

# THE NEED FOR BRAIN TRAINING TO TREAT LEARNING DISABILITIES

We have known for many years that when it comes to learning disabilities, the wrong remedy is as often the answer as no treatment at all. Over a third of America's school-age children have learning issues. Almost 75% of students do not feel successful in school. Furthermore, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2005 "The nation's Report Card"):

- ❖ 3/4 of high schoolers graduate without adequate writing skills.
- ❖ By fourth grade level, 2/3 of students read below grade level, and by eighth grade level.
- ❖ More than 7/10 of all American students are performing overall at below grade level.
- ❖ 85% of all juvenile offenders are poor readers.
- ❖ 50% of the unemployed are functionally illiterate.
- ❖ 20 of the 53 million school-age children are poor readers (2/5).
- ❖ If a child reads poorly at the end of the first grade, there is a 90% probability that they will be a poor reader by the end of fourth grade.
- ❖ 3/4 of poor readers in third grade remain poor readers in high school.
- ❖ 3/4 of the Fortune 500 companies provide remedial reading for their workforce just to get adequate service from their employees.
- ❖ 53% of undergraduates in college enroll in remedial classes.
- ❖ 5 million American children annually receive medication for AD/HD.

Unfortunately, most students with learning issues are taught how to compensate for their problem instead of eradicating the problem with proper brain training. As Ken Gibson notes in his book (Unlock the Einstein Inside: Applying the New Brain Science to Wake Up the Smart in Your Child), "students are taught to adapt to or live with their learning problems...which compels teachers to simply lower their expectations...**to succeed in school, children need the right learning skills.**" Or as Dr. Mary Meeker said: "A learning disability is simply the absence of a learning ability." Tutoring can work if the student has fallen behind in their work, but it does not necessarily teach strategies for learning or develop learning ability. When students fall behind, they can begin to distract others, daydream, and show bad attitudes.

Educational therapists agree that : "An analysis of basic cognitive skills is the first step in obtaining a solution. These are the foundational skills or tools a child uses to learn. Cognitive skills are not the same as the academic subjects taught in school; rather, cognitive skills are the mental tools needed to process and learn

what is taught in an academic environment. These skills are also called mental skills, intelligence, learning skills, learning tools, and processing skills.” (Gibson). **Cognitive abilities are the learning skills needed to pay attention, self-regulate, retain what you have learned, to process and to create the mental pictures of what you have read and comprehended.** It is time for psychologists and educators to devote attention to training cognitive abilities. In our Learning Gym, we train the brain and the sensory system (“Fitness for the Mind”) to operate at an optimal level.