



# About Special Education

Family Mentor Program Training  
*Created by: Amanda Dimilta, York Coach*  
*last updated: November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015*



Children's  
Treatment Network

Generously funded by:



# Special Education



*Providing answers to questions about special education.*

# In this Special Education module

To advocate for a child in the education system is to speak on behalf of the child and promote their specific learning needs.

In this module...

1. Transitioning into school
2. What is the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) procedure?
3. Information about Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
4. Communicating with the school
5. Transitioning out of school



# FAMILY SCENARIO 1:

*“My child is starting Junior Kindergarten (JK) in September. I am really nervous about it, and I need help to make the transition as smooth as possible.”*



- The Connectability [“Starting School”](#) webcast, a 10 minute presentation which outlines the procedure for registering a child with special needs at school, and gives lots of ideas on how to help prepare a child attending a new school.
- The [All About Me booklet template](#), so that they can compile useful and fun information about their child. [Here’s another one](#), from the Ministry of Education site.
- Early Intervention Services checklist. If applicable, the family’s EI will assist them with the transition to school, and outline the steps that will be taken to ensure a smooth transition. A similar checklist can also be found on p.11 of Simcoe Community District School Board’s (SCDSB) guide, [“Planning ‘Entry to School’ Transitions”](#).
- The Morneau Shepell [“Parent Advocacy Guidebook”](#), which assists with compiling the information a family needs when advocating for their child with special needs.
- Autism Parent Resource Kit, [“Educational Transitions”](#), created by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services.

## York

- Early Intervention Services (EIS) supports family from birth to December of SK; Transition to School Notification report completed by EIS and family.
- Upon entry into JK, YRDSB consultants will provide input into programming or, if child's needs require, therapy will be hosted by CCAC or CTN.

## Simcoe

- Infant Development Worker supports family from birth to age 2 with home visits.
- Resource Teacher (RT) supports family from approximately age 2 to December of JK (or school entry)
- The child's RT will arrange a meeting with school staff, parents and team. The Transitional Integrated Program Plan (TIPP), is an interdisciplinary report created by all team members and the family to discuss the child's best placement in school. TIPP actually can be used as the initial IEP as all the supports and strategies are clearly laid out.
- Local Team Occupational Therapist (OT) refers family to CCAC for intake, then connects family with Closing the Gap, who will meet with the school, usually within the first month of school. For high safety needs, RTs and OTs often meet in May/June prior to starting school.
- Each year, local Transition to School information sessions are hosted by the RT program in March.

<b>Suggested Transition Activity</b>	<b>Time period</b>
Consider school options	September of year before school entry
Early Intervention (EI) schedules meeting with family and support team to identify anticipated supports, services, and classroom adaptations needed. Consent to release info to school board. Transition to School Notification report completed.	September-November
Consider goal plans to include kindergarten skills and routines.	October-August
Transition to School Notification reports sent to school board.	November
Parent Information Evenings held	January
School registration.	January-February
Meetings or observations between school and family to take place.	March-May
Prepare portfolio, eg. "All About Me".	March-September
Transition may include meeting with teacher and parent, observation, modeling and problem solving support, participation in team meetings.	September-December of school entry
EI may continue to provide service coordination support as required to the parent and school team, including input for IEP development.	December of school entry – December of SK

*Source: Adapted from Early Intervention Services "Transition to School Timetable", York Region*

# How parents can help

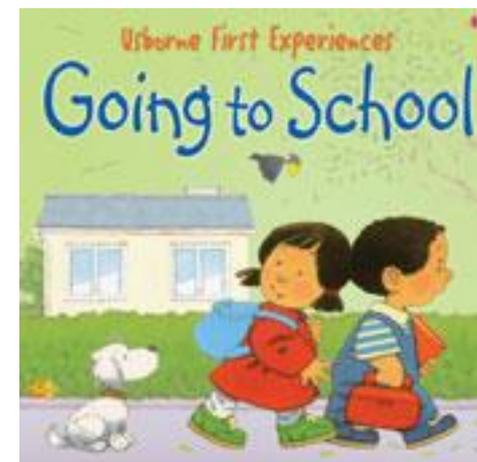
Make an [All About Me](#) booklet.

Arrange to visit the teacher in the classroom on a quiet day, perhaps during the week before school starts.

Take pictures of the classroom, teacher, etc. Discuss having a visual schedule ready for first day of school.

Consider using books or social stories to prepare and get excited about school!

View this [10 minute presentation](#) from our partners at Community Living, which provides helpful information.



# FAMILY SCENARIO 2:

*“I just received notice of the date for my son's Identification, Placement and Review Committee (“IPRC”) meeting. It sounds so official. I have no idea what to expect!”*



# The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

The IPRC meeting request might come at a time when a family has just been handed a diagnosis or even during a transition.

**The role of the IPRC is to:**



- York Region District School Board (YRDSB) [Parent Guide to the Identification, Placement and Review Committee](#)
- Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#)
- Community Living webinar (approx 45 minutes total), ["A Look At All Perspectives"](#)

# Sample Letter of Invitation



## IPRC Letter of Invitation

Date: March 18, 2013

Student ID: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

You are invited to attend an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting to discuss the identification and placement of your child, [REDACTED]

On March 6, 2013 the school staff discussed with you the learning strengths and needs of [REDACTED]. Based on that discussion, staff will make a recommendation for consideration by the Committee. The recommendation will be to identify your child as exceptional, in the area of Multiple Exceptionality (Autism, Learning Disability). As well, a placement in a special program will be recommended as follows:

- |   |   |                                 |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Regular Class</b>                        | <b>Special Education Class</b>                        | <b>Demission</b>                |
| <input type="radio"/> Indirect Service      | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Partially Integrated | <input type="radio"/> Demission |
| <input type="radio"/> Resource Assistance   | <input type="radio"/> Fully Self-Contained            |                                 |
| <input type="radio"/> Withdrawal Assistance |   |                                 |

The Identification, Placement and Review Committee has the responsibility of deciding the identification and placement for your child. You will receive a copy of any documentation that the IPRC will review in making its decision prior to the meeting.

You are welcome to provide the IPRC with any additional information. Your attendance and your participation is encouraged at the IPRC meeting that is scheduled for:

Date: April 2, 2013  
Time: 12:00 pm  
Location: [REDACTED] Public School

Sincerely, [REDACTED]  
Principal's Signature

Parents' Guide included

**Please complete the following two sections below and return to the school:**

1.  I agree with the recommendation for identification and placement. I have provided my comments to the school staff and will not be attending the IPRC meeting.

OR

I will be attending the IPRC meeting for my child.

2.  I have received a copy of the Parents' Guide to Regulation 181/98.

April 2/13  
Date

[REDACTED]  
Signature - Parent, Guardian or Student 16 years or older

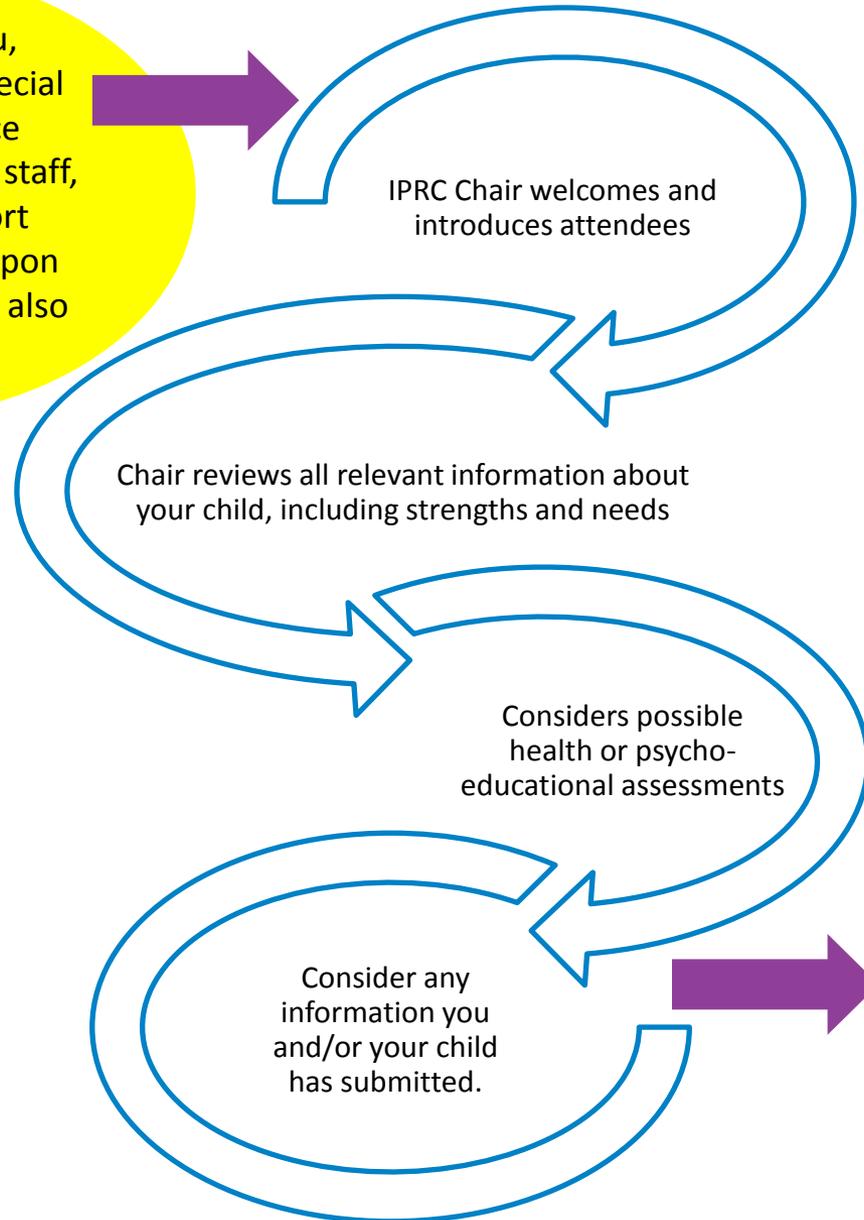
Form NP 360-01 Distribution: copy 1 > O.S.R. copy 2 > C.E.C. copy 3 > Parent copy 4 > Student age 16 or over

Parent has agreed to wait 10 days

A sample Letter of Invitation from YRDSB, which outlines the recommendations that will be made and invites the parents to attend an IPRC meeting to discuss. Parents should attend, if possible.

# What happens at the IPRC

In attendance: you, principal, teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), Board staff, agency reps, support person, interpreter upon request. Student may also attend.

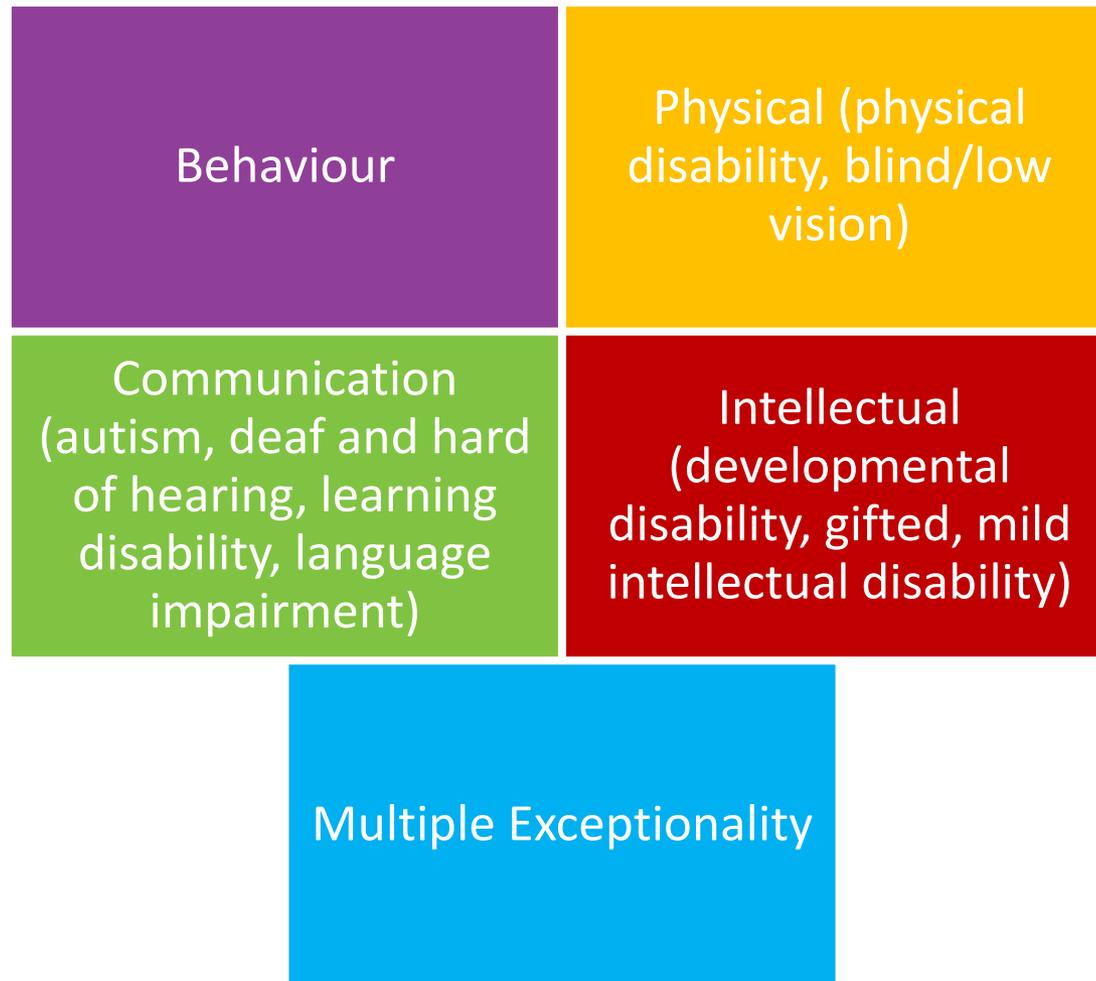


Usually, there are no surprises at the IPRC. All of the “work” is done in advance of the meeting, with the family’s knowledge and involvement. The actual IPRC usually lasts about 10-15 minutes. It is the formal acceptance of the identification and placement decision.

IPRC committee makes a decision regarding identification and placement.

# Categories of exceptionalities

---



# Placements

---

## 1. Regular class with:

- Indirect Service (SERT supports teacher, in-class accommodations);
- Resource Assistance (FT or PT Educational Assistant); or
- Withdrawal Assistance (what happens when “withdrawn” can vary).

2. Partially Integrated (e.g. Community Class or Student Support Services class or Learning Centre Class, not more than 51% of day in regular class).

3. Fully Self-Contained special education class (e.g. Developmental Skills Class).



**Statement of Decision of  
The Exceptionality, Placement and Review  
Committee (IPRC)**

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Preferred Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M Grade: 02  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_ Public School Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Current Category: Communication Current Placement: Resource Assistance  
 Exceptionality 1: Autism Exceptionality 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Initial IPRC  Review IPRC The IPRC met on 02/04/2013 to discuss the above student  
 This student is "not exceptional"  This student is "exceptional"

Summary of Student Strengths	Summary of Student Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sight word reading</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>gross motor</li> <li>community skills (use, money, telephone, computer)</li> <li>self help</li> </ul>	[Redacted]

Category: Multiple Exceptionality  
 Identification(s) (1): Autism (2): Learning Disability (See reverse for list of definitions)  
 Placement: **Regular Class**  Indirect Service  Resource Assistance  Withdrawal Assistance  
**Special Education Class**  Partially Integrated  Fully Self-Contained  
**Demission**  Demission  
 Location:  Home School  Community Class \_\_\_\_\_ Public School  
 Reason for Placement in a Self-Contained Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Recommendations Regarding Program and Service (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of IPRC Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Board Notification Date: 17/04/2013 Effective Date: 03/09/2013  
 IPRC Committee Members (quorum): Gail Stewart, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others in Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Education Transportation Required:  No  Yes (Form NP360-03 completed by current school)  
**To be Completed by Parents/Guardians**  
 I understand and agree with the decision for:  
 Identification:  Yes  No Placement:  Yes  No  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian (& Student 16 or over) Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: Apr 2/13

A sample Statement of Decision from YRDSB, which summarizes the child's strengths and needs, indicates the IPRC's identification decision, and indicates the placement decision.



# Disagree with the decision?

---

- Within 15 days of receiving the original IPRC decision, request to meet again. Explain the concerns.
- If cannot be resolved, file a written notice of appeal to the Director/Secretary of the school board within 30 days of receiving the original IPRC decision, or within 15 days of receiving the second IPRC decision.



**Important!**

If a family disagrees with the **original** decision but does not request a second meeting or file an appeal, the decision of the IPRC will automatically be implemented after 30 school days.

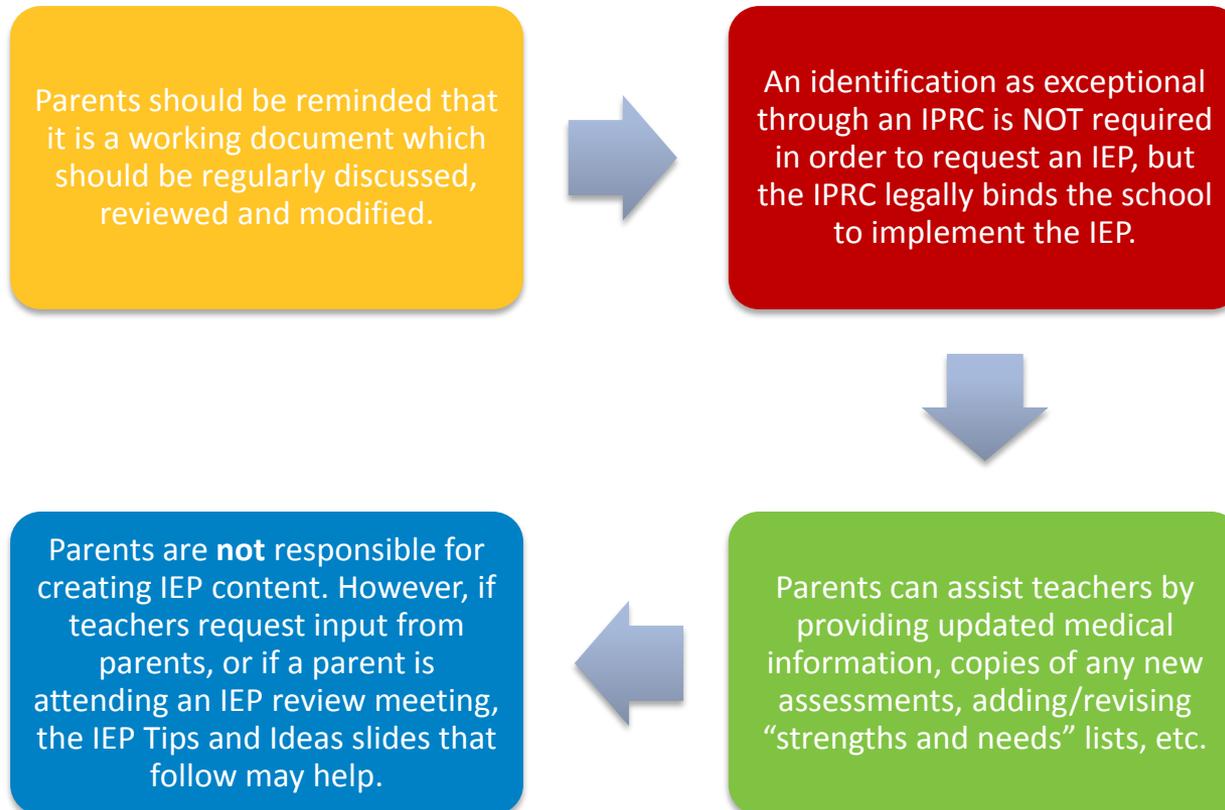
# FAMILY SCENARIO 3:

*“The teacher has asked me for input into my son's Individual Education Plan (“IEP”). I have no idea where to start!”*



**Learning Knows No Bounds**

When IEP creation (or review) time arrives shortly after the school year begins, many parents will be seeking assistance. IEPs can be overwhelming.



- YRDSB's [The Individual Education Plan – A Guide for Parents](#)
- SCDSB's [Individual Education Plan – Helping your child achieve success in the classroom](#)
- Visit [LD@School](#) for overview of accommodations vs. modifications vs. alternative skill areas
- Sample accommodations checklists
- SCDSB's strategy for [SMART learning expectations](#)
- Sample IEPs from the [Ministry of Education - IEP Resource Guide](#), pp. 58-84
- Consider participating in IEP workshops specifically for children with Autism (Kerry's Place, Autism Ontario)

## Accommodations page

Be creative!

Explore other options beyond those typically used for children with a specific diagnosis.

Strategies NOT to implement can be included.

Keep the list concise; remove items that are not practically implemented.

Make it specific to what works for your child.

Figure 3: Examples of Accommodations

Instructional Accommodations	Environmental Accommodations	Assessment Accommodations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddy/peer tutoring</li> <li>• Note-taking assistance</li> <li>• Duplicated notes</li> <li>• Contracts</li> <li>• Reinforcement incentives</li> <li>• High structure</li> <li>• Partnering</li> <li>• Ability grouping</li> <li>• Augmentative and alternative communications systems</li> <li>• Assistive technology, such as text-to-speech software</li> <li>• Graphic organizers</li> <li>• Non-verbal signals</li> <li>• Organization coaching</li> <li>• Time-management aids</li> <li>• Mind maps</li> <li>• More frequent breaks</li> <li>• Concrete/hands-on materials</li> <li>• Manipulatives</li> <li>• Tactile tracing strategies</li> <li>• Gesture cues</li> <li>• Dramatizing information</li> <li>• Visual cueing</li> <li>• Large-size font</li> <li>• Tracking sheets</li> <li>• Colour cues</li> <li>• Reduced/uncluttered format</li> <li>• Computer options</li> <li>• Spatially cued formats</li> <li>• Repetition of information</li> <li>• Rewording rephrasing of information</li> <li>• Extra time for processing</li> <li>• Word-retrieval prompts</li> <li>• Taped texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative work space</li> <li>• Strategic seating</li> <li>• Proximity to instructor</li> <li>• Reduction of audio/visual stimuli</li> <li>• Study carrel</li> <li>• Minimizing of background noise</li> <li>• Quiet setting</li> <li>• Use of headphones</li> <li>• Special lighting</li> <li>• Assistive devices or adaptive equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time limits</li> <li>• Verbatim scribing</li> <li>• Oral responses, including audiotapes</li> <li>• Alternative settings</li> <li>• More frequent breaks</li> <li>• Assistive devices or adaptive equipment</li> <li>• Prompts to return student's attention to task</li> <li>• Augmentative and alternative communications systems</li> <li>• Assistive technology, such as speech-to-text software</li> <li>• Large-size font</li> <li>• Colour cues</li> <li>• Reduced/uncluttered format</li> <li>• Computer options</li> <li>• Extra time for processing</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of tasks used to assess a concept or skill</li> </ul>

Note: A typical IEP would not include all of the accommodations listed above. Only the accommodations that are specifically required by the individual student should be listed in his or her IEP.

**Sample Accommodations  
(Ministry of Education,  
IEP Resource Guide, p.29)**

# SENSORY ACCOMMODATION SUGGESTIONS

STUDENT'S NAME

GRADE

TEACHER

SCHOOL YEAR

## TO MAKE DESK WORK EASIER

- Provide desk closest to teacher
- Provide alternate desk away from group activities
- Assign desk at front of class
- Adjust desk to child's height (correct placement is child's feet on floor/stool with elbows resting on table)
- Provide rubber band around chair legs for child's feet
- Use alternate seating options; ball, knee chair, move-and-sit, disc-o-sit or air cushion
- Allow child to stand
- Allow child use of weighted lap pad
- Allow frequent breaks

## FOR SITTING IN A GROUP

- Allow child to sit on a carpet square
- Mark child's spot on carpet with tape
- Allow child to use chair or beanbag
- Seat child closest to teacher
- Seat child at edge of group
- Seat child at back of group
- Seat child at front of group
- Allow use of handheld fidget toys/manipulatives
- Allow child to sub-vocalize
- Allow child to change position as needed (from knees, to straight legs, to criss/cross, etc)

## FOR WRITING

- Provide a pencil grip (specify kind \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Provide angled writing desk or slant board
- Always provide lined paper or specialized paper
- Provide visual instructions for common written tasks
- Assist with brainstorming for written work
- Help organize thoughts for long writing tasks
- Give extra class time to finish
- Allow the option to finish at home without penalty
- Provide a list of common words and their correct spelling at desk
- Allow dictation to a scribe
- Allow assistive technology (specify kind \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Allow child to dictate ideas into a tape recorder, then scribe his/her own words later or at home
- Warm hands up with proprioceptive work, such as manipulating clay, before writing begins

## FOR READING

- Allow child to read out loud
- Give child a book mark to hold place and help to follow along while reading
- Minimize visual distractions on the page
- Allow child to move/change position/take breaks

## FOR CLASSWORK

- Allow child to move to a quieter area/out in hallway
- Repeat instructions to child 1:1
- Allow child to take work to Resource Room
- Provide visual instructions
- Cover page to show only 1-2 problems at a time

## FOR HOMEWORK

- Allow extra time to complete assignments
- Give modified assignments that require less writing
- Give modified assignments that require less reading
- Give option of drawing in lieu of writing
- Allow work to be typed
- Allow work to be scribed
- Allow work to be modified at the parent's discretion
- Decrease amount of work required

## FOR TRANSITIONS

- Prepare student ahead of time verbally or with a timer
- Follow schedule as accurately as possible
- Allow child to bring a "transition toy" with them
- Give child something to carry with them
- Have child be the "door holder"
- Have child be the "caboose" (last in line)
- Have child be the "leader" (first in line)
- Remind child to keep his/her hands to themselves
- Remind child about "personal space bubble"

## FOR RECESS

- Do not take recess away for mis-behavior in class
- Offer good proprioceptive options such as monkey bars, rock wall climbing, or digging

## FOR HEAVY WORK - REGULAR ACCESS ALL DAY

- Allow child to re-shelve books
- Allow child to rearrange chairs/desks
- Allow child to open and close doors

- Allow child to hold signs
- Allow child to wear weighted back pack
- Allow child to pull the lunch wagon
- Allow child to push adult in a wheeled chair
- Allow child to wipe down tables
- Allow child to carry books to/from the office/library
- Allow child to carry Xerox paper to/from copy room

## FOR SENSORY BREAKS

- Make child "classroom messenger"
- Allow child to pass out papers
- Allow child frequent trips to the bathroom or drinking fountain as needed
- Sing songs that encourage movement
- Encourage whole class stretching
- Allow child access to sensory tub, sand, beans, rice
- Do chair pushups or tailor sit pushups as a class

## TIPS FOR GENERAL SENSORY SUCCESS

- Give child warnings before a fire drill or other bells
- Explain false alarms to child when applicable
- Provide 'Quite Chill' out space, under a desk, in a corner where they can be alone and safe
- Allow noise-canceling head phones
- Allow gum chewing, hard candy, or other food
- Allow water bottle w/straw at desk or other chewy
- Allow fidget toys
- Post visual routine in classroom
- My child is very sensitive to smells
- My child is very sensitive to touch: Please DO NOT TOUCH HIM/HER
- Keep visual distractions in the room to a minimum
- Play calming music in the background
- Allow modifications to art activities with possible use of tools to increase participation
- Please share my child's 504 with all para-educators in contact with my child
- My child is on a special diet, you can support this by: \_\_\_\_\_
- My child needs a modified dress code as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

## MY CHILD'S LEARNING STYLE IS:

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinesthetic

## Programming pages

Talk to the teacher  
BEFORE the IEP is  
completed.

Child can  
participate in  
whatever format  
works, eg. a short  
video clip of child  
expressing their  
wishes.

Refer to previous  
IEPs and report  
cards.

Use the [Ontario  
curriculum](#) as a  
guide.

# Writing effective IEP goals

## SCDSB's strategy\* for SMART learning expectations:

Specific – clear descriptions of what will be taught and how progress will be measured

Measurable – you can count or observe it

Action Words – like “apply”, “explain”, “point”

Realistic and Relevant – for child to be successful, and to child's assessed strengths and needs

Time Limited – usually within one term or semester

*Example of Annual Goal and SMART expectation, via SCDSB:*

### **Elementary – ALT program**

**Annual Goal:** In social skills, [student] will employ “Stop, Think, Do” or a similar technique at a rate of 7 out of 10 possible situations.

**Learning Expectation:** In social skills, [student] will demonstrate, through role-playing, the “Stop, Think, Do” technique and employ it or a similar technique at a rate of 4 out of 10 possibilities.

# FAMILY SCENARIO 4:

*“I am not satisfied with how my daughter is being supported at school, but I don’t want to bother the teacher.”*



# Effectively communicating with the school



This is probably the most important section of this training module.

Helping families collaborate with their child's educators and truly become a member of their child's team will create the foundation for learning and for achieving goals.



Maintaining a level of professionalism – balanced with assertiveness when needed – can be tricky, especially when emotions are running high.



Instil confidence in your families that they do know their child best, and that they are a valued player in their child's education.

# Effectively communicating with the school (continued)

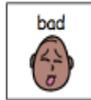
Families should not hesitate to request a meeting with their child's teacher if they have any concerns to address or successes to celebrate!

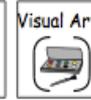
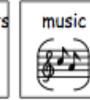
At the beginning of the school year (or earlier!), it is a good idea to ask the new teacher, "What is the best way for us to communicate?"

Ask what form of daily communication (journal, agenda, etc) works best for them.

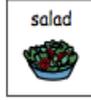
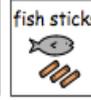
Hi Mom and Dad!

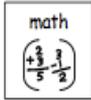
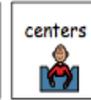


I had a    day at school today.

We had      

For lunch I ate:     

I worked on:     

Other Comments:

- [Building a Positive Parent-Teacher Relationship](#), Lynn Ziraldo, Learning Disabilities Association of York Region (LDAYR).
- [Shared Solutions](#), A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs, Ministry of Education.
- Consider participating in advocacy workshops, hosted by organization associated with your child's diagnosis (eg. Autism workshops with Kerry's Place).



**Source:**  
**Work effectively together**  
(Lynn Ziraldo, LDAYR)

# Successful meetings

(Lynn Ziraldo, LDA)

Focus on the best interests of the child.

Understand each other's perceptions of the child's strengths and needs, remembering that the child acts differently at school and at home.

Commit time and energy to achieving an understanding of each other's points of view.

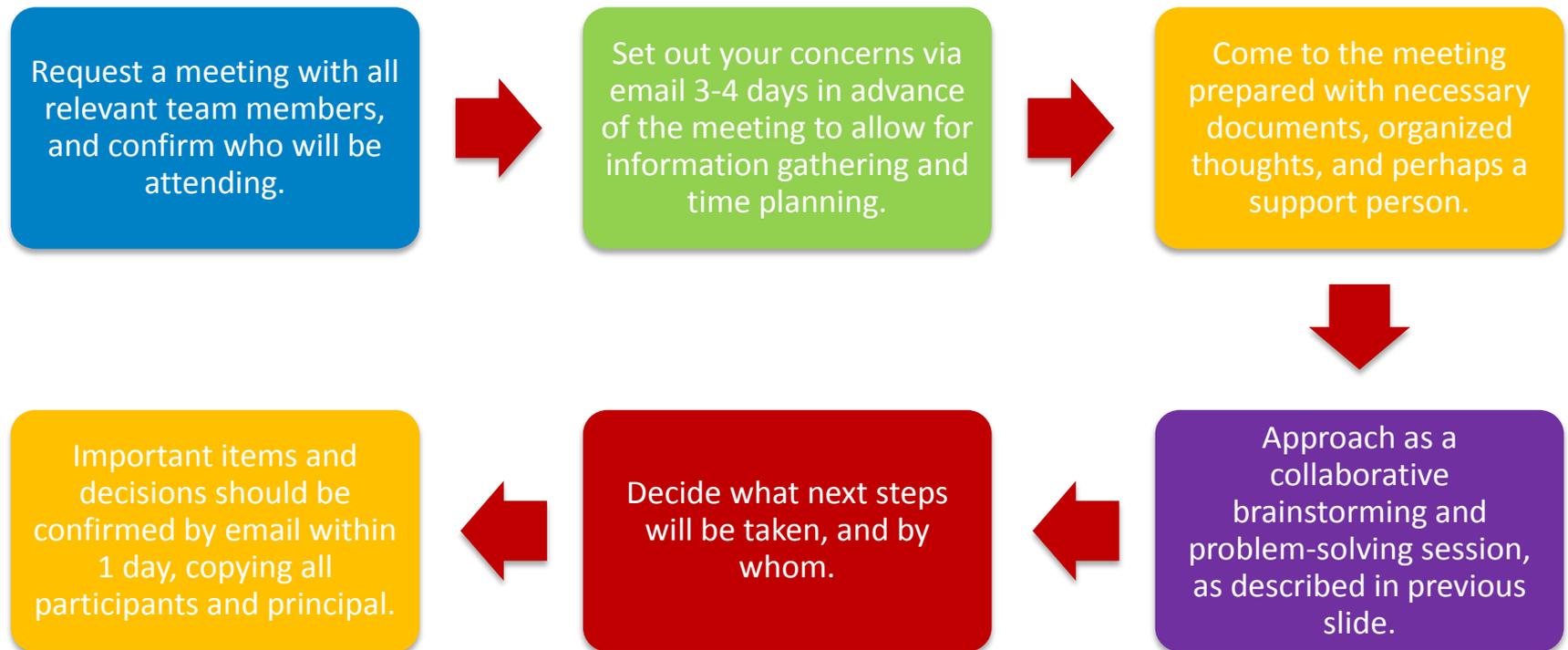
Determine ways to share responsibilities.

Openly express appreciation for participation in the meeting.

Focus on determining a positive course of action rather than on assigning blame.

# What to do if conflicts arise

---



# FAMILY SCENARIO 5:

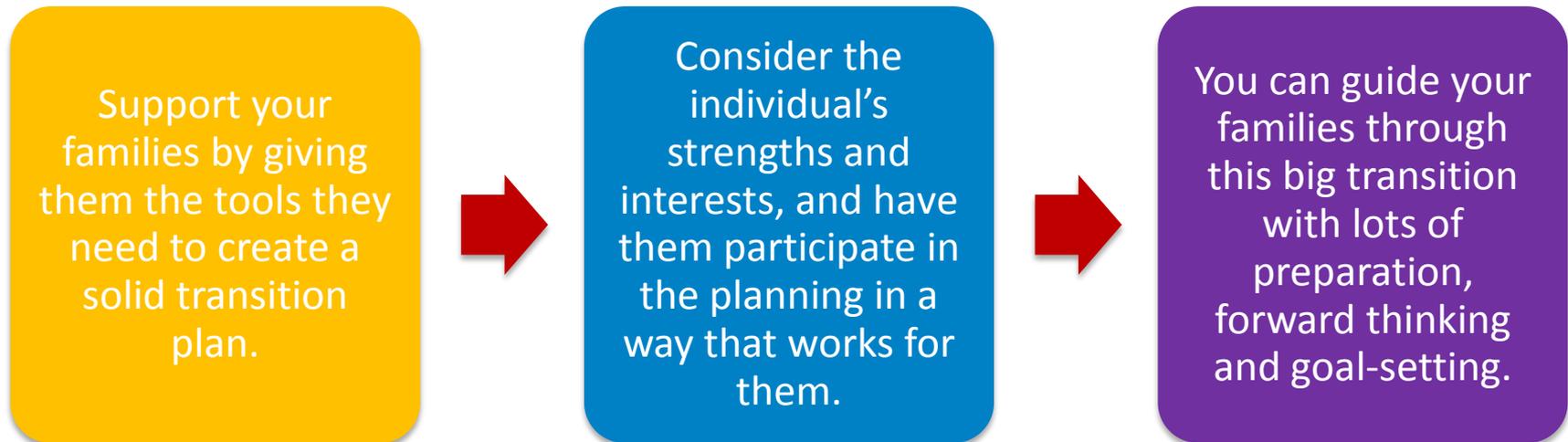
*“My daughter is finishing high school next year. I need help with what comes next for her.”*



# The transition out of secondary school

---

Families may fear the time when their son or daughter with special needs “ages out” of secondary school. Suddenly, they may be faced with many unknowns.



- [Creating Pathways to Success: An education and career/life planning program for Ontario schools](#), which sets out the Ministry of Education's policy and program requirements for Kindergarten to grade 12.
- [Transition Planning Resource Document: Work Experience Program](#), a YRDSB document which includes college vocational programs, bursaries, accommodations options, etc. for the GTA and beyond.
- [Transition Planning: A Resource Guide](#), a Ministry of Education publication
- [Connections: A guide to transition planning for parents of children with a developmental disability](#) York Support Services Network, which is binder of information regarding transition planning, tools and resources, and a space to collect and organize a family's information.
- [Jump Start](#), Lambton Kent Teen Transition Committee, and especially [Getting Started: Navigating the Teen to Adult Transition Years](#).
- [A Durham Approach to Transition Planning to Post-Secondary Life](#), which includes helpful timelines from grade 8 through completion of high school.
- Consider participating in transition workshops, such as those offered at Kerry's Place.

**Figure 4: Sample Actions for Different Stages Prior to Transition**

Four to Five Years Before Leaving School (normally Grades 8 and 9)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student explores and begins to define his or her interests, skills, and abilities. These will be reflected in the AEP from Grade 7 and in the transition plan from age 14.</li> <li>The student explores options for work, further education, and independent living in the community in the light of his or her disability. The accommodations and/or assessments that the student may need in order to realize these goals should be considered. This step should be coordinated with the school's and school board's career-exploration activities that are undertaken in accordance with the ministry guidance and career education policy document Choices Into Action, and should be documented in the board's guidance and career education program plan.</li> <li>Where employment is the primary goal, early and ongoing work placement experiences are desirable. Planning should include appropriate supports in the workplace.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For students who will require health care or social services, the transition-planning team encourages the parents to make applications on behalf of the student. If the student's needs warrant, an appropriate agency is identified and a referral is initiated to ensure that case management and further planning will be available after the student leaves school.</li> <li>Through the AEP process, the student identifies long-term goals and reviews them in the light of his or her interests, skills, and abilities.</li> <li>The transition-planning team identifies, and integrates into the program area of the student's IEP, individualized transition-related learning expectations that are necessary to the achievement of the student's transition goals (see Figure 5, "Transition-Related Learning Expectations", p. 26).</li> </ul>
Two to Three Years Before Leaving School (normally Grades 10 and 11)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The transition-planning team identifies transition partners from outside the school system and involves them in the review of the transition plan.</li> <li>The student engages in community volunteer and/or work placement experiences. These experiences are particularly important where work or community living are the student's primary post-school goals. The forty-hour community involvement requirement (as described in Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 124A) for secondary school students may help meet this need for some exceptional students.</li> <li>Where postsecondary study is a goal, the student and team begin to gather specific information on postsecondary institutions, programs, and support services, with special emphasis on any accommodations that will be required to meet the student's needs. Exploratory visits to the institution may be arranged through the special needs offices of postsecondary institutions to which the student is considering applying. The website of the National Educational Association for Disabled Students (NEADS) (<a href="http://www.neads.ca/english/norc/edlink/directory.html">http://www.neads.ca/english/norc/edlink/directory.html</a>) maintains a link to the websites of the special needs offices of most Ontario postsecondary institutions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student and team consider obtaining a psycho-educational (re)assessment of the student both to assist in identifying accommodations appropriate to the secondary school environment and to satisfy possible admission requirements of a college or university. Universities and colleges frequently require a recent psycho-educational assessment and diagnosis as a condition of admission for students seeking accommodations for special needs.</li> <li>The student and team explore options for post-school financial support.</li> <li>The student and team explore options for post-school living arrangements.</li> <li>The team reviews the status of the student for wait-listed post-school health care and social services, considering alternative strategies where this appears necessary.</li> <li>The team considers initiating a transition portfolio (see description below, under "One Year Before ...").</li> <li>The student and team review the achievement of individualized transition-related learning expectations. These expectations, and the supports required by the student to achieve them, are amended as necessary in the student's IEP.</li> </ul>

# Sample Letter of Invitation

Suggested actions for planning for transition out of secondary school, beginning in grades 8 and 9.

Source: Transition Planning - A Resource Guide, Ministry of Education

### One Year Before Leaving School (normally Grade 12)

While the student and/or parent may have primary responsibility for many of the following actions, transition-planning team members should provide support where appropriate.

- The student applies to appropriate institutions and programs for further education, and/or to community support programs, in accordance with his or her post-school goals.
- Students whose post-school goal is work conduct an active search for post-school employment. Students with high or complex needs should receive assistance from their support network, including parents, friends, teachers, and professional service providers.
- Students whose post-school goal is work and/or community living may allocate a significant portion of their time to community and/or work placement experiences.
- The student makes exploratory visits to postsecondary institutions to which he or she has applied. The special needs office of the particular institution can help to arrange this. Students may consider enrolment in a postsecondary course as a preparatory experience during the final year or over the summer following completion of secondary school. Some questions students should ask include:
  - Will this institution and program meet my interests and needs?
  - What will be expected of me in this program?
  - Can the workload be reduced or rearranged to meet my needs?
  - Is there access to the accommodations that I need?
  - Will I have appropriate financial support (student loans, disability bursaries)?
  - Do I need an updated psycho-educational or other assessment?
- The student applies for financial support programs, where needed.
- The student applies for housing, where appropriate.
- The team makes a final assessment of the individualized transition-related learning expectations and develops plans for further instruction, where required.
- The team helps the student to compile a *transition portfolio* of critical records (or copies of those records) that the student can supply to the organization(s) that will be providing support after the student leaves school. Provision of these records may reduce the need for costly and time-consuming reassessment. Records in the transition portfolio might include the following:
  - correspondence with the receiving institution concerning the transition;
  - the academic transcript, recent report cards, and, if appropriate, the Ontario Skills Passport (see p. 14, note 5);
  - diplomas, certificates, and awards;
  - reports of assessments (e.g., educational, medical, psychological, speech and language, social work);
  - the IPRC description of strengths and needs and statements of decision;
  - recent IEPs with the transition plan and progress reports;
  - cooperative education or work experience program reports;
  - letters of recommendation from teachers and work placement supervisors;
  - relevant samples of the student's work;
  - a self-advocacy statement by the student, outlining future goals and describing his or her special needs and required accommodations and compensatory strategies.
- On leaving school, the student participates in an exit program (as required by Ministry of Education policy, as outlined in *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999*), in which the student's plans for the immediate future are reviewed (see "Exit Programs" on pp. 30–31 of this guide). The transition-planning team leader may wish to review the student's transition plan one last time with the student and parents to ensure that individuals and organizations that will be supporting the student in the future are aware that the student is leaving school and will now be requiring new or additional services.

— Note the recommendation of a "transition portfolio".

While this resource anticipates the student will be leaving secondary school after grade 12, students may attend secondary school until the year they turn 21 years old.

Source: *Transition Planning - A Resource Guide*, Ministry of Education

ar

# School Boards and Special Education: *Quick Links!*

---

Simcoe County:

Public – [Simcoe County District School Board](#)

Catholic – [Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board](#)

French public – [Conseil scolaire Viamonde](#)

French Catholic – [Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud](#)

Protestant – [Protestant Separate School Board](#)

York Region:

Public - [York Region District School Board](#)

Catholic - [York Catholic District School Board](#)

French public – [Conseil scolaire Viamonde](#)

Also see the Ministry of Education guidelines with respect to [Private Schools](#) and [Home Schools](#) in Ontario.