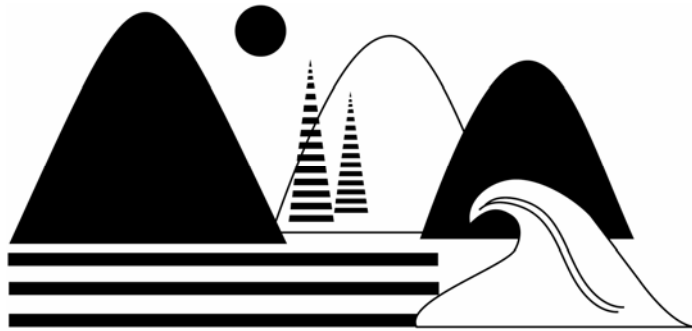


Parent Handbook for Special Education



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**Community Advisory Committee for Special Education
North Santa Cruz County SELPA
Revised September 2007**

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Also many thanks to the parents on our handbook committee who have given their time in revising the handbook for North Santa Cruz County SELPA: Sheryl Wobber, Sandie Williams, Victoria George and Peter McLean.

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INTRODUCTION

We wrote this handbook to help parents understand more about the processes of special education and your important role as a partner in education. We hope it will help you to become fully involved in the team effort of obtaining the most appropriate educational program for your child.

Consider the handbook an important reference on your bookshelf. Keep it available and consult it. Familiarize yourself with its various sections so you will know where to turn whenever a question arises regarding your child's education. There are sections on special education laws, parents' rights, Individualized Education Program (IEP) planning, class placement, and resources for parents.

As you get better acquainted with your handbook we hope it will help you become a confident partner in the process of your child's education.

The contents of this handbook are based on the most recent federal and state laws. However, laws and regulations change constantly. The content of the handbook will be revised as needed to reflect those changes.

SPECIAL EDUCATION LAWS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Public Law 94-142, the Education for Handicapped Children Act of 1975, was the first federal law, which guaranteed every child with a disability the right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

This law also provided that each child:



- Is guaranteed a culturally unbiased, valid assessment in all areas of the suspected disability;
- Is to have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) designed to meet his/her unique needs;
- Is guaranteed specific procedures to insure his/her rights and those of their parents (due process procedures).

Public Law 94-142 states that all children with disabilities need and have the right to an education to become as self-sufficient and productive as possible in adult society, and that children with disabilities should be educated to the maximum extent possible with non-disabled students. This is what's known as the Least Restrictive Environment or LRE.

In 1990 the law was re-authorized as Public Law 101-476 by President Bush and was re-named the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In 1997, President Clinton reauthorized the law, with some changes.

PARENTS' ROLES**Parents as Partners**

Parents are valued partners, and parent participation is one of the outstanding features of current legislation concerning exceptional children. One example of this participation is this handbook. It was designed and prepared by parents of children with disabilities.

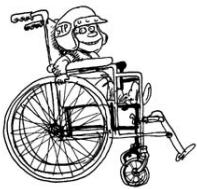


As a parent you are entitled to an active role in the special education process. From the referral to the placement in a special education program, you play an important part. As you play this key role in your child's education, it is important you understand fully all the ways you can participate as a partner.

Your rights and responsibilities as a parent in the identification, assessment, educational planning, placement, and appeals processes are specifically outlined in this handbook. Read them carefully and use them.

Participate

Be active in all the processes of your child's special education. As a parent you will find yourself one of a team of people all working together to plan and provide the most appropriate educational program for your child. Be prepared. Ask questions about anything you do not understand. Your participation is needed in a variety of ways. Here are some examples.



- Consent – By law your consent is required before your child can be tested or receive any special education services.
- Information – As part of the assessment process and the IEP planning you will be asked to provide needed information concerning your child. Your cooperation will help in planning the best program for your child.
- Review – Your child's IEP will be reviewed once a year. Be involved in this process every year. Your input is needed. Remember the IEP is the heart of your child's education and your participation in the process is vital.
- Attendance – Attend all IEP meetings and parent conferences concerning your child. Also, you may have the opportunity to attend parent education programs to learn more about special education activities.
- Communication – Good communication between home and school is an important key to the success of a child's program. Once the decisions have been reached and the IEP written, keep in close touch with what is going on at school.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

An important organization to become aware of and be involved in is the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC). The law requires that a majority of its members be parents and a majority of those be parents of special education children. Representatives of public and private agencies, community groups, special and general education teachers, disabled students, school personnel, and other concerned citizens make up the rest of the committee. This organization plays an important role in special education in the North Santa Cruz County SELPA. The CAC's responsibilities and activities include:

- Advising the NSCC SELPA administration and Governing Board regarding the development and review of special education programs;
- Making recommendations on priorities to be addressed under the local special education plan;
- Acting in support of children with disabilities;
- Assisting in the evaluation of how well the Local Plan for Special Education is meeting the needs of our children;
- Assisting in parent education and the development of public information materials such as this handbook;
- Hosting the annual award ceremony for the recognition of special people, which recognizes the contributions of special individuals and groups in the lives of students with disabilities.

You are encouraged to attend the monthly CAC meetings. Call the SELPA office at (831) 479-5203 for more information, or visit the North Santa Cruz County SELPA website at www.nscselpa.org.

Other active parent organizations exist in the area that can also provide support, information, advocacy, and other assistance. They will welcome your involvement. See Section 8, Resources, at the end of the handbook, for information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Are special education infant and preschool programs available?

Yes. Infants and toddlers aged birth through 36 months with diagnosed disabilities, or at risk for disability, are served by the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, Special Education Department. Preschool children ages 3-5 are also eligible for services. You can obtain further information about infant and preschool programs by calling (831) 479-5203

If I think my child has a learning problem, what should I do?

First discuss your concerns with your child's classroom teacher. If your child has a demonstrated problem that prevents him from functioning in a general school program without special help, then your child may be eligible for special education services. As a first step you may request that your child's teacher make a referral to the Student Study Team, or you may send a request for an assessment to the Special Education Department.

What is a Student Study Team (SST)?

The SST is a general education function. It is comprised of teachers and other school personnel based at your local school site. This team reviews a student's learning strengths and needs and plans alternative strategies to be used in the general program.

If my child is eligible for special education, who decides what services my child will receive and what program he/she will be in?

The appropriate services and programs will be based upon your child's individual special education needs, which are based on an assessment of all areas of the suspected disability. The planning of your child's program and services is done by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The parent is an important member of this team.

What is the Resource Specialist Program?

This program provides special instruction and other service to students with special needs who remain in the general class. Students receive most of their instruction in the general classroom with some special small group instruction from the Resource Specialist, either in class or in a pullout setting.

What is an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?

The IEP is a written document developed for each student eligible for special education, which is based on the educational needs of the student as specified by the IEP team (professionals and parents).

What are related services?

Related services, also called Designated Instruction and Services (DIS), are provided in addition to class placement, when needed. They include speech, occupational therapy, vision, hearing and audiological services, family counseling and training, assistive technology, extended school year, and transportation.

What is due process?

Due process refers to procedures established to ensure that the rights of parents and the school district are protected.

When are transportation services provided?

If age, disabling condition, or distance would prevent a child from attending a special education placement, transportation services will be provided.

Will my child be able to participate in an extended year program?

Yes, if the IEP team has determined a need for an extended year program. Generally extended year is available to those students with intensive needs who require a continuation of services to prevent a regression of skills.

What should I do if I don't agree with everything in the IEP?

You may give consent to those parts of the IEP with which you agree and they will be implemented, thus preventing a delay in services. You will be asked to write a dissenting statement that will then be attached to the IEP. The parts with which you don't agree may become the basis for a due process or mediation.

If I have a problem with my child's IEP or services, what should I do?

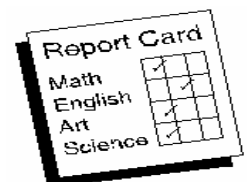
First, discuss the problem with your child's teacher and any other school personnel who are familiar with your child's special needs and who may be able to help resolve the problem for you. You may request that the IEP team meet to review and/or develop a new IEP. (see pages 15 through 18 for full continuum of options).

May I observe special education programs that are available in the district?

Observations may be arranged based on the policies of your local school district. Contact the special education director of your local school district to inquire about scheduling an observation.

May I see my child's school records?

Yes, you are entitled to see all of your child's school records. Make your request, either verbally or in writing, to the Special Education Department of your district.



May I obtain an independent assessment of my child, and must that assessment be considered by the school district in educational planning?

Yes. Parents may have an independent assessment done, at their own expense, at any time, and the results must be considered by the school to support the need for appropriate educational services. Under certain conditions the school district may pay for an independent assessment.

For how long will my child receive special education services?

Services are provided for eligible students ages 0 - 22, as long as the IEP team, including the parents, agree that special education services are needed, or until the student receives a high school diploma. This will be based on on-going evaluation of your child's eligibility needs.

How will my child's IEP be affected if we move out of this school district?

Your child's IEP will still be valid and he/she will be placed in a comparable program for a period of 30 days if you should move. During that time an IEP review should take place in your new school district.

May I volunteer at my child's school?

Parent involvement is strongly encouraged. Speak to your child's teacher about volunteering at school. There are many ways in which you can become involved.

What is SELPA?

SELPA is an acronym for Special Education Local Plan Area. We are a regionalized services office providing special education support and services to districts and parents to improve programs and services to disabled students in the North Santa Cruz County Area. We provide:

- Staff Development
- Curriculum Resources
- Management Information Services
- Liaison Activities with Associated Agencies
- Monitor compliance with state and federal special education laws and regulations
- Consultation to districts and parents
- Alternative Dispute Resolution services to districts and parents

SELPA office contact information:

North Santa Cruz County SELPA
809-H Bay Avenue
Capitola, CA 95010
Phone: (831) 479-5203
Fax: (831) 464-1316
www.nscselpa.org

For more information on any of these services please call our office or check our website.

EARLY START

The Santa Cruz County Office of Education offers special programs to families who have infants or toddlers under the age of three years with health, learning, behavioral or developmental concerns. Families may have received a diagnosis for their child, or they may have questions or concerns about their child's development. In these cases, there are professionals and other parents who can help by answering questions and providing the necessary services to assist the child and family.

If you are concerned about your child's development, the first step is to refer the child for evaluation and assessment. You may call the Early Start program directly at (831) 462-1274 and request an assessment. With your permission, the staff will assign a service coordinator to your family and will work with you to plan an assessment, whereby all areas of the child's development will be evaluated.

Within 45 days after you make your referral to Early Start, the assessment process should be completed and, if the child is eligible, an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) will be developed. The IFSP is a document that addresses both the unique needs of the child as well as the needs of the family to enhance their child's development. It includes a statement of the infant's current developmental level; the family's concerns, priorities, and resources; the expected outcomes; and specific services including frequency, intensity and duration. A family assessment is voluntary.

The IFSP is reviewed every six months (or more often if requested). Development of the IFSP must be coordinated with all other agencies providing services to the child and family (such as California Children Services, San Andreas Regional Center, etc).

The IFSP is a joint effort among your family, professionals who will be working with the child, and the community supports needed to meet the special needs of the child. Research has shown that family-centered interventions during the first three years of a child's life can make a profound difference in the child's future. These services can improve the developmental progress of a child, can reduce feelings of isolation, stress, and frustration in families, and help children with disabilities to grow up and be productive and independent.

Services identified in the IFSP can be delivered in the home, at childcare, or at the Early Start Struck Center. It is your service coordinator's job to assist you to access the services you need for your child. Services are designed to meet the developmental needs of the child and are to be provided at no cost to you. They include:

Assistive technology, psychological services, audiology (hearing) services, family training, counseling, home visits, respite, service coordination (case management), some health services, social work services, medical services for diagnostic or evaluative purposes only, nursing, nutrition counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, special instruction, speech and language services, transportation services, vision services, and others as needed.

When the child is 2 ½, a transition IFSP must be developed which describes the steps to be taken to continue special school services, if needed. You will begin to think about a special education preschool for your child, and your service coordinator will help you to think about making this change, or "transition". There should be no interruption of services for your child when he/she leaves early intervention services and transitions to a preschool.

For more information about California's Early Start Program for infants and toddlers with disabilities contact:

Candace Aliberti, Family Service Specialist
Early Start, Struck Center
(831) 479-5384

Leslie Burnham, Coordinator
Special Connections (Family Resource Ctr.)
(831) 462-1274

SPECIAL EDUCATION: THE STEPS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Identification

Under current law, the school district (as well as other public agencies) is responsible for conducting a continuing search in the community to identify infants, preschool, and school-aged children who may require special education services.

Parents who are concerned about their child's health, development, or learning may want to consult with a health care provider, child care provider, teacher, or other person knowledgeable about child health or development. A conference with your child's teacher or school principal, and possible referral to the Student Study Team is a first step, to determine if the resources of the general education program can meet the child's needs. If parents or school personnel feel that assessment by trained specialists is indicated, they may make a referral to the Special Education department of your local school district. Although not legally required, it is advisable to make your referral in writing.

Assessment

The assessment process has two major purposes:

- To determine if a student is eligible for special education services, and
- To assess the needs or gather all of the information possible about the student in order to determine which are the most appropriate special education and related services for the student

The parent's written consent is necessary before an assessment can be conducted (as well as before any special education services can be delivered to the child). The written assessment plan must be prepared within 15 days after receiving the referral, and must include:

- The reason the referral was made;
- An explanation of the assessment process and the tests which will be used, and who will be responsible for doing the testing and interpreting the results;
- A notification of the rights of the parents regarding the assessment process;
- A statement informing the parent that no diagnostic testing will be done before parental consent is given, and that the parent has up to 15 days to consent.
- A request that the parent provide written permission (if the student is under age 18) for the assessment to be conducted.

A developmental and educational history for the child will be obtained by a specialist. Results of the assessment will be stated in a written report, and parents must be provided a copy of the findings. The report should describe how the child's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum. A flowchart that illustrates the timeline regarding assessment appears on page 33.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

An IEP meeting must be held within 50 calendar days after the date of written consent to an assessment (excluding days in July and August) for eligible children. The IEP is developed by a team including the parents, an administrator, the teacher, the person(s) who conducted the assessment(s), at least one general education teacher if your child is or may be participating in the general education classroom, and other individuals as needed and appropriate. Parents should consider whether to have their child attend the IEP

team meeting. Older students are encouraged to attend and to take an active part in the IEP process. Younger students can attend when appropriate, perhaps just for a portion of the meeting. Parents may also bring a relative, friend, or neighbor to the meeting as a support. The parent is always a necessary, welcome and equal member at meetings to plan special education placement and services.

This initial meeting will be to determine eligibility for Special Education under one of the thirteen federally defined disabling conditions:

- Hard of Hearing
- Deaf
- Visual Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Mentally Retarded
- Deaf-Blind
- Autism
- Orthopedically Impaired
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Emotionally Disturbed
- Speech Impaired
- Other Health Impaired
- Multiple Disabilities
- Preschool-established medical condition

For detailed information on the above disabling conditions contact the Special Education Department.

The parent will be notified of the time and place of the IEP meeting, which should be at a time convenient to them. Parent input will be solicited, and written approval must be given to the IEP written during the meeting. Written consent is required before special education services or placement can be initiated.

The local educational agency is responsible for ensuring that parents/guardians understand the rights for themselves and their children this may include the need for interpreters, for non-English speakers, and for parents/guardians who are deaf.

If your child is eligible for Special Education the IEP must include:

- 1) IEP team membership includes at least one general education teacher if your child is, or may be, participating in the general education classroom.
- 2) A statement of your child's strengths in each listed area and results of the most recent assessments.
- 3) A statement of how your child's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum; or if your child is a preschooler, how the disability affects participation in appropriate activities.
- 4) A reason for placement if it is other than the school regularly designated for attendance.
- 5) A statement indicating the extent to which the child will not participate in a general education classroom. There must be an explanation if the student is not participating in general education activities.
- 6) A statement of your concerns regarding increasing and enhancing your child's educational progress.
- 7) A statement of measurable annual goals that include benchmarks or short-term objectives. These must be related to: (a) meeting your child's disability-related needs; (b) allowing your

- child to be involved and to progress in the general education curriculum; (c) how each of your child's educational needs are being met.
- 8) A statement of special education and related services and supplementary aids and services are to be provided.
 - 9) A statement of how you will be regularly informed of your child's progress at least as often as parents of non-disabled general education students, including the extent to which progress is sufficient to enable the child to reach his/her goals by the end of the year.
 - 10) Program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for your child to: (a) advance toward annual goals; (b) be involved and progress in the general curriculum and participate in extracurricular activities; and (c) be educated and participate with disabled and non-disabled peers.
 - 11) A statement of projected date for beginning services and modifications and their anticipated frequency, location, and duration.
 - 12) A statement regarding your child's participation in district-wide standardized assessments, including accommodations and/or modifications, if any. (This is currently the STAR/CAT6 test in California, for more severely handicapped students this would be the CAPA test.)
 - 13) A statement regarding your child's behavior and whether or not it impedes his/her learning or that of others. If so, then a behavioral support plan must be developed which addresses the identified behavioral concerns.
 - 14) A statement addressing your child's transition service needs starting at age 14, focusing on courses of study, and starting at age 16, focusing on interagency responsibilities and linkages.
 - 15) For blind or visually impaired children, a statement regarding instruction in and the use of Braille. If not provided, a statement of rationale is required.
 - 16) A statement that your child's communication needs have been considered. If your child is deaf or hard of hearing, opportunities for communication with peers and professional personnel in your child's communication mode must be included in the IEP.
 - 17) A statement regarding the need for assistive technology devices and/or services for your child. At the conclusion of the IEP meeting, all participants will be asked to sign the IEP. Never sign a blank form. Don't hesitate to ask the professional present to repeat, or give explanations to you in everyday language. If you are satisfied with the IEP and give your written consent, placement in the appropriate special education program and all related services should occur immediately after the IEP has been signed. If you disagree with all or part(s) of the IEP you will be asked to write a dissenting statement. This statement becomes a part of the IEP. Your signature indicates presence and participation in the IEP meeting. Checking the statements above your signature, also indicate your agreement/disagreement with the IEP.

You may, however, refuse to give your consent to all or part of the IEP. In this case, there will be no change to the current or existing program your child is in. You may request that the portion of the IEP with which you do not agree be reconsidered, and another meeting may be scheduled to discuss and resolve any issues. If necessary, you can use one of the alternative dispute resolution models provided by the SELPA office, or you can request a due process hearing.

The IEP is reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently if either the parent or school personnel request it. **NO changes may occur to the IEP without the parent's written consent.** A complete re-evaluation of a special needs student is done every three years (**triennial assessment**) to determine program changes and needs. It can be done sooner at the request of the parent/guardian.

Placement

When the IEP team has established eligibility, it must determine how to meet the student's individual needs in the least restrictive environment as close to home as possible. The North Santa Cruz SELPA provides a full continuum of program options for special education and related services for students ages birth through 21 years. Assignments to special day classes, special schools, or any other removal from the general education classroom setting should only occur when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in general classes with additional, supportive aids and services cannot be satisfactorily achieved. Remember, under the law each child is entitled to placement in the least restrictive environment, which is that placement which gives the student the greatest amount of contact with their non-disabled peers. Moreover, **as a student achieves goals and succeeds in the present placement, a less restrictive environment should be considered.** Each school district must provide a continuum of services, including:

- **General Class with Designated Instruction and Services (DIS)**

DIS include services and instruction provided by specialists that are not normally provided in a general education classroom. These services support the student's total education program and may include speech, physical, or occupational therapy, audiological services, orientation and mobility instruction, vision or hearing services, home or hospital instruction, designated psychological services, career or occupational training, assistive technology, and parent education and counseling. DIS are available to students in general or special day class placement, and may be delivered in any appropriate setting. DIS consultation can be available to the general education teacher or the student's parents (in addition to direct service to the student) as specified in the IEP.

- **General Class and Resource Specialist Program**

Students are assigned to a general classroom teacher for a majority of the school day and receive Resource Specialist services as specified in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

- **Services for the Hearing and/or Visually Impaired**

Students identified as having a hearing impairment or visual impairment often require highly specialized services, equipment and materials. The North Santa Cruz County SELPA has developed a regionalized program to serve students with these disabilities. These disabilities occur less frequently in school children and are considered low incidence disabilities.

If your child has a hearing impairment or is deaf, he/she will be provided education and services within a program that can maximize his/her communication development. The teacher and support staff will be knowledgeable regarding the unique educational and cultural needs of a hearing impaired or deaf student. This means that your child may receive services in a program located in another district. He/she will be provided transportation to and from school and follow the calendar of that school to assure that he/she becomes a full participant of the school program as a whole. If the needs of your child can be met with a less intensive service, he/she may attend a local school with the services of the itinerant special teacher and interpreter services provided. The IEP team will consider the needs of your child and recommend the most appropriate program for him/her.

If your child has a visual impairment, he/she will be provided the services of specially trained teachers and/or aides to modify their educational program to best meet his/her needs. Services include a teacher of the Visually Impaired, Orientation and Mobility, and Braille educational materials. Large print materials are available. Technology is considered an integral part of the program when it is appropriate.

- **Special Day Inclusion Services**

Students with intensive special education needs are educated in the general education classroom. Modifications to the core curriculum are required based on alternate performance indicators as determined in the individual student's IEP.

- **Special Day Classes**

These provide services to students who have more intensive needs than can be met by general school programs and the Resource Specialist program. Students are enrolled for a majority of the school day and grouped according to similar instructional needs. Students should be integrated in general education activities as appropriate. Special day classes are typically for Severely Handicapped (SH) or Non-Severely Handicapped (NSH) students.

- **Non-Public School**

These services are offered when it has been determined that the most appropriate educational program is not available through the public school system. Non-public, non-sectarian school programs and services may be provided for an individual with a rare or unusual disabling condition for whom the maintenance of a public school program is not feasible; or when a student's disability is compounded by other conditions so that the student requires services and facilities that are not a part of the educational program, or when a student's previous placement in the public school special education program has been determined to be unsuccessful and further modification of the program is not possible.

- **State Special Schools**

Residential schools, which are operated by the State of California for the deaf, blind and neurologically disabled, are available for complete diagnostic workups and may be considered for placement of certain individuals with extraordinary needs. Placement in these programs will be arranged by the school district upon the recommendation of the IEP team.

- **Home Instruction**

Special Education instruction provided in the home, as an alternative to classroom instruction, when the IEP team certifies that the student's diagnosed condition prevent him/her from attending a school setting. Often provided as a temporary placement during illness or during periods of program review

- **Hospital/Institution Instruction**

The educational needs of students who are placed or who reside in a public hospital, state licensed children's hospital, psychiatric hospital, proprietary hospital, or a health facility for medical purposes are the responsibility of and provided by the district or county office in which the hospital or facility is located.

Student Records

All students' records are confidential. Parents/guardians (or the student if age 16 or older) may examine them. To do so, a written request should be made to the district Special Education Department and a time will be set up to review the records. The parent may also set a time for a conference to have information (test results) regarding the child explained by a qualified representative of the school.

Records will only be sent to other agencies/persons outside the school district with written request and permission by the parent. Students of legal age may be sent their records upon request.

School district employees who have a legitimate educational interest in the information regarding the student may examine the records if such information helps school staff understand the student better, and will help them plan for his needs. A list of persons who have seen the confidential records will be kept. Parents have the right to be informed when confidential information is no longer needed and is to be destroyed.

If parents believe that any information about their child is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy of the child they have the right to request that the records be corrected. If the request is denied they may ask for a district level hearing. If the hearing decision finds the information inaccurate, the district will correct the record and inform the parent in writing. If the hearing decision finds the data accurate, the parent will be notified that they have the right to place a statement in the records stating their reasons for their disagreement. All such statements will be kept as a part of the records.

Keeping Records

Keeping records of your child's medical, developmental, and school histories is a necessity. Parents so often need to give a history of a child's development or information pertaining to his disability. As each year passes, these histories become longer and sometimes more complex. Keeping these records in an organized notebook or file will prove to be a most practical and useful project, and as a parent you will find this notebook/file very helpful in contacts with school, medical and agency persons.

Your notebook/file could be organized in this way:

- **Medical History**

This section should include developmental history starting with pregnancy and birth information. Include the name and addresses of any doctors or clinics you have consulted. All medical reports (pediatrician, allergist, etc.), therapy reports (speech, physical therapy, etc.) and agency reports (Regional Center, mental health, etc.) should be included.

- **School**

This section should include copies of IEPs; assessment reports (academic, speech, psychological, physical, vocational); periodic examples of schoolwork (dated); report cards. Also keep a record of letters and phone calls you have made regarding special education and letters you have received from school staff.

- **Personal/Social History**

Include a record of the child's interest and activities, organization, camps, awards, social involvement, and some photographs.

- **Current Information**

Include a copy of your school rules and regulations, the school calendar, a copy of Parents' Rights and Responsibilities in Special Education, and information on community resources.

Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

Individuals with disabilities and their parents have certain protections provided by the IDEA. These protections include rights related to the assessment process and the development of the IEP. In addition, you may appeal a decision if you disagree with the school district, or you may file a complaint if you feel that the proper procedures have not been followed.

“**Due process**” is now a part of our everyday vocabulary. It is a legal way of saying that certain principles and practices exist and must be respected to insure that each child is treated in a manner that guarantees his right to equal educational opportunities. Due process ensures there are specific procedures and timelines that must be followed when and if significant changes are made (or even proposed) in a child’s educational program. Due process is guaranteed to us by the Constitution of the United States. It is there as a safeguard so that every individual has the means of protecting and asserting his own rights.

Parents have the right to be informed of all procedural safeguards and rights of appeal in language easily understood by the general public and in the parent’s primary language. Notice should include:

- A description of the action the school proposes to take;
- An explanation of why the school proposes to take the action;
- A description of any options the school considered but did not recommend;
- The reasons why those options were rejected;
- A description of each evaluation procedure, test, record, or report used as a basis for action.

If a problem arises:

1. Try to get it resolved at your local school level. Contact your child’s teacher and discuss the problems. Other school staff members who are aware of your child’s needs such as the principal, nurse, speech therapist, or psychologist may be able to help.
2. If necessary you may contact your special education director for further assistance.
3. If the situation is not solved satisfactorily and the problem has to do with your child’s program placement, special education or related services, then request an IEP review meeting.
4. Contact the Assistant Superintendent for SELPA at (831) 479-5203, FAX (831) 479-1316, or mail 809-H Bay Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010 to request Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).
5. Arrange for an advocate to assist in the IEP.
6. If you can not reach an agreement with the school district
 - A) And the issue is in the development of the current IEP (identification, assessment or placement), you can file for a **due process hearing**. If you file for a due process hearing, the last signed IEP is still in effect. You will have the option to go mediation. To file you must write to:

Office of Administrative Hearings
Special Education Unit
 1102 Q Street, 4th floor,
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 Phone (916) 323-6876
 Fax (916) 322-8014

- B) And the issue is failure to implement a developed IEP, you could file a **compliance complaint**. You may file a complaint by writing the following address:

Complaint Management and Mediation Unit
Special Education Division
California State Department of Education
 515 L Street, Suite 270
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Other help available for solving problems:

SPIN (Special Parents Information Network)	(831) 423-7713
Central Coast Center for Independent Living	(831) 462-8720
Community Alliance for Special Education (CASE)	(415) 431-2285
Parents Helping Parents.....	(408) 727-5775
Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education, San Francisco, California	(415) 556-4275
Procedural Safeguards and Quality Assurance.....	(800) 926-0648
Protection and Advocacy, Inc. (Serves individuals with developmental and mental disabilities)	(800) 776-5746
Area Developmental Disabilities Board VII (Advocacy for children and adults with developmental disabilities).....	(408) 246-4355

TRANSITION

Students with disabilities should have the continuity of age appropriate and developmentally appropriate peers that are equivalent to those of non-disabled peers to the extent possible.

Children with exceptional needs are entitled to a plan that facilitates the smooth transition from special education programs in five levels: infant to preschool, preschool to elementary school, elementary/middle school to high school, and high school to the world of work or post-secondary education.

Individual Transition Plan (ITP)

Transition refers to the movement from school to the adult world of work and community life. It is defined as an outcome-oriented process that involves a coordinated set of activities that promote this movement. The purpose is to prepare students with disabilities for employment and independent living. Ideally, transition should represent a balance of teaching everyday living skills, personal and social skills, and vocational skills. Thoughtful planning is known to improve the employment rates of students with disabilities.

When students with disabilities reach the age of 18, also known as age of majority, the legal rights regarding special education services move from the parents to the student. Parents and students are notified one year before the student's 18th birthday that transfer of educational rights will occur. If parents/guardians believe their son or daughter is unable or incapable of making sound educational and/or independent living decisions, some options include: conservatorship, limited conservatorship, and estate planning and trust funds.

For more information contact: Protection and Advocacy, Inc (PAI) at 1-800-776-5746 or online at www.pai-ca.org/pubs/500501.htm.

The California Department of Education has identified five Core Messages for Transition. These are:

- Student focused planning based on the student's interests and preferences;
- Student development activities which develop the student's academic, social, and employability competencies;
- Interagency collaboration which involves all stakeholders;
- Family involvement which recognizes parents as equal partners on the IEP team; and
- Program structures that include a range of options that support meaningful connections to the workplace and community.

Under the IDEA, each eligible student is required to have an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) beginning at age 14. This plan is developed by a team which includes the student, parents, school staff, Regional Center case manager, vocational specialist, and anyone else who can contribute to the process. This planning process must begin by identifying the student's post-school goals. Students and families should be supported in thinking about their long-range goals. The ITP team then moves on to develop a statement of needed transition services in the areas of instruction, vocational training, integrated employment, independent living, and community participation. A functional vocational evaluation should be completed as needed.

The ITP serves as a "blueprint" for guiding delivery of services to the student. Within each area, functional and measurable goals and objectives should be explicitly stated. These goals and objectives should be designed to ensure that students will gain the skills needed to achieve their desired post-school goals. Thinking about these questions may help you in thinking about your child's transition plan:

- What courses does the student need to complete to gain the skills s/he needs?
- Does the student need related services to benefit from special education? If so, are the necessary linkages in place to ensure that these services will continue when the student leaves the public school system?
- Has the student been exposed to a broad range of experiences in the community, such as shopping, transportation, recreation or leisure activities, or using community facilities such as a library?
- Are there opportunities for career exploration and experiencing a variety of on-site job training activities?
- Does the student need instruction in daily living skills such as preparing meals, home maintenance, shopping and caring for clothes, grooming, and money management?
- Has the student had a functional vocational assessment?

Remember, transition is a plan, not a program! Your child's transition plan should demonstrate that it is outcome-oriented; focused on meeting the student's needs, interests, and preferences; identify the instruction and services needed to achieve the student's goals' and should clearly state the linkages after exit from the school system to ensure that post-school supports are in place.

In the North Santa Cruz County SELPA, most students with severe disabilities attend the Post-Senior Program administered by the Santa Cruz County Office of Education after high school, and remain in that program until age 22. At that time, they are awarded a Certificate of Completion.

More information about transition planning can be obtained by contacting:

- Special Education department at your local district office.
- Your case manager, San Andreas Regional Center 831-728-1781
- Parents Helping Parents 408-727-5775

Other resources include:

- Transition to Adult Living: A Guide for Secondary Education
www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed/
- Transition Services in the IEP
www.nichey.org
- IDEA '97 Transition Requirements: A Guide
<http://interact.uoregon.edu/wrrc/trnfiles/intro.htm>
- Transition Coalition
<http://www.transitioncoalition.org/>

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was the first civil rights act for people with disabilities. Regulations became effective in 1977 and prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability in all programs that receive federal financial assistance. Each federal department, including the U.S. Dept. of Education, developed its own set of implementing regulations. Section 504 guarantees the civil right of equal access to educational services for students with disabilities, even if they do not qualify for special education under IDEA (see Section 3). Discrimination or a failure to provide a free, appropriate education to students with disabilities is regarded as a violation of basic civil rights.

Here is a summary of some of the major rights under Section 504:

Eligibility

The definition of a disability is much broader under Section 504 than under IDEA, and covers many students not eligible for services under IDEA. A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This includes ADD, ADHD, specific learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, medical conditions, and AIDS.

Evaluation

Under Section 504, students must be evaluated to determine whether they need any type of special services to enable them to benefit from their education, or to insure against inappropriate placements. Parents/guardians, of course, may request an evaluation for their child; however, school districts are also supposed to seek evaluations for children so that those who need services are able to access them. Evaluations must cover all areas of the suspected disability.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) / Maximum Appropriate Integration

Children covered under Section 504 should be educated in the general education setting and be with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible. Within this setting they should receive all aids and services which they need to meet their educational needs.

Procedural Safeguards

This means that parents must receive notice about any actions regarding their child's educational placement. Parents/guardians must have the ability to influence or contest any decisions regarding their child.

Related Services

Students with disabilities are eligible for related services or program modifications even if they do not qualify for special education. Remember that the intent of Section 504 is to guarantee access to general education for students with special needs, and the related services provided to a child should meet that child's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled children are met.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION

In the case of a special needs child whose behavior impedes his/her learning or that of others, appropriate positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports will be developed to address the behavior, including, when appropriate, the development of a **Behavior Support Plan (BSP)**. A behavior support plan shall be part of the student's individualized education program and shall specify environmental and instructional changes and other techniques and strategies including positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports. If a behavior support plan is not effective it can be modified until success is attained or when a special needs student's very serious behavioral problems significantly interferes with implementing the goals and objectives for his/her individualized education program, and/or poses a significant danger to himself or others, a functional analysis assessment shall be conducted with parental consent and a written **Behavioral Intervention Plan (Hughes Bill)** may be developed for the student in accordance with state law and SELPA procedures.

Behavior Intervention Plan (Hughes Bill, AB 2586)

The Hughes Bill was passed by the California Legislature in 1990 and its purpose is to ensure that special education students have the right to positive behavioral intervention plans. Briefly, the Hughes Bill mandates that attempts to change serious and pervasive behavior problems must meet the following criteria:

- Interventions result in lasting and positive behavioral changes;
- Interventions promote greater access to community social events;
- Interventions do not cause pain or trauma; and
- Interventions respect the dignity and privacy of the individual.

The Hughes Bill provides guidelines for developing a behavioral intervention plan, based on behavioral principles, with the goal of maximizing the individual's full potential. Hughes Bill guidelines apply only to students in special education.

Procedures for making a referral and developing a positive behavioral plan:

Students who exhibit serious behavior problems that interfere with the implementation of their IEP may need a Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan. If the student has not responded to documented behavioral intervention attempts, s/he may be referred for evaluation. The following sequence of events is recommended:

- Teacher, principal or parent identifies student as having a serious behavioral problem. Student is:
 - Exhibiting behavior which meets the criteria for serious behavior problems; or
 - Engaging in a behavior that results in a Behavioral Emergency Report being completed.
- Program Administrator/Specialist convenes the student's IEP Team, including the parent/resident care-provider and the BICM (Behavior Intervention Case Manager).
- IEP team, including the BICM meets to determine timelines for the following: functional analysis assessment, written report, and follow-up IEP meetings.
- IEP team re-convenes, the BICM presents the functional analysis assessment report, and the IEP team, including the BICM, teacher, parent(s), and other school personnel develop and approve the Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP), which will, most often, include the following:

- Case file review;
 - Direct observation of the student in a variety of settings and activities;
 - Interview of student's teacher and other staff regarding the student's school program, and
 - Interview with parent/resident care-provider.
- Scheduled IEP reviews occur, and BIP revisions are agreed upon and implemented.
NOTE: BIP review timelines are determined at the initial IEP meeting.

The IEP team, including the behavior intervention case manager, facilitates and supervises all intervention and evaluation activities.

- Emphasis is on developing more adaptive skills for a student; therefore, the goal is to replace maladaptive behavior with more acceptable behavior.
- The elimination of maladaptive behavior does not require the use of intrusive behavioral interventions that cause pain or trauma. Rather, the IEP team shall consider the motivating variables, which cause maladaptive behavior, and endeavor to alter these variables to produce positive behavioral results.

The functional analysis assessment is conducted by the behavioral intervention case manager (BICM). The assessment report, written by the BICM and presented to the IEP team contains:

- A description of the nature and severity of the targeted behavior (in objective and measurable terms);
- An analysis of the antecedents and consequences that maintain the targeted behavior, including an analysis of the function of the behavior across the settings in which it occurs (environmental variables).

In an IEP meeting the BIP is developed and becomes a part of the student's IEP. The plan must be approved by all members of the IEP team, including the student's parent(s) or legal guardian.



Positive Programming

“Positive programming”, meaning the use of positive response options, is the mandate of the Hughes Bill. All behavioral intervention plans written in the North Santa Cruz County SELPA will provide for positive responses to misbehavior, and will include alternative appropriate behaviors. Punishment or other negative interventions (e.g., over-correction, contingent exercises, confined time-out) are not to be used. Approved responses to misbehavior may include, but are not limited to:

- The behavior targeted for reduction is ignored, while the student is carefully observed.
- The student is provided verbal/physical redirection, either to the assigned task or to another activity that is likely to interrupt the target behavior.
- The student is given verbal feedback when her/his behavior is inappropriate.
- The student is told that the message s/he is attempting to communicate is understood and acknowledged.
- The student is given a brief physical prompt to stop the target behavior(s) or to perform a more appropriate behavior.
- The student is given a response cost (e.g., fines, loss of privileges, brief time away from the group)

- The student's behavior is dealt with in the manner prescribed by the school site.
- Temporary removal from the work area, but not from the classroom. As soon as the inappropriate behavior has stopped, the student should be returned to the work area. Students can monitor their own readiness to return to work.
- Teach alternative behavior(s) that produce the same consequence(s) as the inappropriate behavior.

Restrictive procedures are to be used only in the case of a behavioral emergency; to control unpredictable, spontaneous behaviors which pose a clear and present danger of serious physical harm to the individual, others, or property, and which cannot be immediately prevented by a response less restrictive than the temporary application of a technique to contain the behavior.

- No emergency intervention shall be employed for longer than is necessary to contain the behavior.
- For non-severely handicapped students, the normal disciplinary procedures, such as suspension and expulsion, may be utilized for serious behavioral problems. For severely handicapped or severely behavior disordered students, emergency interventions are to be used only when a student is so physically uncontrollable that he/she is incapable of responding to other measures.

RESOURCES

Listed below are resources that provide services, support, or cash benefits to families with a child with a disability. They are divided into sections for ease of reference.

Mandated Programs

California Children Services (CCS)(831) 763-8900
Provides specialized medical care, therapy and treatment, and equipment for families eligible through residency, medical condition, and financial situation

Child Health & Disability Prevention Program (CHDP)(831) 454-2560
Provides preventive health care for children of low-income families or in foster care

San Andreas Regional Center... (831) 728-1781
Evaluation, case management, and purchase of services for clients with developmental disabilities

Santa Cruz County Children’s Mental Health Services(831) 454-4900
Counseling for children and families. Parent support groups available.
Call Family Partnership Program (831) 454-4961.

Santa Cruz County Human Resources Agency.(831) 454-4165
Financial assistance, food stamps, MediCal, and IHSS, for low-income families

Santa Cruz County MediCruz Program(831) 454-4011
Health-care for the indigent

Santa Cruz Health Clinic.....(831) 454-4100
County hospital required to provide medical care to any resident regardless of ability to pay.

Social Security Administration(800) 772-1213
Cash benefits (through Supplemental Security Income [SSI] program) for children with diagnosed disabilities. If you receive cash benefits through the County Department of Employment & Human Services you will probably be eligible.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).....(831) 426-3911
Vouchers for food supplements for low-income women who are pregnant, Breast-feeding, or have children from birth to age three.

Special Programs

Area Developmental Disabilities Board VII.....(408) 246-4355
Advocacy for children and adults with developmental disabilities

Autism Santa Cruz(831) 464-3393
Information, referral and support for families who have children with autism spectrum disorder.

Blind Babies Foundation.....(415) 586-6140
Consultation & home visits.

- California State Department of Education, Procedural Safeguards**(800) 926-0648
Answers questions concerning Special Education laws and regulations
- Central Coast Center for Independent Living**.....(831) 462-8720
Information, referral and advocacy for individuals with special needs
- Community Alliance for Special Education**.....(408) 283-1535
Provides legal support, representation, technical consultation and training to parents concerning special education services.
- Dientes**(831) 459-9211
Provides low cost dental care for those who income-qualify.
- Doran Center for the Blind**.....(831) 458-9766
Information and referral on resources for blind children
- The Epilepsy Network**.....(831) 475-9110
Information, referral and support for families regarding epilepsy.
- Families in Transition**(831) 458-7125
Assists families in locating housing
- Family Partnership Program**(831) 454-4961
Provided support, advocacy and education for families of children within the Santa Cruz County Children’s Mental Health system
- Lift Line**.....(831) 688-9663
Low cost transportation within Santa Cruz County for the disabled.
- Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital at Stanford Hotline**(800) 690-2282
Parent medical information and referral hotline
- Jacob’s Heart Children’s Cancer Association**.....(831) 458-9766
Support for children and families dealing with childhood cancer.
- Protection and Advocacy**(831) 464-0669
Protects the legal, civil and service rights of individuals with developmental or mental disabilities through a variety of advocacy services.
- Red Cross**(831) 462-2881
Transportation to Santa Clara County for medical appointments for the disabled
- Special Connections**.....(831) 464-0669
Support for families who have a child in the Early Start program.
- Special Parents Information Network**.....(831) 722-2800
Information, resources, training, and parent-to-parent support
- Tourette’s Syndrome Support Group**(831) 722-2800
Provides support for families and individuals with Tourettes Syndrome.
- Walnut Ave. Women’s Center**(831) 426-3062
Provides parenting education, information, referral and support

Women's Crisis and Support / Defensa de Mujeres.....(831) 685-3737
Crisis hotline for domestic violence

Counseling

Family Therapist Referral Line(831) 429-7786
Referral service for information on local therapists

Parental Stress Hotline(831) 426-7322
24 hour 7 days a week crisis support hotline.

Parents Center(831) 426-7322
Provides counseling services for children and their families

Youth Services(831) 429-8350
Provides counseling services for older children and their families

Child Care/Respite

Balance 4 Kids(831) 464-8669
Respite provided through San Andreas Regional Center authorization.

Child Development Resource Center.....(831) 479-5282
Information and referral for childcare in Santa Cruz County

Community Association for Rehabilitation.....(831) 761-2699
Respite provided through San Andreas Regional Center authorization.
Can also be obtained independently

Easter Seals Central California.....(831) 684-2166
Respite provided through San Andreas Regional Center authorization. Can also obtain independently

Recreation

Challengers Baseball.....(831) 438-5127
Challengers Little League.

Dragon Slayers.....(831) 688-6699
Dragon Slayers is an innovative animal therapy program for physically-challenged children and adults.

Monterey Bay Horsemanship and Therapeutic Center.....(831) 479-0680
Therapeutic riding for individuals with disabilities and young children

Music Together/Musical Me, Inc.(831) 462-5195
Music and Movement for infants and preschoolers and the adults who love them

Ride-a-Wave(831) 239-3672
To give everyone the chance to experience the thrill of riding a wave, whether they are physically, economically, or developmentally challenged.

Shared Adventures(831) 459-7210
Recreational activities for children and adults with special needs

Special Olympics(831) 429-4258
For children 6 and over with developmental disabilities, with or without physical disabilities

Utilities

Pacific Gas and Electric(800) 743-5000
PG&E has a program called “Medical Baseline Rate” for individuals who require a life-support device, or special heating or air-conditioning needs. Call the number above to obtain application. Must be certified by physician. Also, the “Balanced payment Plan” is for individually metered customers. Contact the number shown on your bill for further information.

SBC (800) 310-2355
Universal Lifeline telephone service is a basic service at half price, for customers with low income. There are two types of Lifeline service available in most areas: Flat Rate – \$4.18 per month offers unlimited local calling, this is usually better if you make more than 2 local calls per day or Measured Rate - \$2.23 per month offers 60 untimed local calls, calls over 60 cost \$.08 each. If you have questions about Lifeline service, call the toll-free Pacific Bell number on page 1 of your bill under “adding, changing, or disconnecting service.”

GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS**Acronyms**

APE	Adapted Physical Education
BICM.....	Behavior Intervention Case Manager
BOT.....	Basic Occupational Training
CAC.....	Community Advisory Committee
CDC.....	Career Development Center
CH.....	Communicatively Handicapped
DIS	Designated Instruction and Service (or related services)
ED.....	Emotionally Disturbed
Ed. Code.....	California Education Code
HI.....	Hearing Impaired
IDEA.....	Individuals With Disabilities Education Act
IEP.....	Individualized Education Program
ITP.....	Individualized Transition Plan
LD.....	Learning Disability
LEA.....	Local Education Agency
LH.....	Learning Handicapped
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MH	Multi-handicapped
NSH.....	Non-Severely Handicapped, includes LH and CH
OH.....	Orthopedically Handicapped
OHI.....	Other Health Impaired
OT.....	Occupational Therapy
PH.....	Physically Handicapped, includes HI, OH, and VI.
PT	Physical Therapy
ROP	Regional Occupational Program
RSP.....	Resource Specialist Program
S & H Code	Safety and Health Code
SELPA.....	Special Education Local Plan Area – (2 in Santa Cruz County)
SH.....	Severely Handicapped. Includes MH and ED
SST	Student Study Team
VI.....	Visually impaired

Glossary

Advocate	Someone who takes action to help someone; also, to take action to help someone.
Allergist	Doctor specializing in diseases of the immune system, including allergies
Apgar	A method of evaluating the overall well-being of the newborn infant, done at 1 minute and 5 minutes after birth
Appeal	To make a request for a change of a decision.
Assessment	Collecting information about a child's social, psychological, and educational needs by observing, testing, collecting, and analyzing data.
At Risk	A term used to describe children who have, or could have, developmental problems that may affect learning.
Audiology	The study of hearing problems
Autism	A developmental disability appearing in children, usually by the age of 3, characterized by disturbances in communication, unusual social behavior, and abnormal responses to sensations
Behavior Disorder	Aggressive, unmanaged behavior of a child that interferes with daily activities, development, or learning skills
Community Advisory Committee (CAC)	A group of parents and special education administrators mandated by law, which advises school boards and administrators about special education programs.
Cerebral Palsy (CP)	A group of conditions characterized by nerve & muscle problems (awkward gait, motor problems, speech difficulties) caused by damage to the brain.
Case Management	The coordination of services, usually performed by a professional working with the family.
Cognition	Thinking skills.
Communication Handicap	A difficulty with receptive (understanding) language or expressive (speaking) language
Confidentiality	A guarantee that personally identifiable information about a child or family remains private and may only be shared among agencies with written permission of the parent.
Developmental Delay	A general term used to describe children who cannot perform the same skills that other children of the same age can usually do.
Developmental	Recording the age at which a child has reached developmental

History	Milestones (crawling, walking, etc)
Disability	The result of any physical or mental condition that affects or prevents one's ability to develop, achieve, and/or function at a normal rate.
Due Process	Procedures established to protect a child's right to entitled services.
Early Intervention	Services and programs for infants and young children who have special needs
Eligibility	Determination of whether a child qualifies for services based on meeting established criteria.
Entitlement	The legal right to certain services and benefits.
Evaluation	The collection of information about a child's learning needs, strengths, and interest.
Fine Motor Skills	Use of the hand or small muscle group.
Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)	A guarantee through IDEA that students with disabilities will be educated free of charge.
Geneticist	Specialist in the study of genetics / heredity
Gross Motor Skills	Use of large muscle groups.
Heredity	The transmission of genetic characteristics from parents to children
Hydrocephalus	An abnormal accumulation of fluid in the brain that leads to enlargement of the head.
Hypertonic	Increased muscle tone
Hypotonic	Decreased muscle tone
Inclusion	Total integration of a child with disabilities into all activities of a general education program
Individualized Education Program (IEP)	A written document that states a child's current level educational performance, specific annual goals and short-term instructional objectives, and appropriate services needed to meet the goals.
Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)	A written plan for an infant or toddler and the family documenting the level of development, strengths and needs, major goals or outcomes expected, services needed, date of the next evaluation, and the starting date.
Individualized Program Plan (IPP)	Service plan originated by a regional center

Informed Consent	A parent's written permission to assess their child, to provide services for the child, or to place the child in special education.
Intake	The process through which a determination is made by an agency for eligibility for services.
Integration	Joining of two groups previously separated, as in disabled and non-disabled children in a school or community setting.
Language Delay	Lag in the development of a child's ability to use or understand language.
Learning Disability	Problems using language, memory, concentrating, following instructions, reading, calculating, or learning through listening or looking
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	An education setting that provides a child with disabilities the chance to work and learn to the best of his or her ability and which provides as much contact as possible with children without disabilities.
Mainstreaming	Placing children with disabilities in general education classroom for specified period of time.
Mediation	Formal intervention between parents and agencies to achieve reconciliation, settlement, or compromise
Mental Retardation	Delay in a child's ability to learn and function independently; can be mild, moderate, severe, or profound.
Mobility	Movement
Multi-Handicapped	A child with two or more disabilities
Neonatologist	Doctor specializing in care of newborns
Occupational Therapy (OT)	Treatment of children to help improve fine motor activities and every day tasks
Ophthalmologist	Doctor specializing in diseases or injuries of the eye
Optician	Specialist in fitting glasses or contact lenses
Optometrist	Specialist in examining the eye and related structures to determine the presence of visual problems or disease
Orientation and Mobility	Training children with visual impairments to know their position in space and ability to move safely from place to place
Orthopedic Handicap	A physical disability
Orthopedist	Doctor specializing in diseases and injuries to muscles, joints and bones

Pediatrician	Doctor specializing in the treatment and management of childhood diseases and problems.
Physical Therapy (PT)	Treatment of children to help improve gross motor activities
Psychiatrist	Medical doctor specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of psychological, emotional, behavioral, and developmental problems
Psychologist	A specialist who administers psycho-educational tests; may also diagnose and treat social, emotional, psychological, or behavioral problems
Referral	A recommendation for assessment to determine if a specialized service is required and at what level.
Related Services	Also known as Designated Instruction and Services (DIS). Refers to all services required by a child with a disability to benefit from public education (speech therapy, audiology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.)
Reverse Mainstreaming	Placing non-disabled children in special education classrooms to play and learn with children who have disabilities.
Self-Help Skills	Skills needed for feeding, dressing, and toileting.
Social Skills	Skills needed by children to get along with adults and other children at home, in school, and in community settings
Social Worker	A specialist in providing and/or coordinating services for individuals and families experiencing social or emotional problems; may also provide treatment for social or emotional problems.
Special Education	Instruction that is designed to meet the needs of children with special needs
Speech and Language Therapy	A program to improve and correct speech and/or language problems
Time Line	The time within which entitled and mandated services must be provided; also prohibits being put on waiting list for any service to which you have a right.
Transition	A change from one program or situation to another (as hospital to home or from an infant program to preschool). Also refers to planning for students leaving school in preparation for adult life.

ASSESSMENT TIMELINE FLOWCHART

