

Short Description of the Various Exceptionalities

Exceptionality	Definition	Characteristics
Autism/Asperger Syndrome	A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, adversely affecting a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines and unusual responses to sensory experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe social problems • Psychomotor coordination deficiencies • Organization difficulties • Lack of ability to read body language or facial expressions • Inability to understand pragmatic language • Often has one particular area of interest to the exclusion of all else • Can be comorbid with sensory integration dysfunction, obsessive compulsive disorder, and/or anxiety disorders
Specific Learning Disability	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, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing deficits resulting in slow responses and work production • Difficulty with long/short term memory • Deficient or extremely uneven academic skills • Lack of organizational and study skills • Possible social problems • Inordinately frustrated by school work • Possible issues of impulsivity • Can be comorbid with ADHD and sensory integration dysfunction • Possible gross and/or fine motor difficulties
Attention Deficit Disorder without Hyperactivity	<p>A medically defined disorder characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity.</p> <p>It involves an inability to direct and/or control attention due to an under-focus on all stimuli (hypo-focused)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks stimuli through a variety of actions in order to stay focused (e.g., fidgets, squirms, shifts from one activity to another, touches everything) • Difficulty sustaining attention for even short periods of time • Easily distracted by external stimuli • Loses/forgets things, information, etc. • Interrupts or intrudes on others • Inability to follow more than one step in a set of directions or instructions • May engage in physically dangerous activities • Cannot see the consequences of actions
Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity	<p>A medically defined disorder characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity.</p> <p>It involves an inability to direct and/or control attention due to an over-focus on all stimuli (hyper-focused)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distracted by stimuli and responds by(e.g., fidgeting, squirming, shifting from one activity to another, touching everything) • Difficulty sustaining attention for even short periods of time • Easily distracted by external stimuli • Avoids or complains about noise, other students, lights, smells, etc. • Paces or roams the room • Impulsive • Interrupts or intrudes on others • Inability to follow more than one step in a set of directions or instructions • Cannot see the consequences of actions

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<p>Emotional Behavioral Disorder</p>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors • An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers • Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances • A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression • A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems <p>EBD Includes mood disorders, anxiety disorders (e.g., generalized anxiety disorders, panic disorders, social phobia), and obsessive compulsive disorders, but psychiatric diagnosis is not a required criteria for IDEA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely inflexible • Low frustration threshold • Difficulty controlling emotions • Limited capacity for change • Extreme explosive episodes • Completely falls apart when hungry, tired, or stressed • Excessive worrying • Social withdrawal or aggression • Irritable or angry • Depression • Variety of physical symptoms
<p>Speech and Language Impairment</p>	<p>Speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.</p>	<p>The characteristics of speech or language impairments will vary depending upon the type of impairment involved. There may also be a combination of several problems. The types of impairments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation disorder • Fluency disorder (stuttering) • Voice disorder • Language disorder, which refers to an impaired ability to understand and/or use words in context. Expressive language disorder: difficulty expressing ideas. Receptive language disorder: difficulty understanding verbal communication

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<p>Traumatic Brain Injury</p>	<p>Traumatic brain injury means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Traumatic brain injury applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.</p>	<p>Children who sustain TBI may experience a complex array of problems, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical/Neurological Symptoms: speech, vision, hearing and other sensory impairment, decreased motor coordination, difficulty breathing, dizziness, headaches, impaired balance, loss of intellectual capacities, partial to full paralysis, reduced body strength, seizures, sleep disorders, and speech problems • Cognitive Symptoms: decreased attention, organizational skills, and problem solving ability; difficulty with abstract concepts; memory deficits; perceptual problems; poor concentration and judgment; slowed information processing; and poor memory • Behavioral/Emotional Symptoms: aggressive behavior, denial of deficits, depression, difficulty accepting and responding to change, reduction of inhibitions, distractibility, feelings of worthlessness, lack of emotion, low frustration level, helplessness, impulsivity, inappropriate crying or laughing, and irritability • Social Skills Development: difficulties maintaining relationships, inability to restrict socially inappropriate behaviors, inappropriate responses to the environment, insensitivity to others' feelings, limited initiation of social interactions, and social isolation • Any or all of the above impairments may occur to different degrees. The nature of the injury and its attendant problems can range from mild to severe, and the course of recovery is very difficult to predict for any given student.