**Kentucky Adoption Profile Exchange (KAPE) Youth Needs Tipsheet**

**Guidelines for determining the level of physical disability**

**Mild**

Characteristics of individuals with mild physical disability include, for example: requires no equipment for daily functioning; requires average or slightly above average medical care; can perform basic life-management functions appropriate for child's age and development; can use mainstream methods of transportation and communication; has a condition that is totally managed by medication; has a condition that is correctable or improves on its own with time; is delayed in physical development but has a prognosis of catching up.

**Moderate**

Characteristics of individuals with moderate physical disability include, for example: requires equipment but not life-support equipment, has a relatively stable condition (while not correctable, the condition is not 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.

**Severe**

Characteristics of individuals with severe physical disability include, for example: requires life-support equipment; has a progressive, degenerative, or terminal illness; requires significant home modifications; requires repeated or frequent hospitalizations or surgeries; requires two 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.

**Guidelines for determining the level of emotional disability**

**Mild**

Characteristics of individuals with **mild emotional disability** include, for example, functioning well in school, at 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 (such as anxiety, sadness, or behavioral difficulty related to introduction to new situations, losses, or changes in the child's environment); able to communicate needs and understand rules as well as consequences of behavior (depends on developmental stage); may use substances;  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**

Characteristics of individuals with **moderate emotional disability** include, for example: symptoms are present but child is able to function with some assistance in school, at home, and with peers; displays anxiety, depression, behavioral problems that can be mediated by medication, behavior therapy, or counseling as needed (these behavioral problems can include: occasional panic attacks or severe anxiety that is not precipitated by external stressors; sexually inappropriate behavior but not 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 judgement or impulse control; hard-to-manage behaviors that are not destructive or violent; isolating behavior; difficulty maintaining friendships; difficulty in communicating needs in an appropriate fashion, sometimes losing sight of consequences of behavior (depends on developmental stage).

**Severe**

Characteristics of individuals with **severe emotional disability** include, for example: serious impairment in social and academic functioning; occasional to persistent danger of severely hurting self or others; recurrent violence that appears unprecipitated; a pattern of cruelty to animals; 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, judgement, 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; requires medication and consistent psychiatric assistance; may have poor prognosis for adult level of functioning.

**Guidelines for determining the level of behavioral issues**

**Mild**

Characteristics of individuals with mild behavioral disability include, for example: redirectable; behavior will likely change with therapy; amount of adult attention is age-appropriate; can be left unsupervised (at age-appropriate level).

**Moderate**

Characteristics of individuals with moderate behavioral disability include, for example, displaying acting-out behaviors, but not destructive or hurtful; having risky behaviors without understanding the consequences; and benefiting from therapy but likely not showing immediate progress.

**Severe**

Characteristics of individuals with severe behavioral disability include, for example: needs line-of-sight supervision; likely has one-on-one support or alternative school setting; has been physically and verbally aggressive toward adults and peers; has a tendency to be a danger to self or others; would benefit from therapy, but it may not change behaviors; may be in detention or have juvenile justice involvement.

**Guidelines for determining the level of developmental disability**

**Mild**

Characteristics of individuals with mild developmental disabilities include, for example, having an IQ range of 50–75, which will eventually enable them to live independently, hold a job, and manage their life with some guidance.

**Moderate**

Characteristics of individuals withmoderate developmental disability include, for example, having an IQ range of 25–50, who may achieve partial self-support in a sheltered workplace but will always need supervision and to live in a group home or family setting.

**Severe**

Characteristics of individuals withsevere developmental disability include, for example, having an IQ of less than 25, who may be able to partially contribute to self-care but will always need ongoing supervision and help with daily routines.

**Guidelines for determining the level of learning disability**

**Mild**

Characteristics of individuals with mild learning disability, for example, functioning well in school and at home, can be mainstreamed with help from a resource room or tutoring.

**Moderate**

Characteristics of individuals with moderate learning disability, for example, consistent difficulty in functioning in school and possibly at home, may need long-term special education.

**Severe**

Characteristics of individuals with severe learning disability, for example: significant and pervasive difficulty in functioning in school and at home, may have learning disabilities that cause permanent difficulty in academics, social and emotional functioning, or occupational functioning.