



Things to Think About!



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/spced/iepguide/iepguide.pdf

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

www.disabilityinfo.gov

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

If there is anything that is not discussed in our newsletters and you would like to see it discussed, or you would like to be added to our newsletter mailing list, please contact us at

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Back to School

By Linda Jorgensen

We know summer is drawing to a close when the first Back-To-School ads appear in our local paper. School registration forms, teacher supply lists and class schedules fill mailboxes and school supplies take over shelves previously covered in blow-up pool toys, sunscreen and flip-flops in local stores. It's time to get ready for that first day back to school.

Children with disabilities often need more supplies and 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 many Special Education programs have additional requirements depending on the program and the specific needs of your child.

In order to make that first week back in class as smooth as possible parents need to get an early start gathering all the extras their children will need. Don't wait until the last minute. The following is a list of items you may need to get ready to go now.

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 tracking forms, activity charts, treatment notes and notes from home. Find a communication method that works well for you and your child's teacher.

2. Personal Supplies

These are items your child will need to get through the school day. Many 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, 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 or physical changes 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 EXPIRED MEDICATIONS TO SCHOOL.**
- Send medical equipment such as wheelchairs, nebulizers, etc. to the shop 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. Help school staff be ready by letting them know your child’s needs early.

4. Transportation Requirements

For children in wheelchairs, or those who need modified seating while riding a bus, contact your local school district’s 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 4-6 weeks after school starts. 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 EIP 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 that may have occurred during the summer and any new accommodations 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.

6. Start New Sleep Habits

Who wants to sleep when the sun is still up and the temperature is starting to cool off? Going to bed late then sleeping in is a summer habit many families acquire. This habit can be hard to break. Start heading to bed 15 minutes earlier during the first week in August. Every 5-6 days move bed time up another 15 minutes. By the end of the month the family should be back on a close to normal sleep schedule, making the first week back in the classroom easier on everyone. 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!

