



# SPECIAL EDUCATION

## Categories of Disability

### **Specific Learning Disability**

Students with a SLD have difficulties comprehending information that a typically developing student may easily process. This may lead to a variety of different issues including escalated behaviors. Students diagnosed with a SLD also may need instruction given to them based around their area of strength (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). Also, students diagnosed with a SLD may be average to strong in one academic area, while extremely weak in another.

### **Multiple Disabilities**

Students with multiple disabilities typically have a variety of issues and typically require similar support to those students who are TBI or ID. They generally have lower cognition and may be bound to a wheel chair. Please refer to the ID section how the disability manifests itself in the classroom.

### **Intellectual Disability**

Students who are intellectually disabled (formally mentally retarded) typically require an alternative setting and curriculum in order to meet educational needs. These students typically have fairly substantial deficits across all areas and need work heavily modified in order to gain access to educational standards. Life skills and community based skills are typically taught with this population. Some mainstreaming opportunities may be available for these students including electives. While an inclusive service may be available, it would still require the teachers to heavily modify the work especially in a secondary setting.

### **Orthopedic Impairment**

Students with orthopedic impairments have some form of physical impairment with their body (typically their waist and below). They typically need to be transported in a wheel chair and also have difficulty with gross and fine motor skills. Students diagnosed as OI also can have severe cognitive delays which could require an alternative setting in order to meet educational needs.

### **Other Health Impairment**

Students diagnosed with OHI have some medical diagnosis that does have an effect on their educational needs. The primary diagnosis typically is ADHD. The student typically has difficulty adjusting to the classroom and may need breaks or a quiet area to complete work due to the medical need. Strategies for students with a diagnosis of OHI may have wide range of needs because of the overall scope of the disability. Listed below are strategies for students with a diagnosis of OHI.

### **Autism**

Autism manifests itself in a variety of different ways in a classroom. Foremost though, Autism is a wide spectrum that looks different from student to student. Primarily, students with autism typically need consistent routine with clear visual cues. Also, students with autism are typically very literal. There is no “gray” area rather everything from teacher instruction to peer to peer interaction is “black and white”. A student may be mildly teasing a student with autism, and they very well may take it literally. For students with more severe autism, they typically need some form of physical stimulation. They also may exhibit some small physical movements which is referred to as stemming.

Also, students with autism can be more prone to having more drastic behavioral issues that may at times involve biting, hitting, scratching and spitting.

### **Deaf-Blindness**

Students that this particular disability typically require some alternative form of communication in order to interact with the classroom environment. Students who are deaf/blind need heavier reliance for some other forms of communication involving their other senses.

### **Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Students who are deaf typically have a heavy reliance on ASL, and/or lip reading. Therefore, they would need to have that form of communication readily available to them.

### **Emotional Disturbance**

Students who are emotionally disturbed (ED) have a variety of different behavioral issues. ED students typically have behavioral extremes which can include moments of depression, anxiety of violence. They typically require therapeutic components to the classroom in order to process certain aspects of the school day and home life. ED students typically need some “safe place” in order to go to in order to process information.

### **Hearing Impairment**

Students that this particular disability typically require some alternative form of communication in order to interact with the classroom environment. Students who are hearing impaired on either ASL, lip reading, or some other Assistive technology device such as a Dynavox, FM Hearing Device, and/or iPad. The classroom will need to be conducive to this student so that they may have equal access to their education.

### **Speech or Language Impairment**

Students with a diagnosis of a SLI typically have a variety of issues based around speech i.e. receptive and expressive language. They may have difficulties understanding what the teacher may be stating or have difficulties getting the appropriate words out to express themselves. Predominantly, students diagnosed with a SLI only need speech therapy.

### **Traumatic Brain Injury**

Students diagnosed with a TBI, as the name implies, had some form of serious brain injury that resulted in severe cognition loss. Students diagnosed with a TBI typically have similar abilities as these students diagnosed as ID or MD. For further information please refer to the ID section.

### **Visual Impairment**

Students who have a visual impairment have difficulty with their vision. They typically need to have items enlarged for them and be closer to the front of the classroom in order to better see the teacher notes.