Dana Greco

Website Review

[*http://www.ldonline.org/parents*](http://www.ldonline.org/parents)

[*http://www.parentcenterhub.org/ld/*](http://www.parentcenterhub.org/ld/)

*Compare and Contrast*

My final Project is going to be a website for parents of children who may have a reading disability or other disabilities that may be addressed within an elementary Learning Support classroom, or even just parents of struggling students. I want to provide information, suggestions and resources that would help parents have a better understanding of special education and how they can address their needs at home (academically/behaviorally) and help them become more successful overall. I chose to review websites that contained this information and resources that would be beneficial to parents.

These websites were very similar with the plain color and layout, not too busy with photos or too much color that is distracting. Though I felt more engaged with ldonline.org/parents though it definitely contained a lot more information, which could be overwhelming. Parentcenterhub was clean and easy to navigate through. Both websites were accommodating with icons to enlarge fonts. Both websites has easy to access contact information, though ldonline did not provide a phone number. I liked how when a video link was shared it popped up right in front of the site rather than navigating to youtube or somewhere else. Overall, I felt ldonline was more suitable for the audience I would be looking to reach.

*Strengths and Weaknesses*

[*http://www.ldonline.org/parents*](http://www.ldonline.org/parents)

This website has an organized look and is easy to navigate through from the start, which I believe would be helpful to parents. The colors are not overwhelming or distracting as it is just a white back ground with predominately orange font with some in light blue. Certain topics and link are bolder and in larger print which also helps with navigation and grabbing your attention for key topics. Access for contact information and the home page remains at the top right corner regardless of what you click, on the navigation tool bar that directs you to a new page on the desktop website. Also, the navigation bar remains on the left side regardless as well. When navigating through different pages on the website, no matter what page you clicked on, at top of that page there is always an option to print this information or email it as well. Again, I feel as though this makes it much easier for parents to use and keep useful information in their possession. Underneath the print and email options, it said “text” provided three different sizes to accommodate those who may have trouble reading the small print. Therefore, rather than zooming in, you can simply enlarge the text, which I am sure most adults would appreciate. It seems that this website would be able to provide parents, even teachers with all the necessary information or questions they would have regarding specific learning disabilities. All pages have a clear purpose and topic with sub topics following. All of the links seem to navigate you to the appropriate topic. Also, I thought it was great that when a video was provided, it just popped up directly from that link in front of the web page, in a smaller box that could be enlarged, rather than taking the viewer to another page.

The main weakness of this website is that there were several ads on the sides of the web page, that I found distracting. Also, as great as it is that they provide so many good topics resources for parents, it does look like an information overload. Even though it is all provided in a very organized way, parents could become discouraged and intimidated from all the data being presented. Within the homepage, they provided parents with updated new articles regarding disabilities, which is wonderful but when you click on these it navigates you away from the website, rather than opening in a new webpage. Lastly, in regards to the contact info, they do not provide a phone number to speak with anyone directly, just a place to send an email message or a fax, which could turn some parents away who rather communicate with someone on a more personal level via phone.

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/ld/>

Parentcenterhub is not visually distracting or overwhelming, but rather pleasing to look at with plain text and background and just a little color. I liked how there was a search bar always at the top right hand corner of the pages for easy access to specific topics/questions. The contact information was accessible from a tab, but was also listed at the very bottom of every page and they provided an address, phone number and an email address. Also, always at the top left hand corner you were able to access their twitter, facebook or youtube page; which I felt was an important strength of this website. I am sure most parents use at least one of those three forms of social media regularly so this could help them gain even more access to information and resources on a regular basis if they chose to follow them. I also thought their navigations tabs were clean and direct, did not seem to have an overload of information. A very nice component to this website, similar to ldonline, there was an icon on the left hand side of every page allowing viewers to change to background color to black, to possibly make the text pop and also an icon to enlarge the text as well. I felt again, that this was such a wonderful features especially for adults when viewing this page, definitely makes it more accommodating and user friendly for all.

The main weakness of this website is when you first navigate to it, on the homepage for the Learning Disabilities, it states that those links have not been updated since 2015, though most of the other aspects of the website are updated what looks to be weekly, this would definitely be a concern to parents if the information they were reading was accurate. Though, I liked how they provided links to their facebook, twitter and youtube when clicked on this you were navigated from the main website to these sites, think it would be best if they were opened on a a new webpage and parents did not lose access to what they were looking at on the site.

*Use Cases*

One use case would obviously be directed for the use of parents/guardians. Both of these websites are created to assist educate and help parents, families of students with learning disabilities (possibly other disabilities as well). They both provided specific information, definitions, special education terms and suggestions as well as support for these families too. Personally I as though ldonline, would be the better option for what I am creating my website on. I think it may even be a good link to include as a possible resource on my site.

Another use case would be for students’ usage as well, Ldonline would most definitely be beneficial for students too, they provided resources for students to access on the computer. They also have a tab called “Kid’s Voices” which provides three sub topics: an art gallery where they could actually view tons of artwork provided by other students with a disability, as well as a sub topic for books; where a list of children’s book are provided with a picture of the book too and lastly a “Your Stories” subtopic; where they could read about other students situations and lives.

Parentcenterhub is not necessarily aimed at students specifically, but I feel if the students were older maybe they would be interested in learning more about the information and supports that are out there and possibly take advantage of the fact that they use social media in different forms to get out information. I would think that some students would follow them on some form of social media whether it be Youtube, twitter or Facebook. They also may be interested in reading the stories provided on other students with a learning disabilities.

Additionally, these sites could also be beneficial for regular education teachers who may have students within their classrooms with disabilities and may not feel as comfortable or as educated as a special education teacher is in these areas.

*Comments*

Joel Jenkins

Jun 14 at 7:06pm

Dana,

Both sites present great information for the intended audiences. LD Online incorporates a dynamic layout. This provides legibility on screens or pads. White-space occupied one-third of my screen.

Inspecting CPIR Learning Disabilities site reveals code designed for screen reader text. The builders considered the visually-impaired visitor in their layout.

Both websites force the audience to work to find information. These layouts would better serve the audience if they guided the audience. Organized compartments of information would relieve scroll-fatigue. The CPIR-site required ten-scrolls of the mouse wheel to scan through the 16-point type. Usability studies show that a site loses visitors once they scroll beneath the fold.

A logical, organized navigation can save many a website.