suspects that the child's developmental progress is delayed. In some cases, it is confirmed at birth because of recognition of distinct syndromes, such as Down syndrome and fetal alcohol syndrome. At the other extreme, the diagnosis is made when problems such as speech delays or school problems arouse concern. In all cases, a high index of suspicion for developmental delay and behavioral signs is necessary for early diagnosis (Box 18-1); and routine developmental screening can assist in early identification (see Chapter 3). Delays are typically seen in gross and fine motor and speech development, although the latter is most predictive. **Developmental disability** can be described as any significant lag or delay in a child's physical, cognitive, behavioral, emotional, or social development when compared against developmental norms. CI is an impairment encompassing intellectual ability and adaptive behavior that are functioning significantly below average (see Box 18-1). In the absence of clear-cut evidence of CI, it is more appropriate to use a diagnosis of developmental disability.

Box 18-1

Early Signs Suggestive of Cognitive Impairment

Dysmorphic syndromes (e.g., Down syndrome, fragile X syndrome [FXS])

Irritability or nonresponsiveness to environment

Major organ system dysfunction (e.g., feeding or breathing difficulties)

Gross motor delay

Fine motor delay

Language difficulties or delay

Behavior difficulties

Modified from Shapiro B, Batshaw M: Intellectual disability. In Kliegman RM, Stantan BF, St. Geme III JVV, et al, editors: *Nelson textbook of pediatrics*, ed 18, Philadelphia, 2011,