

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

1. Definition

Developmental Delay refers to children aged three (3) through nine (9) who are experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional, or adaptive development that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other disability categories shall be used if they are more descriptive of a young child's strengths and needs. Local school systems have the option of using Developmental Delay as a disability category. Initial eligibility as Developmental Delay shall be determined before the child's seventh birthday.

2. Evaluation

The characteristics identified in the Developmental Delay Definition are present.

Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation of Developmental Delay shall include the following:

- a. Evaluation through an appropriate multi-measure diagnostic procedure, administered by a multi-disciplinary assessment team in all of the following areas (not only areas of suspected delays):
 - (1) physical development, which includes fine and gross motor skills combined;
 - (2) cognitive development;
 - (3) communication development, which includes receptive and expressive language skills combined;
 - (4) social/emotional development; and
 - (5) adaptive development.
- b. Demonstration of significant delay in one or more of the above areas which is documented by:
 - (1) performance on a standardized developmental evaluation instrument which yields a 1.5 standard deviations below the mean; or when standard scores for the instrument used are not available, a 25% delay based on chronological age in two or more of the developmental areas; or
 - (2) performance on a standardized developmental evaluation instrument which yields 2.0 standard deviations below the mean; or when standard scores for the instrument used are not available, a 40% delay based on chronological age in one of the developmental areas; and
 - (3) when one area is determined to be deficit by 2.0 standard deviations or 40% of the child's chronological age, the existence of other disability categories that are more descriptive of the child's learning style shall be ruled out.

- c. Evaluation by appropriate team member(s) of the following:
 - (1) documentation of identifiable atypical development;
 - (2) measurement of developmental skills using individually administered procedures;
 - (3) examination of developmental strengths and needs of the child gathered from observation(s);
 - (4) observation by a qualified professional in an environment natural for the child which may include the school, child-care agency, and/or home/community to document delayed or atypical development,
 - (5) interview with the parent to discuss and confirm the noted strengths and needs in the child's development;
 - (6) a review of any existing records or data, and
 - (7) documentation, including observation and/or assessment, of how Developmental Delay adversely impacts the child's educational performance in his/her learning environment.
- d. After the age of seven, when reevaluation for continued eligibility is determined appropriate by the IEP Team, the reevaluation shall include at a minimum a multi-measure diagnostic procedure which includes a comprehensive psycho-educational assessment that measures developmental skills, cognitive functioning, and/or additional areas as determined appropriate by the IEP Team.

Evaluation Participants

Information shall be gathered from the following persons in the evaluation of Developmental Delay:

- (1) the parent;
- (2) the child's general education classroom teacher (with a child of less than school age, an individual qualified to teach a child of his/her age),
- (3) a licensed early childhood special education teacher or special education teacher with pre-school experience and one or more of the following persons:
 - (a) a licensed school psychologist, licensed psychologist, licensed senior psychological examiner, or licensed psychological examiner;
 - (b) a licensed speech/language specialist;
 - (c) a licensed related services and medical specialists; and
 - (d) other personnel, as indicated.