Eligibility of Child with Learning Disabilities
Policy/Procedure

Children with learning disabilities are eligible for special education services. Criteria include:

1. A child is classified as having a learning disability who has 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 imperfect ability to listen, think, speak or, for preschool age children, acquire the precursor skills for reading, writing, spelling or doing mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, and aphasia.

2. An evaluation team may recommend that a child be classified as having a learning disability if:
   • The child does not achieve commensurate with his or her age and ability levels in one or more of the areas listed in (a) above when provided with appropriate learning experiences for the age and ability; or
   • The child has a severe discrepancy between achievement of developmental milestones and intellectual ability in one or more of these areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-mathematics; or
   • The child shows deficits in such abilities as memory, perceptual and perceptual -motor skills, thinking, language and non-verbal activities which are not due to visual, motor, hearing or emotional disabilities, mental retardation, cultural or language factors, or lack of experiences which would help develop these skills.

3. This definition for learning disabilities applies to four and five year old children in Head Start. It may be used at a program's discretion for children younger than four or when a three year old child is referred with a professional diagnosis of learning disability. But because of the difficulty of diagnosing learning disabilities for three year olds, when Head Start is responsible for the evaluation it is not a requirement to use this category for three year olds.

This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45 CFR Section 1304.21, 1308.14
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