

Accommodating learners with barriers to learning in the Grade R classroom

Learners with barriers to learning need additional support in order to reach their full potential. Some of these learners are easy to identify – for instance, they may be in a wheelchair, deaf or blind. But most learners with barriers to learning look like any other child – the educational need is not immediately obvious. Knowing what to look for is really important – the earlier you can identify your learners' barriers to learning, the sooner you can take steps to create an inclusive classroom and learning environment that will help them learn to their full potential.



WHAT ARE BARRIERS TO LEARNING?

A barrier to learning is anything that makes it difficult for a learner to achieve the Expected Levels of Development appropriate for his/her age and/or grade. All barriers to learning and development should be addressed in our classrooms.

SOME CAUSES OF LEARNING BARRIERS

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Barriers to learning are experienced by, among others:

- Learners who have to learn in a language that is not their home language.
- Learners who need to use South African Sign Language (SASL) but do not have access to it.
- Learners who are unable to speak properly due to a disability but do not have access to technologies that could help them.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES

These include negative attitudes towards:

- Learners with disabilities.
- School (parents and learners).
- Girl children.

DISABILITIES

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

These include negative attitudes towards:

- Poverty.
- Parents who had limited access to education and therefore cannot help their children.
- Poor self-image.
- Parents who are away at work all day.
- Alcoholism and violence.