**Steps in the Project (cont.)**

4. Eligibility/Individualized Plan for Employment (REMEDIATION)

Approximately 3 weeks following testing, the participant and the project manager or rehabilitation counselor will meet to go over the results of the testing and when appropriate, discuss the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE may include adult education classes (ABE, ESL, GED training), social skills development and vocational training.

5. Job Development/LD Specific Case Management (REHABILITATION)

The IPE may also include job development services include job training, job coaching and job placement services.

The LD Project Manager, Rehabilitation Counselor or Social Caseworker will become the focal point of contact for the participant and will assist in the facilitation and coordination of ancillary supports (e.g. Family Services, Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse Programs and Community Action Programs).

6. Job Retention (REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION)

A reasonable accommodation may be provided to assist an individual in the obtainment of a GED or to assist an individual in a work environment. A 90-day follow-up period follows the initial hiring date. During this time “On-the-Job-Training” or Job Coaching may continue as a support for the customer.

Individuals with learning disabilities have often been overlooked throughout their lives. Experiencing “hidden disabilities”, many participants have never been identified as having a specific learning disability.

The Learning Disabilities Project has in its first year provided numerous individuals with learning disabilities on public assistance their first clear picture of why they have had difficulty in obtaining, processing or retaining information throughout their lives. For some individuals this self-understanding has been a revelation, for others a confirmation of suspicions held for many years, and for many it becomes a catalyst on their road to independence and economic self-sufficiency.

For more information, contact:

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The Rhode Island learning disabilities project is a unique Department of Human Services intra-agency initiative between the Office of Rehabilitation Services and the Family Independence Program (FIP). This collaborative relationship was created to help identify parents on cash assistance with learning disabilities, and to provide the necessary accommodations and vocational training programs in order for individuals to become independent and economically self-sufficient.

What is a Learning Disability?
Although there are several different definitions of learning disabilities, it is generally understood that a learning disability is a neurological condition that affects one's ability to obtain, process and express information. This condition manifests itself across the lifespan and can affect one's ability to listen, speak, read, write or perform mathematical computations.

Prevalence of Learning Disabilities
- 5-15% of the general population
- 25-40% of the FIP (TANF) population
- 50-80% of Adult Basic Education (ABE) students

Some Facts About Learning Disabilities (LD)
- LD can affect anybody regardless of age, ethnicity, economic status or gender.
- LD can be hereditary & often runs in families.
- LD is a lifelong condition that can be manifested in many different ways, and throughout one's lifespan.
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD) and hyperactivity can and often does co-exist with a LD.
- Individuals with LD can compensate for their difficulties with appropriate interventions, support, accommodations, and self-advocacy.

Who Is Eligible?
Individuals currently on Family Independence Program (FIP) living in Rhode Island and who through screenings are believed to have a learning disability.

What Are Some of the Signs of a Learning Disability?

Receptive Language Deficits:
- Difficulty in comprehending information presented orally or written
- Difficulty transferring information presented orally

Expressive Language Deficits:
- Difficulty in spelling and/or handwriting problems

Reading Deficits:
- Difficulty reading applications or forms
- Reverses letters, words or phrases

Processing Deficits:
- Problems organizing and sequencing information

Mathematics Deficits:
- Difficulty counting money or making change
- Trouble balancing checkbook
- Trouble with left/right orientation

Attention Deficits:
- Easily distracted, short attention span
- Difficulty concentrating and focusing

Memory, Reasoning, Processing Deficits:
- Difficulty with short- or long-term memory
- Poor reasoning and decision-making skills

Social Skills Deficits:
- Poor self-esteem
- Indifference to self-defeating attitudes
- Social/interpersonal difficulties

The Steps in the Project...
follow the 4 R's of assisting individuals with learning disabilities: RECOGNITION, REMEDIATION, REHABILITATION, and REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION. The following steps make up the project design:

1. L.D. Screening (Recognition)
Screening takes place at D.H.S. community offices and at two-week workshops. One of the screening tools used is the S.T.E.P. questionnaire. S = Did you ever STAY back in school? T = Do you have TROUBLE learning or remembering new information? E = Did you receive any EXTRA help in school? P = Do you have a PHYSICAL or mental impairment which prevents you from working?

2. Referral
A referral form is sent to the project manager or the ORS Liaison to initiate the application process. A clinical interview is held with the applicant where background information is obtained, including previous testing if available. Barriers to employment are identified. During the interview other screening tools may be utilized such as self-assessment, the LD checklist, or the Washington State LD screening tool.

3. Testing
There are several evaluations which may be used to assess the existence of a learning disability. In this project a licensed psychologist performs a clinical evaluation. The tests will typically consist of the following: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS-III), Woodcock Johnson Psycho-educational and additional tests of cognitive processing.

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