



SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCE PROJECT

e-newsletter

Things to Think About!

Check It Out

By Brandan Atkin

Visit our website at

www.snrproject.com

and click on "Forms" to find a number of forms to help you in organizing and preparing for your child's IEP meeting.

A copy of "The Guide to the Individualized Education Plan" can be found at

www.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/iepguide/iepguide.pdf

Excellent information on education for disabled children can also be found at



www.disabilityinfo.gov

Also, if you have a topic you would like to see covered in our newsletter, or have a specific question that you would like answered, please contact us anytime.

snrproject@hotmail.com

For help in updating your IEP notebook (or to plan and organize one if you don't have one) refer to the Education section at www.snrproject.com



Headed Back to School

By Linda Jorgensen

August is the month for getting all the necessary preparations completed for a successful school year. Registration forms begin to arrive in the mail, Back-To-School supplies go on sale and everyone wonders, "What happened to summer? It went by so fast?"

Besides sneaking in that last family vacation parents with school aged children need to get their children ready for that momentous first day back in school. Children with physical and mental disabilities often need more preparation than the average student, which can require more footwork by the parent. In addition to the usual lists of classroom supplies and contact forms Special Education programs will have other requirements depending on the specific needs of your child.

The following are just a few of the things that may need to be accomplished before heading back to school.

1. Communication Notebook

Develop a communication system that works well for you, the teaching staff and your child. This might be anything from a simple spiral notebook with dated entries by the parent and the teacher carried back and forth in the child's backpack to a 3-ring binder complete with medication forms, activity charts, treatment notes and notes from home. Find a communication method that works well for you.

2. Personal Supplies

These are items your child will need to get through the school day. Many of these items are specific only to your child and will need to be provided by you, the parent. These items should be stored in an appropriate container labeled with your child's name

- Classroom supplies as requested your child's teacher.
- Specialized diet/food items
- Personal hygiene products
- Wipes
- Disposable medical equipment (gloves, syringes, extra oxygen tubing, canulas etc.)
- Required medications.
- A Seasonal change of clothing.
- Personal comfort items.
- Emergency preparedness items as required by your school.

3. Medical Preparation

- Schedule an annual physical exam by your family pediatrician. Update shots, medications and evaluate your child's current medical needs. Be sure to note any medical procedures that may have occurred over the summer.
- Obtain Doctor's orders for emergency medication, classroom treatment and any other instructions needed by school nursing staff.
- Pick up new prescribed medications. **DO NOT SEND MEDICATIONS WITH OUTDATED EXPIREATION DATES.**
- Send medical equipment such as wheelchairs, nebulizers, etc. for annual maintenance **BEFORE** school starts if possible.
- Check other medical equipment such as walkers, standers, leg/ankle/foot braces, supportive equipment, etc. for fit and repair. Replace or repair broken and ill-fitting equipment as needed.
- Contact school nursing staff **BEFORE** school starts regarding any specialized medical treatment or medications your child may need. Many school districts require a nursing care plan be established **BEFORE** school begins.

Contact your local school nurse for specific requirements.

4. Transportation Requirements

For children in wheelchairs or who need modified seating contact your local transportation office to ensure your child's personal equipment can be safely transported on a bus. Not all buses use the same tie-down systems. A short visit with the bus driver (and the bus) may be needed to ensure your child's equipment can be safely secured during transit. For those children riding in their wheelchairs a custom chest harness that attaches directly to the wheelchair is a necessity to ensure your child's safety while in transit.

5. IEP Preparation

Most Individual Education Plans (IEP) are updated after 4-6 weeks of school. This allows teaching staff time to observe and evaluate your child's current learning levels and status for changes that may have occurred over the summer. Begin preparing for this meeting early and you'll find the process generally goes much smoother for all involved.

- Update your current IEP Notebook*.
- Review your copy of last school year's IEP plan and accompanying documents.
- Review your copy of the **Guide to the Individualized Education Program** ** supplied by your school district.
- Consider goals that may need changing and ones that will need to be evaluated for change.
- Make notes of any changes you feel need to be made.
- Begin gathering documentation from care providers and other sources that may be needed to complete an IEP Plan for the upcoming school year.

A little preparation, some extra planning and your child's first day back at school will be a fun and exciting adventure. Let the learning begin!