

Celebrities with Learning Disabilities

If your child has just been diagnosed with a learning disability, he or she may be feeling a little bit iffy about their self-esteem. This may be due to the overwhelming (but untrue) notion in our society that scholastic difficulties severely limit a person's possibility of success in the work world. Of course, this is quite simply not true. There are plenty of well-known individuals with learning problems who have gone on to accomplish great things in their careers. Here are a few such examples who just might provide the encouragement and inspiration that your child needs to look to the future with optimism:

1. Whoopi Goldberg

Until she explained her difficulties with reading to a perceptive teacher as an adult, Goldberg had no idea she was dyslexic. She was then able to learn the strategies necessary that would allow her to make sense of written language. Goldberg went on to become an incredibly successful actress and comedienne. She is one of the few people in the world to have been awarded an Oscar, an Emmy, a Tony, and a Grammy. Goldberg is also the only woman to have ever hosted the Academy Awards. Her radio show, *Wake Up With Whoopi*, premiered on Clear Channel Radio at the end of July 1006. She has several upcoming movies slated for release, including *It's Under My Skin* and *The Last Guy on Earth*.

2. Tommy Hilfiger

Growing up in New York during the '50s and '60s, Hilfiger struggled with school because of his dyslexia. While reading proved difficult for him, he developed a keen eye for what lines and shapes suited the body. Hilfiger's sharp fashion sense and entrepreneurial drive helped him to launch his own label in 1982. Since then, his business has branched out to design not just men and women's wear, but children's clothing, shoes, home furnishings, and personal fragrances. Hilfiger has experienced continued success with an ever-increasing celebrity clientele, new store openings around the globe and company revenues in the hundreds of millions.

3. Jamie Oliver

This young, hip chef has made cooking cool for a new generation of Food Network viewers. While dyslexia problematized reading for Oliver as a student, he made it a point to finish every cookbook from the well-known Bay Area French restaurant, *Chez Panisse*. Oliver's learning disability has not stood in the way of his achievements; he has been the host of several popular cooking television programs, such as *The Naked Chef* and *Oliver's Twist*, and has written seven cookbooks, including the bestselling *Jamie's Dinners*. His latest television series-*Jamie's School Lunch Project*-documents his quest to revamp the menu of a British elementary school through the introduction of healthier cooking methods and the incorporation of organic foods.

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