

Individuals with hidden impairments, such as learning disabilities, ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, dyslexia and dyspraxia (DCD) and dyscalculia, may have difficulties in a number of areas. Remember that every individual will be different and their home and life experiences may also vary greatly. However, here is a list of common difficulties for those going through CJS:

- Filling in forms
- Explaining things
- Following instructions or directions
- Concentrating in lessons or work parties / workshops
- Managing their money
- Organising and looking after their possessions
- Telling the time and being time aware
- Remembering information
- Working in a group setting
- Reading, spelling, writing and understanding information
- Understanding social norms and hierarchy
- Learning a new skill

Irrespective of diagnosis, the following adjustments may help individuals navigate their way through the offending system.

- Ask the individual what has helped them in the past. Consider what can be put into the individual care plan / management plan.
- Ask what situations / tasks make it harder for them, such as background noise, working in group settings, reading written information, e.g. statements.
- The individual may need more time to digest information. This information should be presented using different methods, such as orally or in writing.
- Provide extra time and support when filling in forms, in interview settings, or when in a new learning environment.
- Some individuals may find it difficult to understand what is been requested of them and may not be able to communicate this difficulty accurately. Check with them first, allow more time and use different communication methods, invite them to ask questions and repeat what you said to make sure it is understood.
- When confused or unsure of how to behave, the individual may present as anxious, angry or irritable. If this happens stop and consider what may have led them to behave in this way e.g. don't understand; change in situation; not enough time to cope with the change; too much information given to them.

Below are some resources that can help you supporting individuals in CJS.

All links can be found at [doitprofiler.com/cjs/resources](https://doitprofiler.com/cjs/resources).

### Support organisations

- AADDUK
- ADDISS
- ADHD Europe
- Adult Dyslexia Organisation (UK)
- Afasic
- Afasic Scotland
- Autism Initiatives
- Autism Scotland
- British Dyslexia Association
- Dyslexia Action
- Dyslexia Association Ireland
- Dyslexia Scotland
- Dyspraxia Association of Ireland
- Dyspraxia Foundation
- Dyspraxia Scotland
- Education Scotland
- Foundation for people with Learning Disabilities
- HADD
- INCADDS
- Mencap
- National Autism Society
- Royal College of Psychiatrists
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
- Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability

### Other useful resources

- Positive Practice. Positive Outcomes. A useful document by the Government, with a lot of information and guidance on LDD in CJS.
- Interest groups for good practice guidance for offenders with LDD
- Easy read materials for CJS
- Check readability of materials:
  - Microsoft readability test
  - Readability Score

To find out more about the Do-IT Profiler for CJS, go to [doitprofiler.com/cjs](https://doitprofiler.com/cjs)

Reading/Literacy	Social and Communication/ASD	Attention, Concentration/ADHD	Coordination/ Dyspraxia (DCD)	Maths/Dyscalculia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anything that needs to be read should be presented in an easy-read format, and the reading age of the material should be appropriate.</li> <li>Where possible, use pictures, as well as words, to help understanding.</li> <li>Avoid printing on bright white paper. Use cream or pale blue instead.</li> <li>Use an easy to read font, such as Arial, Verdana, Comic Sans and size of 12+.</li> <li>Use short sentences and leave plenty of space between lines of text.</li> <li>Offer to read out aloud any written information. Avoid asking the individual to read out aloud in a group, unless this has been discussed beforehand.</li> <li>Offer to help complete any written forms.</li> <li>Where appropriate, write down instructions and use visual prompts to act as reminders.</li> <li>Allow more time to read information. Explain the meanings of words if the individual does not understand them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address the individual by name to ensure they know you are speaking to them.</li> <li>Ask the individual to repeat back what's been said to make sure they understand. If they don't, try and explain differently. Show, as well as tell, where you can.</li> <li>If a change is occurring, such as going to a new place (e.g. work parties, hall or wing, education or court), describe what will happen beforehand if possible.</li> <li>Break information into small chunks rather than giving a series of information at once.</li> <li>Avoid jokes and metaphors.</li> <li>Be specific in what you ask. Avoid saying 'in about 5 minutes' etc.</li> <li>Maintaining eye contact may be harder and may not indicate the individual is not listening to you.</li> <li>Create a list of words and terms used, and avoid prison jargon.</li> <li>Discuss if there are any specific sensory issues, e.g. touch, sound, textures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noisy and / or busy surroundings may make it harder for the individual to focus or understand important information. If possible, discuss what works best for the individual.</li> <li>Encourage exercise, which may help with sleep.</li> <li>Break learning / interview sessions into short blocks to maintain concentration, for example 15 minutes long where possible. Have the individuals move around and stretch.</li> <li>User timers for timed tasks. But set them at intervals, not just for the end of the task.</li> <li>Try to have clocks on display to make it easier to see the time, both digital and analogue.</li> <li>Encourage the individual to reflect what causes them to act impulsively.</li> <li>Discuss approaches to learning how to relax, e.g. mindfulness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handwriting may often be unreadable. Offer to write any letters or forms.</li> <li>Show the individual how to be organised with their paperwork, possessions, etc.</li> <li>Explain how to do tasks and allow more time to practice learning a new skill.</li> <li>Write a list of actions / tasks so they can see what needs to be done and cross them off as they are completed.</li> <li>Show what is expected, and tell the individual what to do. This may need to be shown several times, for example, how to tidy the cell. (You may want to have a photo of what is expected.)</li> <li>Encourage the individual to learn to type and practice a consistent signature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check the individual's understanding of terms, such as +, sum, add, plus, divide, etc.</li> <li>Practice simple addition and subtractions up to 20.</li> <li>Show how to use a calculator.</li> <li>Provide support managing finances.</li> </ul>