

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL DISTRICT THERAPY

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

WHAT IS SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Special education is a no-cost service provided by the public school district for children who require support that cannot be provided by the general education curriculum. This service is designed to meet your child's specific educational needs through a unique instruction plan based on your child's strengths and areas of need. There are a variety of services that can be provided to support your child's educational needs such as speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, adapted physical education, specialized academic instruction, music therapy, etc.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Children can be eligible as early as 3 years of age as long as they meet requirements as determined by the IEP team. There are 14 disabilities that are included in the eligibility criteria of the California Education Code. After your child has participated in the assessment, you will meet with the IEP team to determine if your child meets the eligibility criteria for one of these disabilities based on the information gathered from the assessment and input from you as the parent. Your child does not have to be enrolled in preschool through the school district to be eligible for the assessment.

WHAT IS AN IEP?

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) defines the instruction, support, and services specifically designed to help your child be as successful as possible in the school environment. This program is summarized in a legal document that will be provided to you during and after your meeting with the team. The document includes the child's present levels of performance, annual goals, educational placement or setting, and the frequency of support services. The IEP team differs based on your child's specific needs but can include school administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, school psychologists, and the parents.

HOW DO I REQUEST AN ASSESSMENT?

You can request an assessment by contacting your public school district's assessment team. Each school district handles their intake process a little differently, but after you make the request, the team will provide you with an evaluation plan and after the assessments have been completed you will be scheduled for a meeting with the team. The goal of the assessment team is to get as much information about your child as possible so they can determine your child's areas of need and how the team can best support your child in the school environment. The team will only assess your child based on the areas of concern, so make sure you share any previous assessments completed by other providers.

WHAT DOES THE ASSESSMENT LOOK LIKE?

Based on the information you provide to the team, the team will assess your child in the areas of concern. The assessment can include parent interviews and questionnaires, formal standardized assessment measures, informal assessment measures, observations of your child in the classroom, review of previous assessments, etc. You may be required to bring your child to the school for several days so that the team can collect information to make decisions related to your child's needs.

SPEECH ONLY VS. TEAM ASSESSMENT

In order to give the team as much information as possible, talk with your speech-language pathologist about which type of assessment to request through the school district:

SPEECH

Possible areas of concern:

- Receptive Language
- Expressive Language
- Articulation/Phonology
- Stuttering
- Voice
- Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC)
- Social Skills

TEAM ASSESSMENT

Possible areas of concern:

- Attention
- Learning Difficulties
- Academic Skills
- Social Emotional/Behavior
- Adaptive/Daily Living Skills
- Communication
- Fine Motor Skills
- Gross Motor Skills
- Sensory Processing
- Hearing/Vision

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES?

Although your child may already be receiving speech therapy services through Rady Children's Hospital or another provider, there are many benefits to transitioning to school-based therapy services:

- Therapy is provided in your child's natural environment
- Your child is supported by a complete team with a variety of specializations
- School-based providers have access to the school curriculum and can tailor therapy to benefit your child academically and socially
- Your child will typically participate in therapy in a small group or classroom with their peers, which provides opportunities for social growth
- School-based therapy is free and provided in a location convenient to your home

HOW DO I COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL PROVIDERS?

Another difference between clinic-based and school-based therapy is the amount of parent participation. Communication with your child's providers will require more effort, but also gives your child more independence and opportunities for self-advocacy. Here are a few recommendations for communication with your child's school providers:

- Make sure you have contact information for all your child's school providers and ask about their preferred method of communication
- Put a folder in your child's backpack to communicate with school providers on your child's progress and when your child is receiving therapy
- Ask your child's providers to provide activities/homework you can do at home to help support your child at home as well

HOW DO I TRACK MY CHILD'S PROGRESS?



The team will have a meeting every year to discuss progress on annual goals and establish new goals for the upcoming year. Every three years, your child will have a “triennial” IEP where they will participate in a comprehensive assessment to update the educational program and make sure the child continues to meet criteria. You should also receive progress updates throughout the year to help you track how your child is progressing with their annual goals.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

CALIFORNIA EARLY START TRANSITION

<https://www.sdcoe.net/student-services/early-education/Documents/HOPE%20Infant/2013%20TransitionEng.pdf>

AUTISM SPEAKS GUIDE TO INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/individualized-education-program-iep>

A GUIDE TO THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (US DEPT OF EDUCATION)

<https://www2.ed.gov/parents/needs/spced/iepguide/index.html>

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/special-services/ieps/understanding-individualized-education-programs>

SPECIAL EDUCATION TIMELINES FOR CALIFORNIA

<https://www.californiaspeciallaw.com/special-education-timelines-for-california/>

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVOCATES-SAN DIEGO

<https://specialneedsresourcefoundationofsandiego.com/special-needs-resource-list-san-diego/advocacy/>

SAN DIEGO PRESCHOOL TEAM CONTACT INFORMATION

CARLSBAD UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.carlsbadusd.k12.ca.us/spedpreschool>

DEL MAR UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.dmusd.org/Page/4042>

ENCINITAS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

http://www.eusd.net/pps_early_intervention_registration/

ESCONDIDO UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.eusd.org/page/special-education>

OCEANSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.oside.us/Page/175>

POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.powayusd.com/en-US/Departments/Student-Support-Services/Special-Education/Preschool-Assessment>

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.sandiegounified.org/early-childhood-special-education-ecse>

SOLANA BEACH SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.sbsd.k12.ca.us/Page/4892>

VISTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.vistausd.org/departments/specialeducation>

RIVERSIDE PRESCHOOL TEAM CONTACT INFORMATION

HEMET UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

https://www.hemetusd.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=255242&type=d&pREC_ID=590060

LAKE ELSINORE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

https://www.leusd.k12.ca.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=325300&type=d&pREC_ID=733472

MENIFEE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.menifeeusd.org/District/Department/147-Special-Education>

MURRIETA VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.murrieta.k12.ca.us/domain/64>

ROMOLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.romoland.net/Page/202>

TEMECULA VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.tvusd.k12.ca.us/Page/25621>