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Supporting Someone with a Learning Disability Workbook

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Disclaimer

This workbook has been created by Safe Haven Connect CIC to provide general information and practical guidance for people supporting someone with a learning disability.

It is intended for family members, friends, carers, volunteers and anyone who wants to provide respectful, person-centred support.

The information in this workbook is not a substitute for professional medical, educational or social care advice.

If you have concerns about someone's health, wellbeing or safety, seek advice from an appropriate healthcare professional or support service.

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Supporting Someone with a Learning Disability

PAGE 1 – Understanding Learning Disabilities

A learning disability affects the way a person understands information and learns new skills.

Every person is different. Some people may need a little support, while others may need more help with everyday activities.

Having a learning disability does not define a person's personality, talents, interests or potential.

With the right support, encouragement and opportunities, people with learning disabilities can live meaningful, fulfilling and independent lives.

♥ A person with a learning disability may need support with...

☐ Understanding information

☐ Communication

☐ Everyday tasks

☐ Managing money

☐ Travelling independently

☐ Making decisions

☐ Reading or writing

☐ Building confidence

☐ Other:

♥ What do I hope to learn from this workbook?

♥ My biggest goal when supporting this person

Remember

See the person first, not the disability.

Everyone deserves respect, opportunities, choices and the chance to reach their full potential.

Support independence, celebrate abilities and always treat people with dignity and kindness.

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Supporting Someone with a Learning Disability

PAGE 2 – Getting to Know the Person

Every person with a learning disability is unique.

They have their own personality, interests, dreams, strengths and preferences.

Taking time to understand the individual helps you provide support that is respectful, meaningful and centred around what matters to them.

Remember, support should help people live the life they want.

Things they enjoy

☐ Music

☐ Sport or exercise

☐ Arts and crafts

- ☐ Gaming
- ☐ Watching films or TV
- ☐ Cooking or baking
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Spending time with family or friends
- ☐ Going out into the community
- ☐ Other:

♥ Their strengths and talents

♥ Things that help them feel happy and confident

♥ How can I support them today?

- ☐ Listen to their choices.
- ☐ Encourage independence.
- ☐ Give plenty of time.
- ☐ Explain things clearly.
- ☐ Celebrate achievements.
- ☐ Be patient.
- ☐ Offer encouragement.
- ☐ Respect their decisions.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Remember

Every person deserves to be listened to, included and respected.

Focus on what the person can do, encourage their independence and celebrate every achievement—no matter how small.

Support should empower people, not limit them.

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PAGE 3 – Communicating Clearly and Respectfully

Good communication helps build trust, confidence and independence.

Some people with a learning disability may need information explained in a different way or may need extra time to understand and respond.

Remember, communication should always be respectful, patient and person-centred.

Helpful ways to communicate

- ☐ Speak clearly and calmly.
- ☐ Use simple, everyday language.
- ☐ Give one instruction at a time.
- ☐ Allow plenty of time to respond.
- ☐ Check understanding.
- ☐ Use pictures or visual aids if helpful.
- ☐ Listen carefully.
- ☐ Encourage questions.
- ☐ Other:

Things that help this person communicate

♥ If they don't understand, I can...

- ☐ Explain it differently.
- ☐ Break it into smaller steps.
- ☐ Show rather than tell.
- ☐ Repeat calmly.
- ☐ Give more time.
- ☐ Ask if they'd like me to explain again.
- ☐ Other:

♥ What helps us communicate well together?

♥ Remember

Communication isn't about speaking quickly or using complicated words.

It's about making sure the person feels listened to, understood and included.

Patience, respect and clear communication can help build confidence and independence.

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PAGE 4 – Encouraging Independence

One of the most important ways to support someone with a learning disability is to encourage independence.

Everyone should have the opportunity to make choices, learn new skills and take part in everyday life.

Support should help people do as much as they can for themselves while providing help when it's needed.

 Ways I can encourage independence

- ☐ Offer choices instead of making decisions for them.
- ☐ Encourage them to try new things.
- ☐ Give enough time to complete tasks.
- ☐ Break tasks into smaller steps.
- ☐ Praise effort and achievements.
- ☐ Encourage problem-solving.
- ☐ Respect their decisions.
- ☐ Offer support only when needed.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Skills they are developing

☐ Cooking

☐ Cleaning

☐ Shopping

☐ Managing money

☐ Travelling

☐ Personal care

☐ Using technology

☐ Building friendships

☐ Employment or volunteering

☐ Other:

♥ One new skill I can help them develop

♥ How will I encourage confidence today?

Remember

Independence looks different for everyone.

The goal isn't to do everything alone—it's to help each person achieve as much independence as possible while feeling safe, confident and supported.

Believe in the person's abilities, celebrate progress and encourage every step towards greater independence.

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PAGE 5 – Promoting Choice and Inclusion

Everyone has the right to make choices about their own life.

Supporting someone with a learning disability means helping them take part in everyday life, make decisions and feel included in their community.

Choice, respect and inclusion help build confidence, independence and self-esteem.

Ways I can promote choice

☐ Offer simple choices.

☐ Respect their decisions.

☐ Encourage them to express their opinions.

☐ Give enough time to decide.

☐ Involve them in planning.

☐ Support informed decisions.

☐ Celebrate their achievements.

☐ Other:

♥ Ways I can promote inclusion

☐ Encourage friendships.

☐ Support hobbies and interests.

☐ Help them access community activities.

☐ Encourage volunteering or employment.

☐ Support independent travel where appropriate.

☐ Help them learn new skills.

☐ Encourage participation in family events.

☐ Other:

♥ What activities do they enjoy most?

♥ One opportunity I can help them access

♥ Remember

Everyone deserves the opportunity to be included, respected and valued.

Supporting someone isn't about making decisions for them—it's about helping them make their own choices and live a life that is meaningful to them.

Inclusion creates confidence. Choice builds independence. Respect changes lives.

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PAGE 6 – Supporting Emotional Wellbeing

Everyone experiences a wide range of emotions.

People with a learning disability may sometimes find it difficult to explain how they are feeling or why they are upset.

By listening, showing patience and offering reassurance, you can help them feel safe, understood and supported.

♥ Signs they may need extra support

- ☐ They seem quieter than usual.
- ☐ They appear anxious or worried.
- ☐ They become frustrated more easily.
- ☐ They avoid activities they usually enjoy.
- ☐ They seem withdrawn.
- ☐ They become upset more often.
- ☐ Their routine changes noticeably.
- ☐ Other:

♥ What usually helps them feel better?

♥ How can I support them emotionally?

- ☐ Listen without judgement.
- ☐ Reassure them.
- ☐ Give them time to talk.
- ☐ Keep routines consistent.
- ☐ Encourage activities they enjoy.
- ☐ Celebrate small achievements.
- ☐ Ask how they're feeling.
- ☐ Other:

 One thing I can do today to support their wellbeing

 Remember

Every person deserves to feel listened to, valued and understood.

Sometimes the greatest support comes from being patient, spending time together and showing that someone cares.

Kindness, encouragement and understanding can make a lasting difference to someone's confidence and wellbeing.

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PAGE 7 – Building Confidence and Community

Feeling part of a community can improve confidence, wellbeing and independence.

Supporting someone with a learning disability isn't just about practical help—it's about encouraging friendships, new experiences and opportunities to belong.

Everyone deserves to feel included and valued.

 Ways to build confidence

- ☐ Celebrate achievements.
- ☐ Encourage new experiences.
- ☐ Praise effort, not just success.
- ☐ Support independent choices.
- ☐ Encourage hobbies and interests.
- ☐ Build on their strengths.
- ☐ Help them set realistic goals.
- ☐ Other:

 Ways to encourage community involvement

- ☐ Join local groups.
- ☐ Volunteer.
- ☐ Attend community events.
- ☐ Take part in sports or fitness.
- ☐ Learn a new skill.
- ☐ Meet with friends regularly.
- ☐ Explore new hobbies.
- ☐ Other:

♥ What makes them feel confident?

♥ One opportunity I can help them explore

Remember

Confidence grows when people are encouraged, included and believed in.

Every opportunity to make friends, learn something new or become involved in the community helps build independence and self-belief.

Support people to discover what they can achieve—not what others think they can't.

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PAGE 8 – Looking After Yourself as a Supporter

Supporting someone with a learning disability can be rewarding, but it's also important to care for your own wellbeing.

When you look after yourself, you're better able to provide patient, consistent and compassionate support.

Remember, asking for help and taking breaks are healthy parts of being a good supporter.

 How am I feeling today?

☐ Happy

☐ Calm

☐ Tired

☐ Stressed

☐ Overwhelmed

☐ Frustrated

☐ Worried

☐ Hopeful

☐ Other:

 This week I will...

☐ Take regular breaks.

☐ Get enough sleep.

☐ Eat healthy meals.

☐ Spend time outdoors.

☐ Talk to someone I trust.

☐ Make time for my hobbies.

☐ Accept help when it's offered.

☐ Practice self-care.

☐ Other:

 People who support me

1.

2.

3.

♥ One thing I will do for myself this week

♥ Remember

Supporting someone else shouldn't mean forgetting about yourself.

Looking after your own physical and emotional wellbeing helps you continue offering the best support possible.

A well-supported carer is better able to support others with patience, kindness and compassion.

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PAGE 9 – My Support Plan

Every person with a learning disability has their own strengths, goals and support needs.

A personalised support plan can help you provide consistent, respectful and person-centred support while encouraging independence and choice.

Remember, the aim is to help the person live the life they choose.

♥ What helps them thrive?

- ☐ A consistent routine.
- ☐ Clear communication.
- ☐ Encouragement.
- ☐ Time to make decisions.
- ☐ Familiar people.
- ☐ Positive feedback.
- ☐ Community activities.
- ☐ Learning new skills.
- ☐ Other:

♥ My Three Priorities

1.

2.

3.

People and Services That Can Help

1.

2.

3.

My Personal Reminder

When supporting someone with a learning disability, I want to remember...

Remember

The best support is built on respect, patience and believing in the person's abilities.

Every opportunity you give someone to make a choice, learn a skill or achieve a goal helps build confidence and independence.

Support people to live their lives—not simply to receive support.

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PAGE 10 – My Commitment as a Supporter

Congratulations on completing this workbook.

Supporting someone with a learning disability is about more than providing help—it's about encouraging independence, respecting choices and recognising each person's unique strengths and abilities.

Every act of kindness, encouragement and inclusion can have a lasting impact.

Remember, your role is not to do everything for the person, but to support them in living the life they choose.

 I Will Remember To...

- ☐ Treat the person with dignity and respect.
- ☐ Listen to their wishes and choices.
- ☐ Encourage independence whenever possible.
- ☐ Be patient and give them time.
- ☐ Celebrate every achievement.
- ☐ Focus on their strengths and abilities.

- ☐ Promote inclusion within the community.
- ☐ Continue learning how to provide the best support.

My Personal Reminder

When supporting someone with a learning disability, I want to remember...

My Support Promise

"I will support this person with kindness, patience and respect. I will encourage independence, celebrate their achievements and recognise their right to make choices about their own life. I will always see the person before the disability and help create opportunities for them to thrive."

Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Final Thoughts

Every person deserves the opportunity to live with dignity, choice, independence and respect.

Your encouragement, understanding and belief in the person's abilities can help build confidence, create opportunities and improve quality of life.

Thank you for taking the time to learn how to provide person-centred support.

Explore more free workbooks, resources and wellbeing tools at:

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 Supporting people, families, carers and communities with compassion, inclusion and respect.