



Missouri Eligibility Criteria for Young Child with Developmental Disability

Young Child with a Developmental Delay Definition

“Young Child with a Developmental Delay” means a child ages three (3) through five (5) who is experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate evaluation instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development, and who need special education and related services.

Note: LEAs in Missouri are not required to adopt and use the term “Young Child with a Developmental Delay” for any children in their jurisdiction. However, if an LEA uses the term “Young Child with a Developmental Delay,” the LEA must conform to both the State’s definition of the term and the age range.

Criteria for Initial Eligibility for Young Children with a Developmental Delay

A child has a developmental delay when:

For children ages three (3) through five (5) (not kindergarten age eligible)

- A. The child’s development is at or below 1.5 standard deviations, or equivalent levels, of the mean in any TWO areas of development OR at or below 2.0 standard deviations, or equivalent levels, in any ONE area of development. Areas of development that can be used to determine eligibility include physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, or adaptive.
- B. The child needs special education and related services.

Professional Judgment

A child may also be deemed eligible when:

- A. the evaluation report documents through formal and informal assessment that a significant deficit exists and a child is eligible for services even though the standard scores, or equivalent levels, do not meet the stated criterion levels in A above, or
- B. the team may determine that a child, who is functioning above the stated criterion level and because of intensive early intervention, is eligible for services based on expected regression if services were to be terminated.

For children ages five (5) (kindergarten eligible)

- A. Children kindergarten age eligible may continue eligibility as a Young Child with a Developmental Delay if they were identified as such prior to attaining kindergarten age eligibility.

Missouri Eligibility Criteria can be found in the Missouri State Plan for Special Education, Regulation III-Identification and evaluation; <http://dese.mo.gov/governmental-affairs/dese-administrative-rules/incorporated-reference-materials/IDEAPartB-2014>