Eligibility of Child with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
Policy/Procedure

Children with emotional or behavioral functioning disorders are eligible for special education services. Criteria include:

1. An emotional/behavioral disorder is a condition in which a child's behavioral or emotional responses are so different from those of the generally accepted, age-appropriate norms of children with the same ethnic or cultural background as to result in significant impairment in social relationships, self-care, educational progress or classroom behavior. A child is classified as having an emotional/behavioral disorder who exhibits one or more of the following characteristics with such frequency, intensity, or duration as to require intervention:
   - Seriously delayed social development including an inability to build or maintain satisfactory (age appropriate) interpersonal relationships with peers or adults (e.g., avoids playing with peers);
   - Inappropriate behavior (e.g., dangerously aggressive towards others, self-destructive, severely withdrawn, non-communicative);
   - A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, or evidence of excessive anxiety or fears (e.g., frequent crying episodes, constant need for reassurance); or
   - Has a professional diagnosis of serious emotional disturbance.

2. The eligibility decision must be based on multiple sources of data, including assessment of the child's behavior or emotional functioning in multiple settings.

3. The evaluation process must include a review of the child's regular Head Start physical examination to eliminate the possibility of misdiagnosis due to an underlying physical condition.

This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45 CFR Section 1304.21, 1308.8
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