

Q. WHAT IS AN IEP?

A. IEP stands for Individualized Educational Plan. It's part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The IEP was developed to ensure children with disabilities receive specialized instruction in elementary and secondary school.

Q. WHAT IS A 504 PLAN?

A. 504 is shorthand for section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The 504 plan was developed to ensure that a child with disabilities receives accommodations that give him access to a learning environment and promote his academic success in elementary and secondary school.

Q. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN IEP AND A 504 PLAN?

A. An IEP is an education law. It includes outlined goals and progress reports. All services are available to all students.

A 504 plan is a civil rights law that doesn't set goals for the child, but affords the same opportunity as other students without disabilities. This plan does not guarantee transitional services to older students.

To understand more of the differences, set up a meeting at your child's school to discuss the plans.

Q. HOW DO I START THE PROCESS FOR THESE PLANS?

A. The processes for both an IEP and 504 plan start with an evaluation to determine if your child is eligible. In both cases, the school must agree with the need for the evaluation. If the school requests the evaluation of your child, your written permission as a parent or caregiver is required before the evaluation can take place.

Q. DOES HEMOPHILIA QUALIFY MY CHILD FOR EVALUATION FOR THESE PLANS?

A. Yes. Living with hemophilia could cause issues for your child in school. Both plans could help him have a happier, more successful experience.

Q. HOW DOES THE SCHOOL DECIDE WHICH PLAN IS RIGHT FOR MY CHILD?

A. The school does not choose which plan is right for your child. The school must comply with both laws. It's important to note that children who are eligible for services under IDEA also qualify for a 504 plan. But those who qualify for a 504 plan do not necessarily qualify for an IEP. If your child qualifies for an IEP, he must be given that plan.

Q. MY CHILD HAS BEEN EVALUATED AND IS ELIGIBLE FOR AN IEP. NOW WHAT?

A. If your child's evaluation determines that special education services are needed, an IEP will be created and implemented based on the specific needs of your child as defined by you and the school system team.

Q. MY CHILD IS ELIGIBLE FOR A 504 PLAN. IS THE PROCESS THE SAME AS AN IEP?

A. Yes. The process of building a 504 plan is the same as the process of creating an IEP. The only differences are in what the plan aims to do and the help or assistance it provides to your child.

Q. IF MY CHILD QUALIFIES FOR AN IEP, WHAT ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE?

A. An IEP focuses on helping your child achieve academic success. Your child could receive special classes in subjects that are particularly challenging or be given alternate testing conditions. It depends on the needs of your child and the plan you have created with the school.

Q. IF MY CHILD QUALIFIES FOR A 504 PLAN, WHAT ACCOMMODATIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

A. A 504 plan can address assistance including (but not limited to) places to store factor, wheelchair access, alternate plans activities such as in gym class, etc. The plan will be tailor child's specific needs.

Q. CAN I HELP SHAPE MY CHILD'S PLAN?

A. Absolutely! You know your child best and are an important part when working with the school to build the right plan.

Q. DOES MY CHILD HAVE TO REQUALIFY FOR EITHER PLAN?

A. Children with IEPs are required to undergo reevaluation 3 years. Generally, the IEP is reviewed every year when a child moves to the next grade.

Children with 504 plans are also required to undergo reevaluation every 3 years. As a parent or caregiver, you can request a reevaluation at any time, but your child can only have 1 evaluation each year.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO TO HELP MY CHILD WITH THESE PLANS?

A. Ask for forms, evaluations, and reports in writing. Keep a log of all communications. Create a safe space at home so you can access them in the future. Create a support system with your child's teachers and school administrators. Play an active role in understanding your child's needs and helping with assignments and helping with homework. And, of course, celebrate your child by rewarding his hard work.

