Creating Meaningful Individual Education Plans

What Parents NEED to KNOW

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What is so important about an IEP?
“If you’re not sure where you’re going, you’re liable to end up some place else. If you don’t know where you’re going, the best made maps won’t help you get there.”

Robert Mager
What job is he doing? What skills does he need to use?
When does he do this job?
Who does he do this job with?
What might make employment worthwhile to him?
Look ahead 1, 5, 10 years

Where will she live?
What will she do in her leisure time?
How will she care for herself?
Friendships and relationships?
IDEA
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

do you know my rights?
Parents play a critical role in the IEP

- Equal partner
- Powerful advocate
- Informed, active participant in planning and monitoring
What is an Individualized Education Program?

The IEP has two general purposes:

(1) to set **reasonable learning goals** for your child; and

(2) to state the **services that the school district will provide** for your child.
Who else is a critical part of the team?
Where do we Start?

Future plans and aspirations of student and parent

Academic, functional and personal needs of student

Strengths, interests, and learning styles of student
Creating a Home File

✓ Professional assessments
✓ Relevant research
✓ Child’s thoughts about self and school
✓ Sensory Inventories
✓ Strategies Document
✓ Interest inventories
Your observations

• What are my child’s strengths, skills, interests, challenges and limitations?

• What are my biggest fears or worries?

• What specific behaviours, or other problems, have I observed? How do I react? What strategies are effective?

• Have I recently noticed any changes in behaviour or ability?
Building a USEFUL IEP
1. Independent living

2. Further education

3. Employment
IDEA 2004 requires your child’s IEP include:

- Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
- Special education and related services to be provided
- Annual goals and Objectives
- Measuring progress and review
- Participation in state and district-wide assessments
- Dates and location
- Transition services
- Participation with nondisabled children
- Dates and location
- Transition services
Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance

WARNING

Academic and functional needs and goals
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills to consider:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expressive language</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning/organizing</td>
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<td>Self-regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concept formation</td>
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<td>Leisure and play</td>
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<td>Interfering behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Receptive language</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Making inferences</td>
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<td>Motor movements</td>
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<td>Social thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer interaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate actions</td>
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<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Identify emotions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Cognitive flexibility</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sensory challenges</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rote Memory</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Working Memory</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Decision making</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Personal hygiene</strong></td>
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Some Ideas of present level...

Executive function deficits impact her ability to participate in mainstream educational settings that do not provide visual organizers and step by step instructions.

Bob’s difficulty with self regulation make it difficult for him to cope with challenging tasks and to take academic risks. He needs direct training in self regulation methods such as a 5 point Scale, relaxation techniques and the use of break cards to improve.
Annual Goals

Global: What can be accomplished in a year?

Functional: based on the student’s needs

Relevant: for the future development of the student’s learning and independence?

Developmental: realistic given current functioning
What is the most meaningful content/skill for the future development of the student’s learning and independence?
How will the autism needs be addressed?
Special education and related services to be provided.

What is needed to build strengths and correct or develop areas of weakness?

- Communication Device
- Modifications
- Adaptations
- Accommodations
- Assistive Technology
How much of the school day will your child be educated separately from non-disabled children or not participate in extracurricular or other non-academic activities such as lunch or clubs?
Participation in state and district-wide assessments.

The IEP team must decide what modifications your child needs and list them in the IEP. If your child will not be taking these tests but will take an alternate assessment, the IEP must include a statement as to why the tests are not appropriate for your child and how your child will be tested instead.
<table>
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<th><strong>The IEP Must State Dates and Locations:</strong></th>
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<td>![Question Mark]</td>
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<td>When services and modifications will begin?</td>
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Transition services
Everyday transitions count too
Parents play a critical role in the IEP

Know your child well.

KNOW your state special education regulations.

Prepare, organize and participate.

Put all requests and communication in writing.
Knowledge is power
BUT
Knowledge is NOT ENOUGH
“The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest stars in the world, but if they don’t play together, the club won’t be worth a dime.”

Babe Ruth
Build relationships
Bring in the village
Building Relationship

• Listen….really listen

• Work as equals (no ego allowed)

• Look for solutions (win- win)

• Avoid blame and sarcasm

• Affirm what is working
Maintain Optimism

Adversity is temporary

Can be overcome by a “can do” attitude and strong persistence

Leave all negativity, self defeat and resentment at the door
Be someone you would WANT to work with
What attitude are you modeling?


OR

The critical key to the child’s success will be your attitude
You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of.

Jim Rohn
A well planned, consistently implemented IEP that matches a student’s unique skills, abilities and areas of need will give the student the tracks to run on throughout his educational career. It will help to nurture and develop a young adult who is happy with himself, is able to contribute to his community and foster healthy relationships and hobbies.
Helpful Links

- [www.autismaspirations.com](http://www.autismaspirations.com)
- [http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/iep.fqas.htm](http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/iep.fqas.htm)
- [https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/gp_iep_guide.pdf](https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/gp_iep_guide.pdf)

Click here for a list of the contact information for each state's Protection and Advocacy Agencies.