



ESE Program Information Sheet - Developmentally Delayed (DD) (age 0-5)

Definition: A prekindergarten child with disabilities is a child who is below five (5) years of age on or before September 1 and has a sensory, physical, mental, or emotional condition which significantly affects the attainment of normal developmental milestones.

A child who is developmentally delayed is one (1) through five (5) years of age and is delayed in one (1) or more of the following areas:

1. Adaptive or self-help development,
2. Cognitive development,
3. Communication development,
4. Social or emotional development,
5. Physical development including fine, or gross, or perceptual motor.

This definition is found in State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.03026, F.A.C.

Overview: Many different types of developmental delay may occur in infants and young children. They may cause problems with language development, independent functioning skills, social or emotional skills, cognitive skills, and communication skills. Sometimes a child may experience delays in many or all of these areas. When this happens, it is called "global developmental delay." Global developmental delay may occur for any of the following reasons:

- A genetic defect, such as Down syndrome
- Fetal alcohol syndrome, caused by a mother drinking alcohol during pregnancy
- Fragile X syndrome, an inherited type of cognitive impairment
- Severe medical problems developing soon after birth, often associated with prematurity
- Often no cause can be found

Early Intervention services enable many children to “catch up” to typical development. Children initially diagnosed with one or more developmental delays, who receive sufficient interventions early enough, often will no longer need services when re-evaluated.

State Laws and Regulations: The rules referenced below are specific to Prekindergarten Children with Disabilities and Children Three through Five who are Developmentally Delayed. Please refer to [Volume I-B: Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules, Excerpts Related to Exceptional Student Education](#) (PDF, 9MB) for a complete listing of laws and regulations applicable to exceptional student education.

- [6A-6.03026 Special Programs for Prekindergarten Children with Disabilities](#)

- [6A-6.03027 Special Programs for Children Three Through Five Years Old who are Developmentally Delayed.](#)

General Resources: The following Resources will provide educators with information concerning Students with Developmental Delays.

- [Prekindergarten Children with Disabilities Expanding Opportunities for Providing Services: A Guide for Making System and Program Level Decisions](#) (PDF, 2MB)
- [Technical Assistance Paper K12: 2007-160 - Transition from Early Steps to the School District Prekindergarten Program for Children with Disabilities or Other Programs](#) (PDF, 148KB)

Websites:

- [Florida's Central Directory of Early Childhood Services](#)
- [Florida's Early Steps](#)

State Resources:

- [Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services](#)
- [Florida Department of Education: Early Learning/Prekindergarten](#)
- [Florida's Early Steps](#)
- [Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System-Child Find](#)

National Resources:

- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Learn the Signs. Act Early](#)
- [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center \(ECTA\)](#)
- [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center \(ECTA\)- Transition](#)
- [National Professional Development Center on Inclusion \(NPDCI\)](#)
- [Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention \(TACSEI\)](#)

Tips to support inclusion: Students diagnosed with development delay(s) need to receive individualized instruction, based upon their area(s) of deficit. It is important for teachers to realize the wide range of abilities and characteristics students with DD may exhibit and develop effective teaching strategies. Some general tips follow:

- Allow for adequate thought process time. When asking a question or offering a choice, allow three (3) seconds or more before restating the question or giving further prompts.
- Use visual supports to help the student understand the flow of the day, as well as what is expected during activities.
- Model or have another student model the behavior/activity that you are asking the child to complete.
- Think "out-loud" so that the student can hear your thought process.
- Allow for repetition of skill practice.
- Adapt teaching tools, based upon the needs of the student.
- Break down multiple-step challenges into manageable tasks, when teaching new skills. The student should be able to experience success after completing each step.
- Be patient!