

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

A Developmental Disability is present when an individual does not reach his/her developmental milestones at the expected times in three or more areas. It is an ongoing major or minor delay in the process of development. Individuals diagnosed with developmental delays or disabilities may experience difficulty with a variety of independent living skills. They generally experience limitations in three or more of the following:

1. Self-care
2. Self-direction
3. Economic/Financial self sufficiency
4. Independent living
5. Learning
6. Receptive and expressive language
7. Mobility



The table below indicates an approximate timeline of growth and development for typically developing individuals. Delays in the acquisition of these skills impact independence and ability to function in daily life. When typical developmental milestones are not met, professionals may be able to diagnose and classify specific developmental disabilities.

AGE	DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONE	AGE	DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONE
2 months	Smiles at others' voices	18 months	Walks independently. Drinks from a cup. Eats finger food independently. Says at least 15 words.
3 months	Raises head and chest when lying on stomach, grasps objects smiles at other people	2 years	Runs, speaks in two word sentences, follows simple instructions, begins to use make believe in play
4 months	Babbles laughs and tries to imitate sounds	4 years	Gets along with people outside the family draws shapes rides a tricycle
6 months	Rolls from back to stomach and stomach to back. Moves object from hand to hand. Anticipates feeding and bathing.	5 years	Knows name and address. Jumps, hops and skips. Counts 10 + objects. Says over 2,000 words.
7 months	Responds to own name. Finds partially hidden objects	7 to 11 years	Concrete Operational Stage, acquires basic logic and reasoning skills. Applies skills to everyday life
9 months	Sits without support, crawls, shows fear of strangers	Teens to adult	Formal Operational Stage. Problem solving. Abstract thinking
12 months	Walks with or without support, waves bye bye. Understands the word no. Engages in give and take activities. Begins to say words and imitate people		

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS SERVED

What is a Developmental Disability?

A disability associated with one or more of the following:

- **Intellectual Disability**
- **Cerebral Palsy**
- **Epilepsy**
- **Autism**
- **Down's syndrome**
- **Other Neurological Impairments**
- **It is likely to continue indefinitely**
- **It must be diagnosed prior to age 22**

Autism refers to a condition characterized by disorders of communication and behavior which manifests itself during the early developmental stages. An individual with autism often has typical physical and motor development while often having difficulty with expressive and receptive language and communication. Some forms of emotional behavior are present in some but not all individuals. Individuals with autism may exhibit a variety of ways of relating to people, objects and events and may also appear uninterested, aloof, and exhibit a lack of concentration. Behaviors such as hand flapping, touching, tapping, twiddling of fingers, and rocking behaviors may be present in some, but definitely not all individuals with autism. Individuals with autism can be confused by things occurring in their environment and therefore desire familiar things and set routines which are part of a system. Changes in the usual routine may pose problems. Therefore, it is important that you know which patterns to follow in their everyday activities. There can be a need for language stimulation and training in the area of social skills in order for individuals to increase their relationships and become part of their communities. There may also be a need for behavioral programming to deal with self-injurious, repetitive, and aggressive behaviors which are present in some individuals. Autism is a condition which is still surrounded by controversy. Person centered planning and service provision,

support, guidance, clear instruction, and understanding and compassion are methods which are successfully resulting in increased independence for individuals.

Cerebral Palsy is the term applied to a group of neurological conditions that result in impaired or abnormal functioning in the areas of the brain that control movement. It is usually attributed to brain injury before or during birth. However, brain damage or injury at any time in life can result in much the same symptoms characterized primarily by difficulty in muscular coordination and sensory functions. Cerebral Palsy may also be associated with seizures, or the inability to see, speak, hear, or learn as similarly to non-disabled peers. In some cases, psychological or behavioral problems may result. Because individuals with Cerebral Palsy often have severe speech problems, others frequently make the mistake of thinking they have Intellectual Disabilities. It is best to get to know individuals to learn their strengths and refrain from mistakenly identifying them. While no cure currently exists for Cerebral Palsy, treatment may include physical, occupational, speech, and hearing therapy by professionals.

Epilepsy refers to a condition of the nervous system characterized by sudden seizures, muscle convulsions, and partial or total loss of consciousness due to abnormal chemical-electrical discharges of the brain. Common behavioral characteristics as they relate to epilepsy include drowsiness, fatigue, embarrassment, changes in emotion and alteration of a person's perception of familiarity or unfamiliarity. The primary characteristic of all forms of Epilepsy is the presence of seizures.

Intellectual Disability is a condition involving significant below average intellectual abilities combined with deficits in adaptive behavior which are manifested during the developmental period. Significant below average intellectual functioning means a test score of less than 70 on standardized IQ tests such as Wechsler and Stanford-Binet.

Deficits in adaptive behavior means an inability to meet the standards of personal independence and social responsibility expected on an age and cultural grouping milestone chart. The phrase “Manifested during the developmental period” means that the condition occurred during the first 18 years of life and includes speech difficulties, shortened attention span, difficulties in performing activities of daily living and a lack of self-help skills. In addition, delays in motor development are sometimes present in individuals with intellectual disabilities. An intellectual disability is a condition and cannot be cured by medications as though it were an illness or disease. Many people confuse Intellectual Disability with Mental Illness. A basic difference is that mental illness usually manifests itself later in life than most developmental disabilities, and the person involved has generally experienced normal intellectual and adaptive development, prior to the onset of a mental illness. The service needs of one diagnosed with both Intellectual Disability and a mental illness (dual Diagnosed) pose additional challenges for both the individual and the service providers. Diagnosis is sometimes challenging for clinicians, because the person’s intellectual disabilities may impair their insight and accurate reporting of symptoms. Persons who are dually diagnosed benefit from a variety of programmin including positive behavioral supports, psychiatrists and psychologists who specialize in ID/MI, well trained staff, and the use of approved medications. Persons with ID/MI can live and work successfully in their communities with appropriate supports.

Down Syndrome is a genetic condition in which a person has 47 chromosomes instead of the usual 46. Down syndrome symptoms vary from person to person and can range from mild to severe. Individuals with Down Syndrome have wide ranging abilities. However, children with Down syndrome have a widely recognized appearance. Their head may be smaller and differently shaped than typically developing children. The inner corner of the eyes may be rounded instead of pointed. They may have a smaller body structure which can be less flexible than peers. As mentioned with other disabilities, all characteristic vary from person to person.

Other Neurological Impairments

This group of disabilities includes disorders of the brain and central nervous system that substantially impair the use and development of language, understanding, memory, attention span, fine muscle control, and adaptive behavior. Some examples include aphasia, some level of brain damage and learning disabilities. Individuals with a neurological impairment may experience a variety of learning or social behavior problems. They may also have special care needs because of problems in muscular control. Some forms of neurological impairments are both difficult to diagnose and to treat. Many individuals are able to compensate and do very well later in life. Some persons may need selected specialized services similar to those provided to other individuals with disabilities.

Common Characteristics of Developmental Disabilities:

- **Sensory/Motor Development**
- **Disturbances in any of the senses**
- **Disturbances in motor skills and/or coordination**
- **Communication**
- **Difficulty speaking, organizing or relaying a message**
- **Repetitive language**
- **Difficulty understanding other people’s language, especially strangers**
- **Cognitive Processing Difficulty**
- **Difficulty focusing and paying attention**
- **Easily distracted**
- **Poor impulse control**
- **Difficulty in understanding concepts**
- **Memory difficulties**
- **Limited problem solving and decision making skills**
- **Delayed Emotional Development**
- **Limited use of coping skills**
- **Lack of appropriate alternative responses**
- **Social Development issues**
- **Difficulty forming and maintaining relationships**

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

TEST

1. When typical developmental milestones are not met professionals may be able to diagnose a specific developmental disability. True False

2. Intellectual Disability is the only type of Developmental Disability. True False

3. A Developmental Disability is likely to continue indefinitely. True False

4. All individuals with autism engage in repetitive behaviors. True False

5. Cerebral Palsy is always accompanied by Intellectual Disability. True False

6. Intellectual Disability is the same as Mental Illness. True False

7. Individuals with Developmental Disabilities always have difficulty with self-care, economic self-sufficiency and mobility. True False

8. Individuals with autism have made progress with the help of supportive staff and instructors, clear instruction, guidance, and understanding and compassion. True False

9. Name three of the developmental milestone areas an individual may experience delays in, in order to be considered as having a disability.

10. If a child does not walk at 12 months, would he/she be considered as having a developmental disability? Yes No

11. If a person with a developmental disability increases their independence in one area are they considered as no longer having a disability? Yes No

12. Individuals with disabilities can live independently and live meaningful lives. True False

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE