



NEW DIRECTIONS

Winter 2015-2016

Early Childhood Direction Center

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ECDC is a regional clearinghouse that provides free information, referral, technical assistance and support to families, professionals, and community agencies concerned with children birth to five with suspected or diagnosed delays or disabilities.

We provide ongoing community training programs for both parents and professionals.

ECDC is funded by the New York State Education Department, hosted by Women and Children's Hospital and provided in-kind support from People Inc.

If you would like to be included on our listserve to receive the latest federal, state and local updates, please send an email to ecdc@kaleidahealth.org and indicate whether you are a parent or a professional.



www.facebook.com/ECDCWNY1

Effective IEP Meetings: Tips for Parents

Preparation and participation in your child's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meeting is an important strategy for success! The process starts with a referral and evaluation, next the CPSE will gather data and host a meeting to determine your child's eligibility. If eligible the CPSE team will create the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that will guide professionals and help serve your child.



Important Things to Do to Prepare for Your Child's Meeting

- Pull and review your records. Examples: Report Cards, Most recent IEP, Quarterly & Behavior Reports
- Invite and prepare guests or advocates.
- Prepare your questions and requested recommendations.
- Tell the school about any special guests and requests ahead of time.
- Relax and reflect on your child.

Every IEP meeting should cover these key aspects

- **Present level of educational performance (PLEP):** The special ed. teacher will write a statement about your child's current levels of academic and functional performance (social, behavioral and motor skills, for example) and goals. This is based on data (like test scores) and observations from you and other team members.
- **Annual goals:** The team reviews what progress your child has made toward meeting his or her annual goals. Then together you develop new or revised goals for the coming year. It's important for annual goals to be specific, measurable and tailored to your child.
- **Individualized supports and services:** The team discusses how well your child's accommodations, modifications and specialized instruction are working. Then you and the team update the supports and services to match your child's current performance and new annual goals.

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If it seems like the team is proposing “one size fits all” strategies, remind them that the IEP should reflect your child’s individual strengths and needs. If you don’t understand something or need clarification, speak up. This is your best chance all year to communicate with the whole team.

Wrapping Up the IEP Meeting and Next Steps

The chairperson should review the IEP that the team agreed upon, and answer any questions or concerns. Don’t be silent. If you have a question or concern, bring it up. If you disagree with something you have the right to mediation and due process. The Committee on Preschool Special Education meeting is a “team” process and you are an important member of the team. There is no one decision maker.

If you have questions after the meeting talk to your child’s teacher or call the committee chairperson. You will receive a copy of the IEP within a couple of weeks. Don’t simply file it and forget it. The IEP will guide your child’s day-to-day education for the next year. Get ready to monitor how it plays out and watch for periodic reports documenting your child’s progress toward their goals.

Your Parental Rights

- ✓ To be fully informed
- ✓ To be notified about all meetings at least five school days before
- ✓ To have a new meeting time and day arranged if you know that you can’t attend
- ✓ To participate in decision making
- ✓ To have all information explained
- ✓ To have your concerns for your child documented in the IEP
- ✓ To have confidentiality maintained
- ✓ To be able to review all school records
- ✓ To have access to mediation, due process and impartial hearing, if needed

Do You Have Questions? Call ECDC

If you have additional questions throughout the IEP process or following your meeting, ECDC is here to help! We can answer your questions neutrally, confidentially, and for free.

716-408-2589



Check out ECDC's Website!

www.wchob.org/ecdc

For our past newsletters and many more resources!

Workshops

The ECDC can provide information and workshops on a variety of topics tailored to the interests and needs of parents and early childhood professionals.

A list of our workshops can be found on our website listed above!