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Fluency Eligibility Guidelines

Early Childhood Special Education Eligibility for Children Age 3 up to 6 years

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Fluency Eligibility Guidelines is to provide a structure within which the speech-language pathologist (SLP) can use consistent, evidence-based evaluation practices in accordance with VT Special Education Rule 2361.2 (d) (1) to:

- Apply indicators that identify a young child with a typical disfluencies
- Complete a comprehensive evaluation of a child's fluency following a referral for fluency concerns
- Identify whether a fluency disorder that warrants early childhood special education services is present, based on the indicators as described in this guidance.

Eligibility Criteria for a Fluency Disorder

A young child, age 3 up to 6 years old, meets the eligibility criteria for a fluency disorder under the speech and language domain in the area of developmental delay if they exhibit stuttering behaviors that are observed or reported in any setting, that reoccur over four or more weeks, and demonstrate the following:

A child will have 2 or more of the following stuttering characteristics:

- More than 10 disfluencies per 100 words
- Three or more extra repetitions/units in a part word or single syllable word (e.g., "li-li-li-like" or "I, I, I, I want.")
- More than 50% of disfluencies are repetitions or prolongations and or blocks

Any pitch rises, increased loudness or speeding up in repetitions or within prolongations

OR

One or more of the following:

- Fixed articulatory postures that stop speech for more than one second (e.g., blocks)
- Avoidance behaviors before the stutter (e. g., extra sounds or words used in order to get speech started)

Escape behaviors during stutter (e.g., head nods, eye blinks, grimaces, or other body movements).

Flow Chart for Fluency Disorder

Early Childhood (Ages 3 up to 6 years)

This flow chart is intended to assist the Evaluation Planning Team (EPT) in the eligibility determination process for children under the age of 6 with fluency concerns.

A child meets eligibility criteria for a fluency disorder under the speech and language domain in the area of developmental delay if he/she exhibits stuttering behaviors that are observed or reported in any setting and reoccur over four or more weeks.

