

Educational Disability Definitions

What is Autism - Autism is a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics that may be associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. Essential features are typically but not necessarily manifested before age three. Autism may include autism spectrum disorders such as but not limited to autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder -- not otherwise specified, and Asperger's syndrome. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance. However, a child who qualifies for special education under the category of autism may also have an emotional disturbance as a secondary disability if the child meets the criteria under emotional disturbance.

What is Deaf-blind - Having both hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that the child cannot be accommodated in special education programs designed solely for students having hearing or visual impairments;

What is a Visual Impairment - A visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes those children who are partially sighted or blind.

What is a Communication Disorder - The impairment of speech articulation, voice, fluency, or the impairment or deviant development of language comprehension and/or expression, or the impairment of the use of a spoken or other symbol system that adversely affects educational performance. The language impairment may be manifested by one or more of the following components of language: morphology, syntax, semantics, phonology, and pragmatics;

What is a Developmental Delay - A disability category used for children birth through age of eligibility for public school who experiences developmental delays in physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development or adaptive development.

A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

- (A) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
- (B) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
- (C) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
- (D) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
- (E) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
- (F) The term includes schizophrenia but does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have a serious emotional disturbance;

What is a Hearing Impairment- Means a hearing condition, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes those children who are hard of hearing or deaf. Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

What is Mental Retardation - Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, and includes a student whose intelligence test score is two or more standard deviations below the norm on a standardized individual intelligence test, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, and that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

What is an Orthopedic Impairment- Means a motor disability that adversely affects the child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by an anomaly, disease or other conditions (e.g. cerebral palsy, spinal bifida, muscular dystrophy or traumatic injury).

What is OHI (Other Health Impairment)-

1) To be eligible as a child with an other health impairment, the child must meet all of the minimum criteria:

(a) The child exhibits limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment;

(b) The child's limited strength, vitality or alertness is due to a chronic or acute health problem; and

(c) The child's condition is permanent or expected to last for more than 60 calendar days.

(2) For a child to be eligible for special education services as a child with an other health impairment, the eligibility team must also determine that:

(a) The child's disability has an adverse impact on the child's educational performance; and

(b) The child needs special education services as a result of the disability.

What is a Specific Learning Disability-means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations. Specific learning disability includes conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, dyslexia, minimal brain dysfunction and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Traumatic Brain Injury - An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psycho social impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, including cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psycho-social behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. The term does not include brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma.