

# Definition of Intellectual Disability

*Intellectual disability* is a disability characterized by significant limitations in both **intellectual functioning** and in **adaptive behavior**, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates **before the age of 18**.

## Intellectual Functioning

*Intellectual functioning*—also called intelligence—refers to general mental capacity, such as learning, reasoning, problem solving, and so on.

One way to measure intellectual functioning is an IQ test. Generally, an IQ test score of around 70 or as high as 75 indicates a limitation in intellectual functioning.

## Adaptive Behavior

*Adaptive behavior* is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives.

- Conceptual skills—language and literacy; money, time, and number concepts; and self-direction.
- Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized.
- Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone.

Standardized tests can also determine limitations in adaptive behavior.

## Age of Onset

This condition is one of several developmental disabilities—that is, there is evidence of the disability during the developmental period, which in the US is operationalized as before the age of 18.

## Watch on You-Tube

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V\\_mTP9WLdcI#t=92](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_mTP9WLdcI#t=92)

Source: <http://aidd.org/intellectual-disability/definition#.Uq5DoEDxvIU>