

## CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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**Annotation:** This article discusses the different categories of students with disabilities, focusing on their educational needs and the importance of inclusive education. It highlights various teaching methods and support systems that help ensure equal opportunities for students with special needs.

**Keywords:** Inclusive education, students with disabilities, special educational needs, teaching strategies, equal learning opportunities, support systems.

### КАТЕГОРИИ УЧАЩИХСЯ С ОГРАНИЧЕННЫМИ ВОЗМОЖНОСТЯМИ

**Аннотация:** В статье рассматриваются различные категории учащихся с инвалидностью, их образовательные потребности и значение инклюзивного образования. Подчеркивается важность различных методов обучения и систем поддержки, обеспечивающих равные возможности для детей с особыми потребностями.

**Ключевые слова:** Инклюзивное образование, учащиеся с инвалидностью, особые образовательные потребности, методы обучения, равные возможности обучения, системы поддержки.

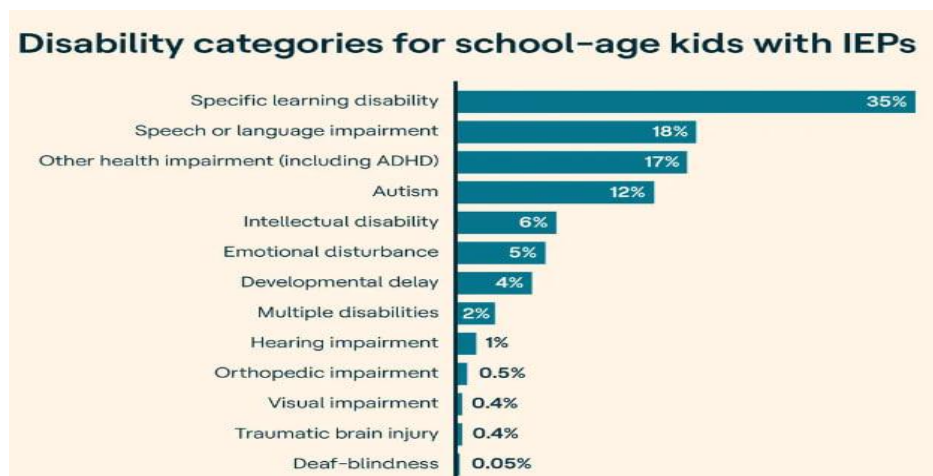
Students with disabilities have physical or mental impairments that affect their ability to learn or participate in daily activities. These impairments can range from vision and hearing loss to learning disabilities and mental health conditions.

Disabilities can involve seeing, hearing, talking, thinking, moving, emotional/behavioral health involving self and relationships with others, and other biological/organ functioning. Disabilities can involve these things in varying degrees and various combinations. Thus, disabilities differ greatly in nature and implications for teaching and learning. Among the many issues involving disabilities is what students with

disabilities deserve in their education, and afterward. One must consider not only students with disabilities' lives during their education, but also their education as preparation for life after they leave public education.

To qualify for services, kids need to have a disability that impacts their schooling. The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) groups disabilities into 13 categories. But this doesn't mean the law only covers 13 disabilities. Some of the categories cover a wide range of challenges.

To get an [Individualized Education Program](#) (IEP), kids need to meet the requirements for at least one category. Keep reading to learn about the 13 disability categories and why all of them require finding that the disability "adversely affects" a child's education.



### 1. Specific learning disability (SLD)

This category covers a wide range of learning challenges. These include differences that make it hard to read, write, listen, speak, reason, or do math.

[Dyslexia](#)

[Dyscalculia](#)

[Written expression disorder](#) (you may also hear this referred to as dysgraphia)

This is by far the most common category in special education. The numbers vary a bit from year to year. But students with learning disabilities tend to make up about a third of all students who have IEPs. In the 2020–21 school year, around 35 percent of students who had IEPs qualified under this category.

#### Speech or language impairment

This is the second most common category in special education. A lot of kids have IEPs for speech impediments. Common examples include lisping and stuttering. [Language disorders](#) can be covered in this category too. Or they can be covered in the learning disability category. These disorders make it hard for kids to understand words or express themselves.

This is another commonly used category. It covers a wide range of conditions that may limit a child's strength, energy, or alertness. One example is [ADHD](#). Many kids who qualify for an IEP under this category have attention deficits. Other examples in this category include epilepsy, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome.

#### Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

[ASD](#) is a common developmental disability. It affects social and communication skills. It can also impact behavior.

#### Intellectual disability

This category covers below-average intellectual ability. Kids with Down syndrome often qualify for special education under this category.

#### Emotional disturbance

This category covers mental health issues. Examples include anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, and oppositional defiant disorder. (Some emotional or conduct disorders may also be covered under "other health impairment.")

#### Developmental delay

This category can be used for young kids who are [late in meeting developmental milestones](#) like walking and talking. Different states have different rules about this category. It's also the only category in IDEA that has an age limit. It can't be used after age 9.

### Multiple disabilities

Many kids have more than one disability, such as ADHD and autism. But this category is only used when the combination of disabilities requires a highly specialized approach, such as intellectual disability and blindness.

### Hearing impairment, including deafness

This category includes a range of hearing issues that can be permanent or that can change over time. (This category does not include [auditory processing disorder](#), which is considered a learning disability.)

### Orthopedic impairment

This category covers issues with bones, joints, and muscles. One example is cerebral palsy.

### Visual impairment, including blindness

This category covers a range of vision problems, including partial sight and blindness. But if eyewear can correct a vision problem, then a child wouldn't qualify for special education under this category.

### Traumatic brain injury

This category covers brain injuries that happen at some point after a child is born. These can be caused by things like being shaken as a baby or hitting your head in an accident.

### Deaf-blindness

This category covers kids with severe hearing and vision loss. Their communication challenges are so unique that programs for just the deaf or blind can't meet their needs.

One point of view is that the most important thing for all students with disabilities is to be part of general education, not to be taught in environments or settings different from that of their age peers who are not identified as having a disability. Hence, their disability should not set them apart from other students but be seen as just another variation of human existence, demanding only accommodation to make their participation in the classroom a reality.

A different perspective is that some disabilities require acknowledgment of the need for special instruction, that such instruction may require a separate setting and special teacher, and that not all things can be taught well in the same place and by the same teacher. Moreover, students with disabilities deserve instruction from a teacher especially knowledgeable about their particular disability and skilled in teaching students with it. For example, blind students need a teacher highly skilled in teaching orientation and mobility as well as Braille, deaf students need a teacher fluent in signing, deaf-blind children need a teacher highly competent in teaching them, students with speech/language problems need a teacher highly skilled in working with speech/language deficits, and so on.

From this point of view, instruction is more important than being in a class with nondisabled peers, and learning particular skills in school is highly important for students' lives after school. Failure to become competent in the special skills required for functioning as independently as possible after the school years sets up students with disabilities for their failure of inclusion in community settings when they are adults.

In conclusion, understanding the different categories of students with disabilities is essential for creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. These students may have physical, sensory, intellectual, or emotional impairments that affect their ability to learn in a traditional classroom setting. By recognizing their unique needs, educators can implement specialized teaching strategies, assistive technologies, and personalized learning plans to enhance their educational experience. Collaboration between teachers, parents, and support specialists is crucial in ensuring that students with disabilities receive the necessary resources and opportunities to succeed. Promoting inclusivity in education not only benefits these students but also fosters a more compassionate and diverse learning environment for all.

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