Learning Differently 101 for Students: Unlocking the Power of Learning Differently.
- Sign up for newsletters from Eye to Eye, at http://eyetoeyenational.org/email, and forward them to friends and family members curious about learning differences.
- Contact local radio and TV stations and ask them to air our sample PSA.
- Share an old school photo on social media with a story of what school was like for you with a learning difference.
- Send the sample letter to the editor to local newspapers or your school newspaper, asking them to recognize Learning Disabilities Awareness Month.
- Share our facts and myths flyer with PTAs, schools, or community organizations.
- Try out some of our 31 suggestions for celebrating Learning Disabilities Awareness Month, using the free calendar included in this toolkit.
## Learning Disabilities Awareness Month

**HELP RAISE AWARENESS EVERY DAY!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Ready to start spreading awareness? Update your social media cover pages with Eye to Eye’s Learning Disabilities Awareness month graphics!</td>
<td>2 Announce Learning Disabilities Awareness Month and include a fact about learning differences in your e-mail signature.</td>
<td>3 Share Your Story! Tell us about your #LdProudtoBe story or the story of someone you care about (with their permission) and tag Eye to Eye!</td>
<td>10 Arrange a watch party of the Roadtrip Nation documentary Being You with your friends and family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6 Encourage your school or your child’s school to include a call-out or paragraph about Learning Disabilities Awareness Month and any local activities in its weekly or monthly newsletter.</td>
<td>8 Contact your city council members and a state legislator to let them know it’s Learning Disabilities Awareness Month (Google: &quot;yourstatename legislature&quot;). See if they can share your PSA.</td>
<td>16 Find the facts to share about common myths and misunderstandings about learning differences in this toolkit!</td>
<td>17 Ask your local library to highlight empowering books about learning differences like the Hank Zipzer series by Henry Winkler, or Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7 Adapt the included “Letter to the Editor” and send it your local or school paper.</td>
<td>15 Contact your local TV and radio stations to see if they will include a PSA about Learning Disabilities Awareness Month (see included sample).</td>
<td>18 Tag a celebrity with a learning difference in a social post and thank them for sharing their story with hashtag #LdProudtoBe.</td>
<td>24 Follow our partner organizations who each work in different ways to secure educational equity for the 1 in 5. eyetoeyenalional.org/intro-to-learning-differently#partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10 #HonorAnAlly Share a story on your social channels about someone who’s been a learning differences ally to you or someone you love. Be sure to use the hashtag #HonorAnAlly and tag Eye to Eye!</td>
<td>21 Host a live chat about learning differences to share tips, tricks, and advice. (You’ll be surprised who will join! Remember 1 in 5 people has a learning difference!)</td>
<td>25 #HonorATeacher Share a story on your social channels about a teacher who changed your or your child’s life. Be sure to use the hashtag #HonorATeacher and tag Eye to Eye!</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12 Share our students’ stories posted on social throughout the month with your community.</td>
<td>14 Follow Eye to Eye on Twitter (@ezenational) and retweet an Eye to Eye tweet with 3 people.</td>
<td>19 Share a video on TikTok or Instagram about one thing you wish people understood about learning differences.</td>
<td>26 Follow Eye to Eye on Instagram (@ezenational). Like posts to help spread the word, and share a pic that tells your story about learning differences with the hashtag #LdProudtoBe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13 Share Eye to Eye’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources for the Learning Differences Community page with your friends and loved ones.</td>
<td>15 Contact your local TV and radio stations to see if they will include a PSA about Learning Disabilities Awareness Month (see included sample).</td>
<td>20 Follow Eye to Eye on Twitter (@ezenational), RT posts to help spread the word, and tweet your own story about learning differently with the hashtag #LdProudtoBe.</td>
<td>27 Election Day is a week away! Check out Our Time Our Vote (<a href="https://www.nclrd.org/our-time-our-vote/">https://www.nclrd.org/our-time-our-vote/</a>) for resources for people who learn differently and share them with your community!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14 Follow Eye to Eye on Twitter (@ezenational) and retweet an Eye to Eye tweet with 3 people.</td>
<td>21 Host a live chat about learning differences to share tips, tricks, and advice. (You’ll be surprised who will join! Remember 1 in 5 people has a learning difference!)</td>
<td>26 Follow Eye to Eye on Instagram (@ezenational). Like posts to help spread the word, and share a pic that tells your story about learning differences with the hashtag #LdProudtoBe.</td>
<td>28 Sign up for newsletters from Eye to Eye at <a href="https://eyetoeyenalional.org/">https://eyetoeyenalional.org/</a> email, and forward them to friends and family members curious about learning differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15 Contact your local TV and radio stations to see if they will include a PSA about Learning Disabilities Awareness Month (see included sample).</td>
<td>22 Schedule one of our learning differences experts to speak to your school or group by contacting <a href="mailto:partnerships@eyetoeyenalional.org">partnerships@eyetoeyenalional.org</a>.</td>
<td>27 Election Day is a week away! Check out Our Time Our Vote (<a href="https://www.nclrd.org/our-time-our-vote/">https://www.nclrd.org/our-time-our-vote/</a>) for resources for people who learn differently and share them with your community!</td>
<td>29 Share your awareness story with Eye to Eye! What have you done this month to spread awareness for learning differences? Let us know! <a href="mailto:marketing@eyetoeyenalional.org">marketing@eyetoeyenalional.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16 Follow Eye to Eye on Twitter (@ezenational), RT posts to help spread the word, and tweet your own story about learning differently with the hashtag #LdProudtoBe.</td>
<td>23 Is there a teacher, doctor, mentor, or someone else who guided you through a learning disability diagnosis, helped you secure an IEP/504, or who has just never given up on you or your child? Send him or her a thank you note.</td>
<td>25 #HonorATeacher Share a story on your social channels about a teacher who changed your or your child’s life. Be sure to use the hashtag #HonorATeacher and tag Eye to Eye!</td>
<td>30 Make a donation to Eye to Eye in honor of a school that would benefit from Eye to Eye’s programming. We’ll send them more information!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17 Ask your local library to highlight empowering books about learning differences like the Hank Zipzer series by Henry Winkler, or Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt.</td>
<td>24 Follow our partner organizations who each work in different ways to secure educational equity for the 1 in 5. eyetoeyenalional.org/intro-to-learning-differently#partners</td>
<td>27 Election Day is a week away! Check out Our Time Our Vote (<a href="https://www.nclrd.org/our-time-our-vote/">https://www.nclrd.org/our-time-our-vote/</a>) for resources for people who learn differently and share them with your community!</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18 Tag a celebrity with a learning difference in a social post and thank them for sharing their story with hashtag #LdProudtoBe.</td>
<td>28 Sign up for newsletters from Eye to Eye at <a href="https://eyetoeyenalional.org/">https://eyetoeyenalional.org/</a> email, and forward them to friends and family members curious about learning differences.</td>
<td>29 Share your awareness story with Eye to Eye! What have you done this month to spread awareness for learning differences? Let us know! <a href="mailto:marketing@eyetoeyenalional.org">marketing@eyetoeyenalional.org</a></td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19 Share a video on TikTok or Instagram about one thing you wish people understood about learning differences.</td>
<td>29 Share your awareness story with Eye to Eye! What have you done this month to spread awareness for learning differences? Let us know! <a href="mailto:marketing@eyetoeyenalional.org">marketing@eyetoeyenalional.org</a></td>
<td>30 Make a donation to Eye to Eye in honor of a school that would benefit from Eye to Eye’s programming. We’ll send them more information!</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20 Follow Eye to Eye on Twitter (@ezenational), RT posts to help spread the word, and tweet your own story about learning differently with the hashtag #LdProudtoBe.</td>
<td>30 Make a donation to Eye to Eye in honor of a school that would benefit from Eye to Eye’s programming. We’ll send them more information!</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21 Host a live chat about learning differences to share tips, tricks, and advice. (You’ll be surprised who will join! Remember 1 in 5 people has a learning difference!)</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
<td>31 Advocate beyond the classroom and create awareness in the workplace with the Workplace Accommodation toolkit from JAN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Radio stations are especially receptive to airing PSAs, and are easiest to produce -- all you need is to write a script that the radio DJ can read. Cable operators like Cox, Comcast, and Verizon and your local community cable station are often willing to create a spot with you, if they can place their own logo on the PSA, too.

**Record your PSA:** Recording can be done in person with any digital audio recorder. The overall recording process should take no more than 10 minutes but be sure to get several takes. Once you have the audio you will need a computer program to clean it up, removing any “ums,” stumbles or deep breaths. If you need help, try a local ad agency or radio station.

**Submit to local stations:** Most stations accept PSAs only via email as an attached MP3 audio file. PSAs are often submitted to a group of stations, for example, Clear Channel DC takes submissions for all 11 stations it manages. When submitting a PSA, always include the script, since some stations may choose to record the PSA with their own on-air personalities. Your script should include an email address, phone number or website. Most stations need about three weeks lead time before running a PSA. Be sure to include your preferred air dates, but recognize that most stations can’t provide you with an exact time when your PSA will be aired.

**Who to Contact:**

**TV**
Contact the broadcast affiliate and independent station in the media market (city, town, or area) where you live. These are stations that are the local affiliates for NBC, ABC, CBS, and Fox. They each do their own local news and has airtime that they can choose to fill with public service advertising.

   Speak to: Public or Community Affairs Director, General Manager

**Cable**
Cable can provide various opportunities for public service advertising. Start with the company on your cable bill, and look to contact all the cable systems in your area.

   Speak to: Advertising or Marketing Director, General Manager

**Radio**
Radio stations are generally formatted for a very specific audience. To achieve the greatest success, contact the radio stations that speak to parents and guardians, community leaders, and those who are in the education community. Know also that News and Talk stations are typically the most supportive of public service advertising.

   Speak to: Public or Community Affairs Director, General Manager
Sample PSA scripts:

**15 seconds:**
October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. Did you know 1 in 5 people have learning differences, including Steven Spielberg, Richard Branson, Jewell Loyd, and Lisa Ling? Students who learn differently often face both academic and social challenges. However, with the right strategies and support, we can help them unlock their strengths and thrive in school and in life. Learn more at eyetoeyenational.org/LDAwareness2020.

**30 seconds:**
October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. Did you know that 1 in 5 people in the US has a learning difference like dyslexia or ADHD? Chances are, you know someone who learns differently! While learning and attention issues may not be as visible as other health issues, they’re just as real. By setting high expectations for students who learn differently and ensuring they have the right supports from parents, educators and the community, we can propel them to thrive in school and in life. Learn more at eyetoeyenational.org/LDAwareness2020.
To [insert either the editor’s name or write “To the editor”]

October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. In the United States 1 in every 5 students has a learning disability like dyslexia and ADHD. Most students diagnosed with learning disabilities have average to above average intelligence. They simply learn differently and need specialized support to succeed.

People don’t “outgrow” learning disabilities. However, they have a good chance of success when given the right support. Learning disabilities are Just learning differences that require flexibility in instruction. Research has found that many traditional teaching methods like lectures, textbook activities, and handouts do not meet the needs of all students. Students who learn differently need a variety of learning materials, tools, and support to meaningfully link coursework to learning.

In addition, many people who learn differently also struggle with social skills. Some have trouble reading body language. Others find it hard to follow conversations or to control their impulsive behavior. That’s why it’s important to raise awareness and build a supportive community.

I hope you will visit the Learning Disabilities Awareness Month page at Eye to Eye https://eyetoeyenational.org/LDAwareness2020, to learn more about learning differences and consider featuring a story in your publication this month. While you’re there, click on the toolkit which includes a calendar to see 31 ways you and your readers can help spread Learning Disabilities Awareness during the month of October — and all year-round.

Thank you,
[insert your name here]
[insert town/neighborhood/community]
Using Social Media to Raise Awareness

Social media is a great tool to break stigma and debunk myths around learning differences far and wide. Here are some easy ways you can use social media to raise awareness this month:

✔️ Download social media images from eyetoyenational.org/LDAwareness2020 and feature them throughout October on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram.

✔️ Like and share posts from Eye to Eye’s Facebook page, Twitter, and Instagram feeds throughout the month.

✔️ Tag Eye to Eye with your awareness posts throughout the month and use the hashtags #LDAwareness2020 or #LD ProudtoBe.

Sample posts to get you started!

It’s Learning Disabilities Awareness Month! 1 in 5 students in the U.S. has a learning difference like dyslexia and ADHD. Chances are you know someone who learns differently! Visit eyetoyenational.org/LDAwareness2020 to learn more!

This October, I’m proud to raise awareness and spread the facts about learning differences. Visit eyetoyenational.org/LDAwareness2020 to learn more!

October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. Help raise awareness and spread the facts about learning differences. www.eyetoyenational.org/LDAwareness2020 #LDAwareness2020

1 in 5 students in the U.S. has a learning difference like #dyslexia and #ADHD. Chances are you know someone who learns differently! Learn more: www.eyetoyenational.org/LDAwareness2020
October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month

Ask me about my _________

I <3 someone with _________.

This is what someone with _________ looks like!

Find more at www.eyetoeyenational.org/LDAwareness2020
LEARNING DIFFERENCES
Myths and Facts

MYTH
LEARNING DIFFERENCES ARE CAUSED BY LACK OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME, OR POOR DIET.

Learning differences are caused by neurological differences in brain structures and functions that affect a person’s ability to receive, store, process, retrieve or communicate information.

MYTH
People don’t “outgrow” learning differences. However, they have a good chance of success when given the right support.

MYTH
PEOPLE GROW OUT OF LEARNING DIFFERENCES.

MYTH
PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES ARE LESS INTELLIGENT.

Most people identified with learning differences have average to above average intelligence. They simply learn differently and need specialized support to succeed.

MYTH
EVERYONE WHO LEARNS DIFFERENTLY EXPERIENCES THE SAME SYMPTOMS.

Learning differences are complicated and vary from person to person. There are many forms of learning differences and each person’s experience is unique.