



## What's Wrong With Identifying a Child With a Disability when the Child Does Not Have One?

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- Mislabeling students creates a false impression of the child's intelligence and academic potential.
  - Once students are receiving special education services, they tend to remain in special education classes (Harry & Klingner, 2006).
  - Students are likely to encounter a limited, less rigorous curriculum (Harry & Klingner, 2006).
  - Lower expectations can lead to diminished academic and post-secondary opportunities (National Research Council, 2002; Harry & Klingner, 2006).
  - Students in special education programs can have less access to academically able peers (Donovan & Cross, 2002).
  - Students in special education suffer higher than average dropout rates. In 2004, 45% (nearly half!) of special education students dropped out of school before graduating. That dropout rate is significantly higher than both the New York state average, 32%, and the national average, 25%. (Hehir, 2005)
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### References:

Harry, B. & Klingner, J., (2006). *Why are so many minority students in special education?: Understanding race and disability in schools*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

Hehir, T. (2005). *New directions in special education: Eliminating ableism in policy and practice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Publishing Group

National Research Council. (2002). *Minority students in special and gifted education*. Committee on Minority Representation in Special Education. M. Suzanne Donovan and Christopher T. Cross (Eds.), Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

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