

Standards for Special Education Evaluation & Eligibility

The following standards for special education evaluation and eligibility shall be effective July 1, 2017.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

I. Definition

Traumatic Brain Injury means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one (1) or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

Traumatic Brain Injury may include all of the following:

- (1) An insult to the brain caused by an external force that may produce a diminished or altered state of consciousness; and
- (2) The insult to the brain induces a partial or total functional disability and results in one (1) or more of the following:
 - (a) Physical impairments such as, but not limited to:
 1. Speech, vision, hearing, and other sensory impairments;
 2. Headaches;
 3. Fatigue;
 4. Lack of coordination;
 5. Spasticity of muscles;
 6. Paralysis of one or both sides; and
 7. Seizure disorder.
 - (b) Cognitive impairments such as, but not limited to:
 1. Attention or concentration;
 2. Ability to initiate, organize, or complete tasks;
 3. Ability to sequence, generalize, or plan;
 4. Flexibility in thinking, reasoning or problem solving;
 5. Abstract thinking;
 6. Judgment or perception;
 7. Long-term or short term memory, including confabulation;
 8. Ability to acquire or retain new information; and
 9. Ability to process information/processing speed.
 - (c) Psychosocial impairments such as, but not limited to:

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1. Impaired ability to perceive, evaluate, or use social cues or context appropriately that affect peer or adult relationships;
2. Impaired ability to cope with over-stimulation environments and low frustration tolerance;
3. Mood swings or emotional lability;
4. Impaired ability to establish or maintain self-esteem;
5. Lack of awareness of deficits affecting performance;
6. Difficulties with emotional adjustment to injury (anxiety, depression, anger, withdrawal, egocentricity, or dependence);
7. Impaired ability to demonstrate age-appropriate behavior;
8. Difficulty in relating to others;
9. Impaired self-control (verbal or physical aggression, impulsivity);
10. Inappropriate sexual behavior or disinhibition;
11. Restlessness, limited motivation and initiation; and
12. Intensification of pre-existing maladaptive behaviors or disabilities.

II. Evaluation

The characteristics as identified in the Traumatic Brain Definition are present.

Evaluations Procedures

A multi-disciplinary team approach to individual evaluation procedures that include varied sources of information and the appropriate use of instruments sensitive to cultural, linguistic, and environmental factors or sensory impairments to include the following:

- (1) Appropriate medical statement obtained from a licensed medical provider;
- (2) Parent/caregiver interview;
- (3) Educational history and current levels of educational performance;
- (4) Functional assessment of cognitive/communicative abilities;
- (5) Social adaptive behaviors which relate to Traumatic Brain Injury;
- (6) Physical adaptive behaviors which relate to Traumatic Brain Injury; and
- (7) Documentation, including observation and/or assessment, of how Traumatic Brain Injury adversely affects the child's educational performance in his/her learning environment and the need for specialized instruction and related services (i.e., to include academic and/or nonacademic areas).

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Evaluation Participants

Information shall be gathered from the following persons in the evaluation of Traumatic Brain Injury:

- (1) The parent;
- (2) The child's general education teacher;
- (3) A licensed special education teacher;
- (4) A licensed school psychologist, licensed psychologist, licensed psychological examiner (under the direct supervision of a licensed psychologist), licensed senior psychological examiner, or licensed psychiatrist;
- (5) A licensed medical provider (i.e., licensed physician, physician's assistant or licensed nurse practitioner); and
- (6) Other professional personnel (e.g., occupational therapist, physical therapist), as indicated.