



SPECIAL EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: A POPULATION-BASED INVESTIGATION Time to Designation Report

Province

This **Time to Designation** report describes the number of school years until students with special needs and disabilities receive their first/initial special needs designation.

Results are presented in percentages of students who had the following times to designation:

- **0 years**
- **1-2 years**
- **3-4 years**
- **5 or more years.**

The numbers in parentheses refer to the designation-specific sample size.

Province-level reports represent all releasable district-level data compiled to the level of the province.



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Additional Notes

- (1) For the large majority of students, their first/initial special needs designation is also their most common designation – the latter of which is the method by which we have presented students’ outcomes in this report. In some cases, however, students’ first/initial designation may not be the same as their most common designation.
- (2) Being designated in one of the BC MED’s special needs categories is not a requirement for supports and services to be provided to any student. It is the impact of the students’ needs on their respective educational programs, and not the reported designations, that determine the supports and services provided to students. Designation in a special needs category is for the purpose of funding alone, not service or support provision.
- (3) If the number of school years equals zero, then the corresponding percentage of students received their first/initial special needs designation in the same year they entered the BC school system (here, Kindergarten), and so forth for the other times to designation.
- (4) Because of the diversity of special needs designations the BC MED routinely tracks, there are many reasons why a given student may face a delay in receiving a special needs designation. For example, in the case of unexpected trauma, given students who were non-special needs for a number of school years may suddenly require special assistance years into their schooling. As another example, some special needs may emerge and/or are only able to be validly assessed later in life. In contrast, other students may have had a special need(s) since birth, and therefore may receive a special needs designation in their first school year (here, Kindergarten). In addition, different districts may have different times to designation and in creating Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for their students. Therefore, please interpret results with caution.
- (5) We retained for this report’s analyses only those Cohort 1/2/3/4/5 students who had valid data available.



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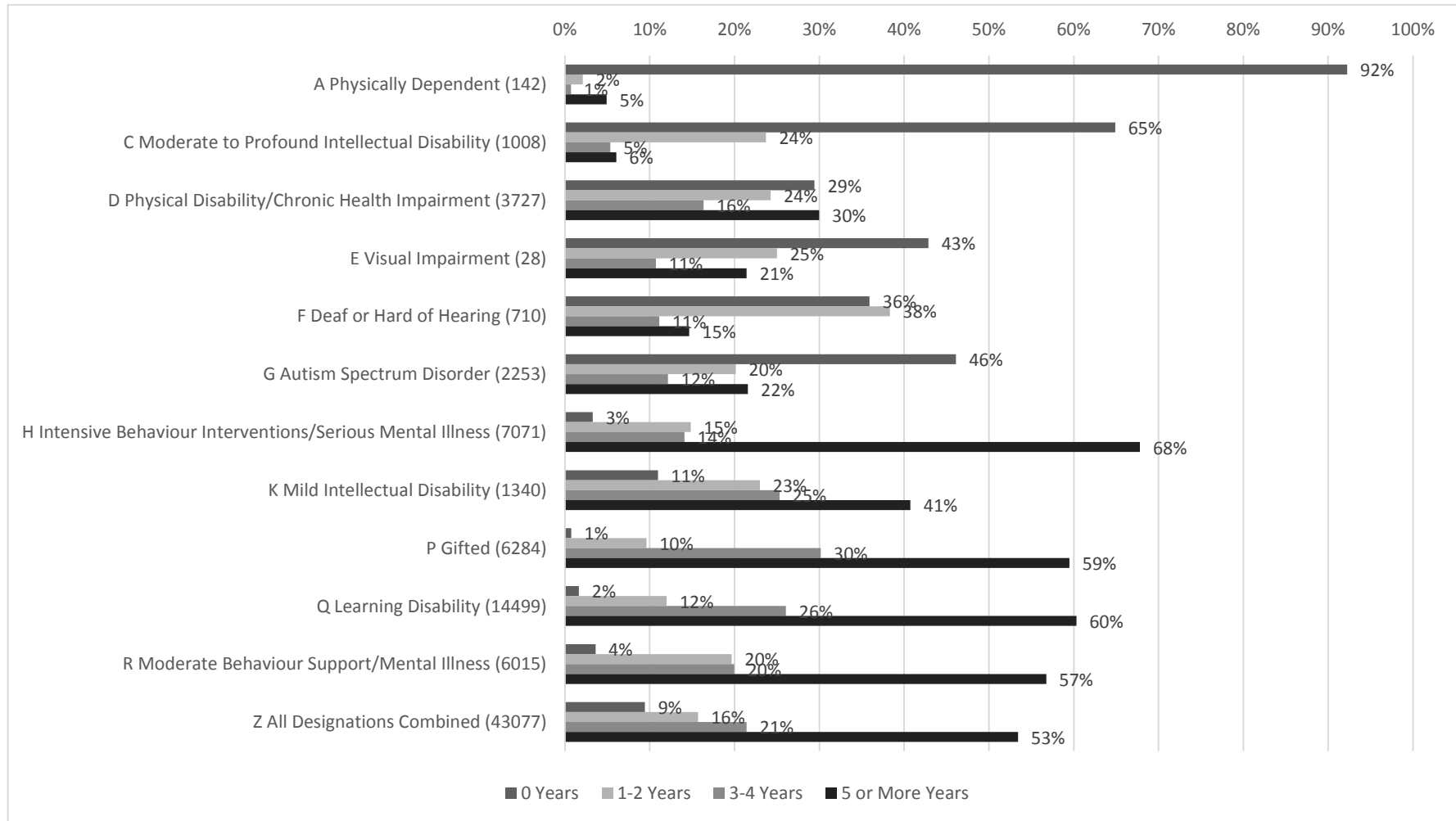
Additional Notes (cont'd)

- (6) Changes in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnostic criteria over time have resulted in some students previously ineligible for diagnosis in this special needs category eventually being categorized as such. Please refer to the METHODOLOGY document for more information about ASD.
- (7) As a general disclaimer about all our reports: Although the large majority of students have a consistent special needs designation over time, some students may not have a consistent special needs designation over time (i.e., their designation may change over time). Being designated in one of the BC MED's special needs categories is not a requirement for supports and services to be provided to a student. Designation in a special needs category is for the purpose of funding alone, not service or support provision.
- (8) As a general disclaimer about all our reports: Population counts and outcome measures within our reports will differ from those reported by the BC Ministry of Education, as our reports follow specific cohorts of students over time, whereas Ministry reporting allows for students to enter and exit cohorts.



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Number of School Years Before Students with Special Needs Received Designation





For Further Information:

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