



Understanding your Child's IEP

Hosted By the Village
of Homer Glen's
Ability Awareness
Committee

Topics for the Night

01.
**What is
an IEP?**

02.
**How to
prepare for
an IEP
Meeting.**

03.
**Ways to
advocate
for your
child.**

04.
Q&A

Speaker Introductions

Carrie Morfoot

- Parent of Three
- Special Needs Parent
- Special Educator for 25+ years

Missy Chandarana

- Parent of Five
- Special Needs Parent ASD
- Past EI and EC parent

Jen Ivey

- Parent of Four
- Special Needs Parent ASD
- Past EI and EC parent
- Current Outplaced Student Parent

Karen R. Adamczyk

- Parent of two adults
- Retired School Social Worker 20+ years
- Former Figure Skating Coach for students with and without disabilities
- Former Board member of School District 92 and Lockport Area Special Education Coop
- Current member of Ability Awareness and Homerfest Committees

Lara Cowger

- Parent of two
- 504 Parent
- School Social Worker 25 years

The background features a large orange circle in the center. To its left is a teal triangle pointing right. To its right is a grey cloud-like shape with a white and yellow arrow pointing right. In the top left corner, there is an orange abstract shape. In the bottom right corner, there is a teal semi-circle. A grey shadow is cast by the orange circle onto the white background below it.

01

What is an IEP

Understanding the IEP

What does IEP stand for?

- An IEP is an Individualized Education Program which is a written statement of the educational program designed to meet the student's needs and is developed by a team.

Who is on the IEP team?

- Parent
- Student (14 ½ required)
- General Education and Special Education Teacher
- Local Educational Agency (LEA)
- Evaluation Personnel
- Others

What legal requirements do the school and parents have?

- Must occur 1x a year
- 3 days in advance
- 10 days to look over
- IEP updates
- Amendments

Understanding the IEP

What is the IEP Process?

Referral for a Case Study Evaluation

- can be initiated by the school or a parent/guardian (re-evaluation must be done at least every 3 years)
- parent request does not guarantee an evaluation
- after consent school has 60 school days

Eligibility Conference

- team shares results of evaluation
- team, including parents, determines whether a disability is present and if the disability impacts education

IEP Conference/Components of the IEP (must be held at least once a year)

- present level of performance
- parental concerns
- goals and objectives/benchmarks
- educational accommodations and supports
- educational services and placement
- other components based on eligibility (behavior or autism considerations)

What is the difference between an IEP and a 504?

⇒ Not all students who have disabilities require specialized instruction. For students with disabilities who **do require specialized instruction**, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) controls the procedural requirements, and an IEP is developed. The IDEA process is more involved, and requires documentation of measurable growth.

⇒ Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is for students with disabilities who do not require specialized instruction but need the assurance that they will receive equal access to public education and services. A 504 Plan is a document that is created to outline their specific accessibility requirements. Students with 504 Plans **do not require specialized instruction**, but, like the IEP, a 504 Plan should be updated annually to ensure that the student is receiving the most effective accommodations for his/her specific circumstances.



02

How to prepare for an IEP Meeting

How to prepare for an IEP Meeting

- Gather reports and assessments from outside therapists & doctors as well as from the school team.
- Review the IEP - request the IEP document if not received 3 days prior to meeting date.
- Research your student's diagnosis, challenges, and academic goals.
 - Diagnosis or specialty informational websites
 - www.WrightsLaw.com
 - Social Media
 - Friends/Family

How to prepare for an IEP Meeting

- Write down questions and/or make notes on printed out IEP.
- Share what you have with the team prior to meeting - no surprises.
- Bring support and notify IEP team how many people will be attending.

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03

**Ways to advocate for
your child**

Ways to advocate for your child (Parent)

- Be present in the meeting and open to listening
- Ask the questions, sometimes even if you think you know the answers
- You are part of the team and should be an active participant
- Think about the needs of your child, at times that may differ than what you think is best for them



Ways to Advocate for Your Child

(Team Member Perspective)

- Get to know your team members. You can contact them directly or go through your case manager.
- Ask questions about your child's therapeutic services.
- Remember there are always two sides to every story.
- Learn about your parent rights.
- Parents are equal members of the team BUT parents outrank everybody!
- Don't be afraid to stop the meeting and ask for clarification of anything.
- Your child's diagnosis and goals are not predetermined by the team ahead of time.
- Team members are also advocating for your child.
- Trust your instincts - they are never wrong!



04

Q&A

Resources

- **The Parent's Guide**
- **Procedural Safeguards**
- **Resource Guide**



Thank You!