



6 Tips to Make Sure Your Child's IEP Is Implemented Properly

Check in with the teacher.

The parent-teacher conference is a good time to take the pulse of your child's progress. But you can also check in regularly to make sure your child's IEP is being followed. Share any concerns based on what you're seeing at home. If your child spends most of his time in the general education classroom, his teacher will know if he's being pulled out of class to work with special educators as promised in his IEP.

Contact the team leader if the IEP isn't being honored.

If you think the school isn't delivering all of the services and supports in your child's IEP, don't sit and stew. Be proactive and contact the IEP team leader. Give that person a chance to clear up misunderstandings and correct any problems. The leader may appreciate your alert. If corrective action is required, make sure it happens. Be friendly but firm.

If things don't improve, request a special IEP team meeting.

If you take the steps above but aren't satisfied with the results, you can request a special IEP meeting. You don't have to wait until next year's IEP meeting to iron out any problems. Getting the entire team together may be the only way to put your child's IEP back on track as soon as possible.

Know your child's special educators and their schedules.

The IEP should state what special education services your child will receive and for how many hours per week. You can ask the IEP team leader for the names of the special educators assigned to help your child. Find out what services they'll provide and on which days. That way you can casually ask your child, "Did you spend time with Mrs. Smith today?" Your child may tell you a little—or a lot!

Read the progress reports.

Your child's IEP includes measurable annual goals. It should also explain how his progress toward goals will be measured and when this will be reported to you. Many schools send IEP progress reports to parents when report cards are issued. Find out when you can expect progress reports and mark the dates on your calendar. Carve out time to compare the IEP with how well your child is progressing.

Watch, listen and read between the lines.

Keep an eye on your child's homework and classroom test scores. Is the teacher adjusting assignments as noted in the IEP? If so, is your child making progress? Ask your child if he's getting his accommodations, whether it's extra time on tests or assistive technology. Talk to your child in a way that suits his age and personality. Listen carefully to what he says—or doesn't say—about school and learning. Jot down your concerns.