

# Understanding *How* Children Learn and *Why* They Sometimes Falter

by Dr. Mel Levine

(NAPS—There's good news for many parents whose children struggle in school. Currently, too many kids underachieve because the way they learn is incompatible with the way they're taught. Often boys and girls with good minds suffer from subtle dysfunctions—patterns of brain wiring that make certain aspects of learning exceedingly difficult. Such youngsters may develop poor self-esteem, behavior problems, anxiety and a loss of motivation.

Parents who are desperate to find a way to understand what's going on with their child now have a place to turn. The non-profit institute, All Kinds of Minds recently opened its first Student Success Center, a unique service to help identify a child's learning profile and help him or her become more successful in school and in life.

For example, a parent or teacher may notice a child is having memory problems, or difficulties with language, organization, socialization or written output. At the Student Success Center, a team of specialists can provide in-depth assessments and recommend solutions to assist families.

Every Student Success Center participant receives:

1. A thorough assessment of the student's strengths, weaknesses, and interests.
2. A comprehensive written report which provides families with information about their child's individual strengths and weaknesses.
3. A plan based on the child's learning profile that involves the child, his parents, learning specialists and other clinicians working together to help the stu-



**Many children could do better in school if their specific interests, strengths and weaknesses were properly identified, an expert explains.**

dent become a more productive learner. Methods to help a child succeed may include:

- Developing strategies that enable a student to learn to work around a weakness.
- Designing activities that actually strengthen an area of weakness.
- Strengthening “strengths” so the child uses and improves the parts of his mind that work especially well.
- Helping the child discover his/her natural interests where he can excel.

4. Long-term ongoing follow-up sessions with the family, the child and teachers to monitor the student's progress and make further adjustments in his or her education and home life.

More information is available about the Student Success Center in North Carolina by calling 1-888-956-4637 or 919-933-9378, or by visiting the All Kinds of Minds Web site: [www.allkindsofminds.org](http://www.allkindsofminds.org).

*Dr. Levine, the founder of All Kinds of Minds, is Professor of Pediatrics at the University of North Carolina Medical School and the Director of the University's Clinical Center for the Study of Development and Learning in Chapel Hill, NC.*