

Current Child Functioning Level Guidelines

Physical: Physical functioning refers to the physical body of the child.

Mild: Requires no equipment for daily functioning, requires average or slightly above average medical care, appointments, etc., can perform basic life management functions appropriate for child's age and development, can use mainstream methods of transportation and communication, has a condition which is totally managed by medication, has a condition which is correctable or improves on its own with time, is developmentally delayed in physical development but has a prognosis of catching up.

Moderate: Requires non-life support equipment, has a relatively stable condition - i.e. while not correctable, neither is it progressive or degenerative; requires moderate home modifications, may require corrective surgery, requires up to weekly medical appointments, can perform basic life management functions appropriate for child's age and development (feeding, dressing, toileting) with some assistance, may require some assistance with transportation and communication functions.

Severe: Requires life support equipment, has a progressive, degenerative or terminal illness, requires significant home modifications, requires repeated or frequent hospitalizations or surgeries, requires 2 or more medical appointments per week, requires a parent or aide to perform basic life management functions (feeding, dressing, toileting, etc.), always requires special adaptations for transportation and/or communication.

Emotional: Emotional functioning refers to the emotional well-being and mental health of a child. Mental Health diagnoses are the most likely to affect this level, although more diagnosis should not correspond with a lower functioning level. Children with many diagnoses may still be functioning at a mild or moderate level based on their ability to handle life's day-to-day issues.

Normal to Mild: Overall good functioning in school, home and with peers. If symptoms are present, they are transient and may be a result of developmental stage or expected reaction to external stressors (e.g. anxiety, sadness, or behavioral difficulty related to introduction to new situations, losses or changes in the child's environment). Ability to communicate needs and understand rules as well as consequences of behavior (depends on developmental stage). Possible use of substances. Child does not require medication or therapeutic mediation at this time, but may benefit from counseling in dealing with emotions and behaviors that may be causing difficulty.

Moderate: Symptoms are present but child is able to function with some assistance in school, home and with peers. Anxiety, depression, behavioral problems that can be mediated by medication, behavior therapy or counseling as needed (e.g. occasional panic attacks or severe anxiety that is not precipitated by external stressors, sexually inappropriate behavior (does not include sexual abuse of others), episodic use of substances, some conflicts with teachers, peers or others in authority, fighting, occasional theft or lying, depressed mood without suicidal ideation, encopresis or enuresis, poor judgment or impulse control, hard to manage behaviors

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that are not destructive or violent, isolating behavior, difficulty maintaining friendships. Difficulty in communicating needs in an appropriate fashion and sometimes loses sight of consequences of behavior (depends on developmental stage).

Severe: Serious impairment in social and academic functioning. Some to persistent danger of severely hurting self or others, recurrent violence that appears unprecipitated, a pattern of cruelty to animals and fire setting behaviors, inability to maintain personal hygiene, sexual abuse of others, gross impairment in ability to communicate (largely incoherent), inability to see consequences of actions or show empathy for others, significant destruction of property, gross impairment in reality testing, judgment, and thinking. Persistent use of substances. Self-mutilating behavior, presence of hallucinations or delusions (that are not related to substance abuse or organic difficulty). May require repeated psychiatric hospitalizations or 24 hour monitoring. Medication and consistent psychiatric assistance is needed. Prognosis may be considered poor for adult level of functioning.

Developmental/ Cognitive: Cognitive functioning refers to developmental disabilities or the child's inability to learn new concepts. Cognitive functioning is characterized by significant functional limitations in at least two of the following skills: communication, self-care, home living, social/interpersonal skills, use of community resources, self-direction, functional academic skills, work, leisure, health, and safety. Onset usually occurs before age 18. More than 200 specific causes of mental retardation have been identified. The average IQ score is 100 – anywhere from 80 to 110 is considered normal for children who have experienced trauma, grief, and loss. IQ scores are often skewed based on environmental factors (such as children who come from abusive/negligent homes) and are often lower for children of minority backgrounds solely based on the way the test is designed.

Mild: A child with an IQ range of 71-84 usually eventually able to live independently, hold a job and manage their lives with some guidance.

Moderate: A child with an IQ range of 51-70 may achieve partial self-support in a sheltered work place, but will always need supervision, and will need to live in a group home or family setting.

Severe: IQ less than 50 may be able to partially contribute to self-care but will always need on-going supervision and help with daily routines.

Learning: Learning functioning refers to the child's ability to function in school and to grasp new concepts. Many workers include information about Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) in this section.

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Mild: Overall good functioning in school and home. Child can be mainstreamed with help from resource room or tutoring.

Moderate: Consistent difficulty in functioning in school and possibly at home. Child may need long term special education.

Severe: Significant and pervasive difficulty in functioning in school and home. Child may have learning disabilities which cause permanent difficulty in academics, social/emotional functioning, and/or occupational functioning.