Vulnerable Adults Need Protections Against Online Exploitation, Abuse, and Aggression

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Who are Vulnerable Adults?
Because of age, developmental disability, mental illness, or physical disability require supervision or personal care
In adult foster care families, small group homes, or need protective services because of abuse and neglect concerns
Lack the personal and social skills required to live independently
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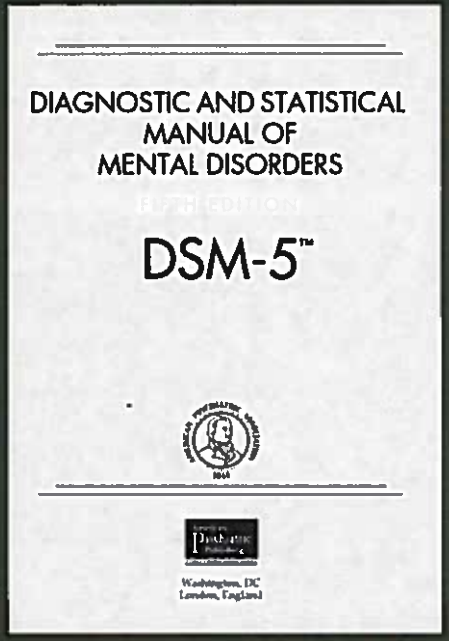
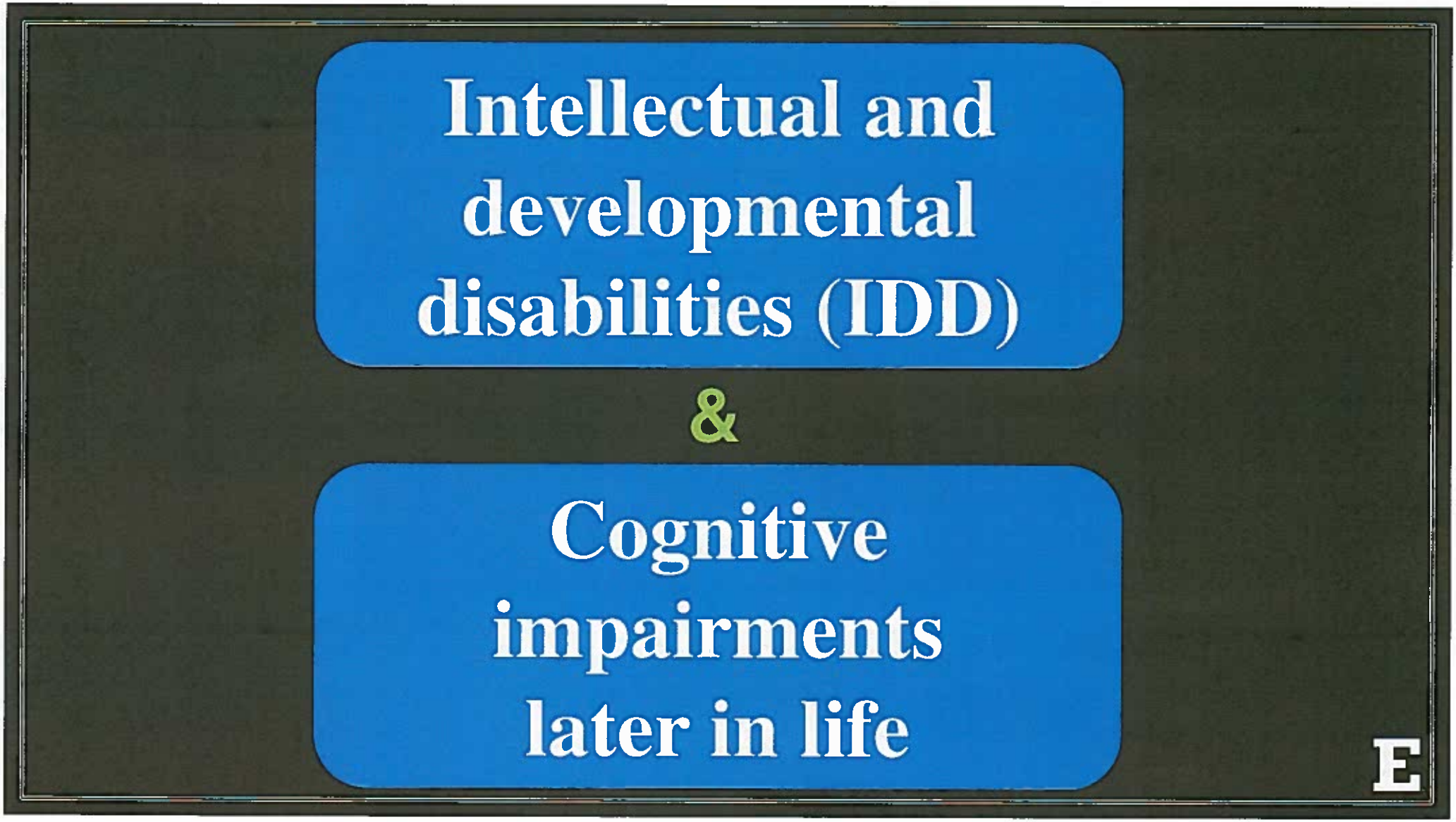
- **Intellectual function deficits = challenges with reasoning, problem solving, and judgment**
- **Chronological age ≠ cognitive age/mental age**



American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)*. American Psychiatric Publishing, 33-34 (2013).


Intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)
&
Cognitive impairments later in life
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Conceptual + Social + Practical

- Reasoning/problem solving
- Processing speed
- Working memory
- Language (expressive & receptive)
- Literacy
- Generalizing
- Overall knowledge
- Learning

- Communication skills
- Social judgment
- Queues and nuances
- Following rules
- Making/keeping friendships

- Personal care (ADL / IADL)
- Responsibilities
- Organizing tasks
- Rely on others

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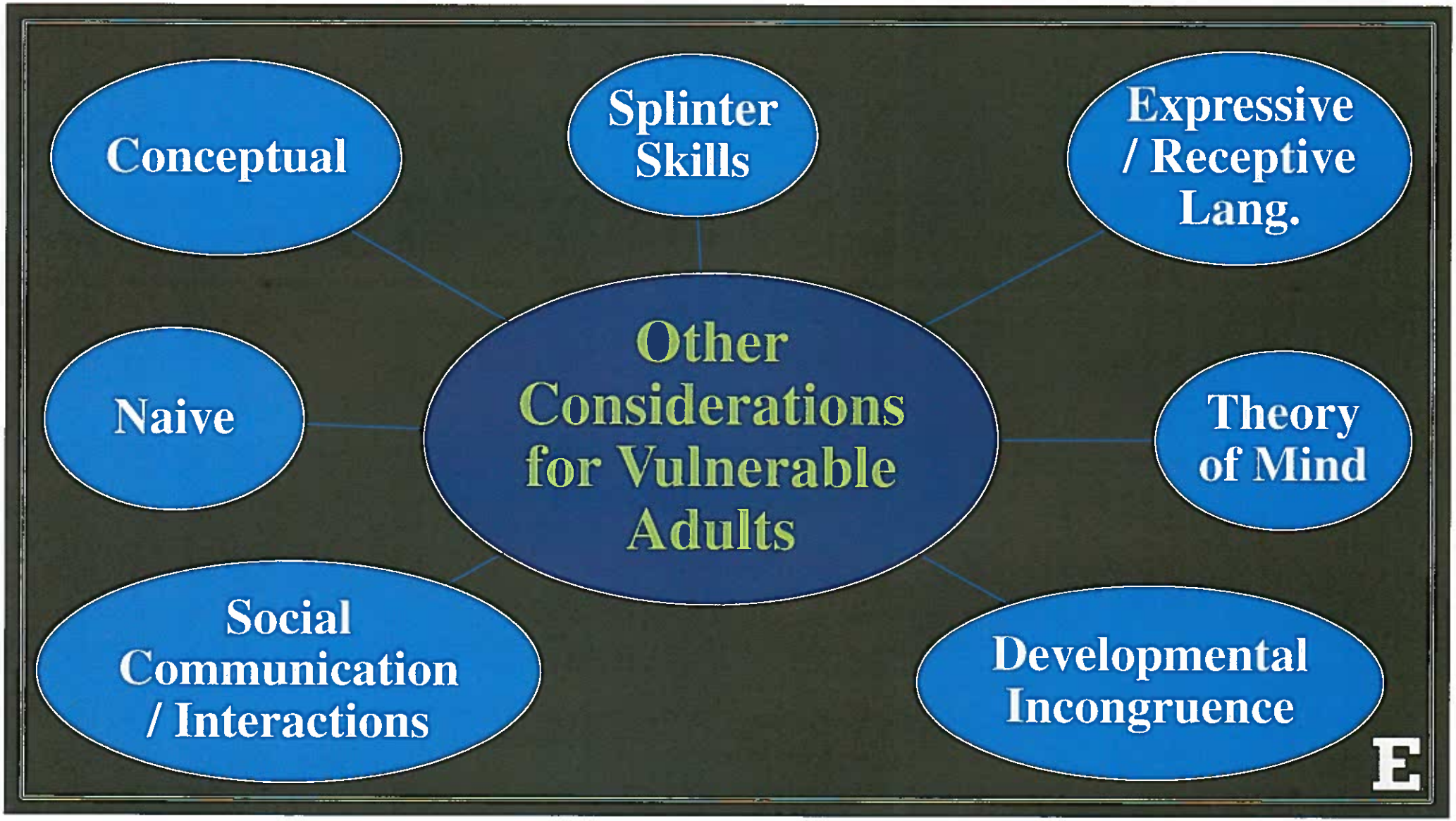
Conceptual
Splinter Skills
Expressive / Receptive Lang.
Naive
Other Considerations for Vulnerable Adults
Theory of Mind
Social Communication / Interactions
Developmental Incongruence
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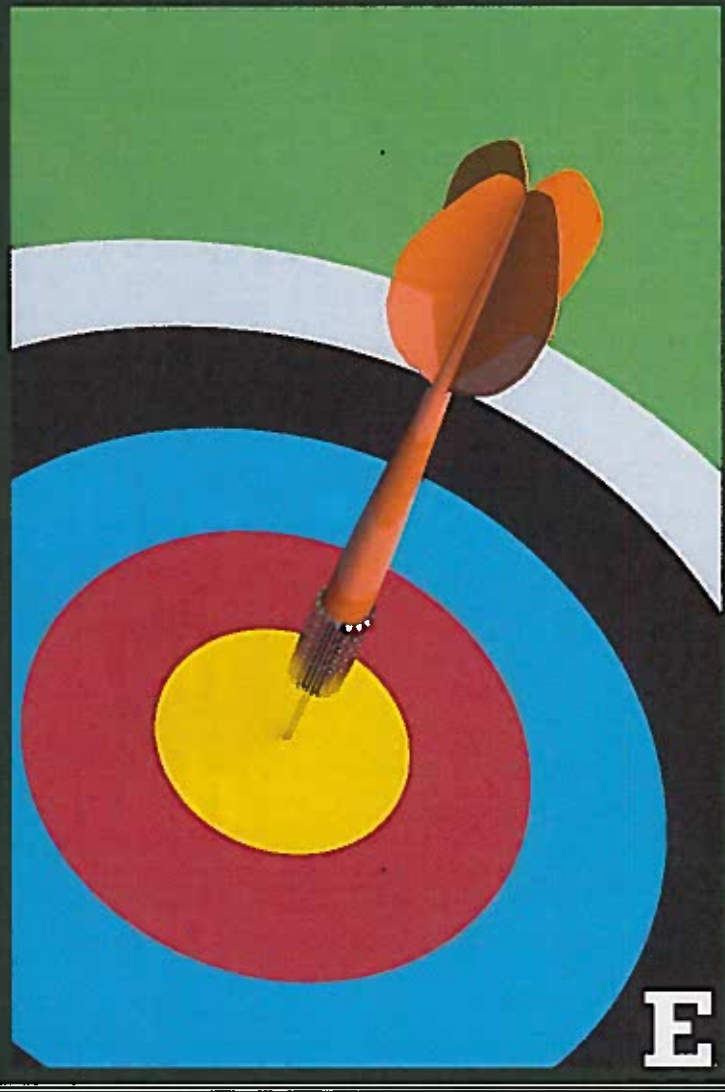
Vulnerable adults have a higher risk of being <u>targeted</u> for online exploitation, aggression, and bullying.



Increased risk of:

- manipulation
- difficulty saying "no"
- inability to recognize a dangerous situation

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