

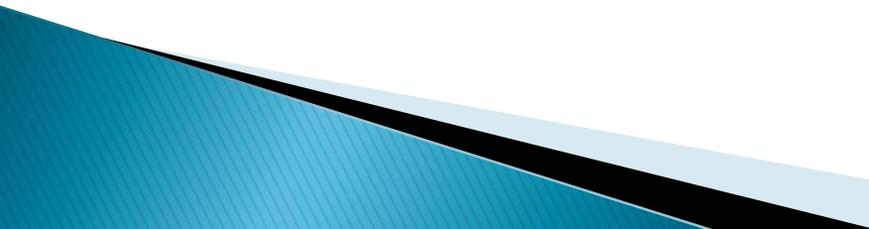
Dispelling the Myths

Transitioning from Early Intervention to Early
Childhood.

The Referral Process

- ▶ Is a fairly simple one if your child is enrolled in Early Intervention through Child & Family Connections, your Service Coordinator will make the formal referral to the school district when your child is 2 years 6 months.
 - ▶ If your child is NOT enrolled in EI you are responsible to contact your local special education provider.
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The Referral Process

- ▶ The school district is responsible to get your child evaluated and in school by your child's third birthday.
 - ▶ However, if your not in EI this may take a little longer.
 - ▶ A transition meeting will be set up by your SC when your child is 2 years 9 months.
 - ▶ The district has 60 school days to complete evaluations and hold the MDC/IEP meeting.
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The Evaluation Process

- ▶ Is made up of several steps, the first of which is a Domain Meeting.
 - ▶ A Domain Meeting is to review or Identify areas of need.
 - ▶ Even if your child is receiving services, he/she might not qualify for services through the school district.
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The Evaluation Process

- ▶ The School District has 60 *school days* to complete the process after you have signed the consent form.
 - ▶ You will be contacted by your Special Education Coordinator to schedule evaluations.
 - ▶ You will be asked questions regarding your child's health and social emotional status as well as questions about birth history, medical history, developmental milestones and family/home environment. The school Social Worker is generally the one reviewing this information with you.
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Your Team

- ▶ Based on your child's needs your team may include; a social worker, nurse, psychologist, PT, OT,ST and special education teacher.
 - ▶ You are an *equal* member of this team.
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Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

- ▶ This meeting is sometimes referred to as a “staffing”. The meeting is technically a two part process, beginning with the MDC –Multi Discipline Conference which determines eligibility. Everyone involved in evaluating your child will attend this meeting. You will receive a notice from the school and it will list who will be at the meeting.
- ▶ *Ask your special education coordinator for copies of everyone's report PRIOR to this meeting.*

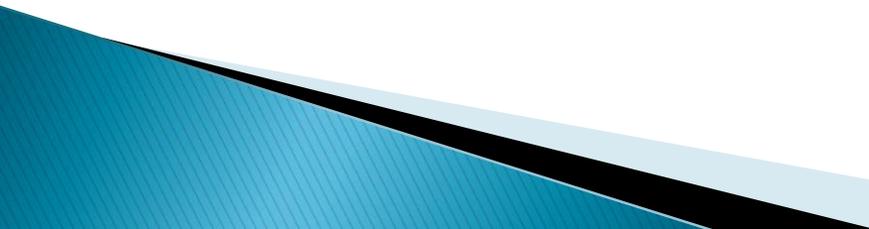
Individualized Education Plan

- ▶ This is your opportunity to review their reports, make notes on points where you have concerns or questions.
 - ▶ These meetings can become emotional, so reviewing them can help temper those feelings.
 - ▶ You may want to talk to your current providers to create a list of strengths and needs, while remembering school therapy and their goals are and should be, based on your child in a classroom setting.
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Individual Education Plan

- ▶ It's important to *always* bring someone with you –your spouse, a friend or another family member!
 - ▶ The meeting can be intimidating there are a lot more school people, but you are an important member of the team.
 - ▶ You know your child the best.
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Preparing for the IEP Meeting

- ▶ When you are notified of the date and time, check your calendar; if you have a conflict notify them promptly to reschedule.
 - ▶ Contact school if you have new medical information or other information to share.
 - ▶ Contact school and let them know if you are bringing someone other than your spouse.
 - ▶ Make a list of your child's strengths and needs, bring it with you to review during the meeting.
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Preparing for the IEP Meeting

- ▶ Make a list of questions no matter how simple they might seem to you!
 - ▶ Ask questions! If you don't understand tests and test scores, let alone the new language of the special education abbreviations that fly around the table.
 - ▶ Before the meeting make sure you observe the programs that your team is considering placing your child.
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Preparing for the IEP Meeting

- ▶ Don't bring your child to this meeting. You will want to be able to fully participate and listen to what is being discussed.
 - ▶ You will get plenty of advice from family, friends and therapist.
 - ▶ *Remember every child is different; every experience is unique to that family!*
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What happens at the IEP Meeting?

- ▶ A staffing is held to share information that has been collected through interview, observation and evaluation of your child.
 - ▶ Each member of the school team will talk about his/her report, they will cover strengths and weakness in each area tested. Any additional evaluations that you have made available will also be discussed.
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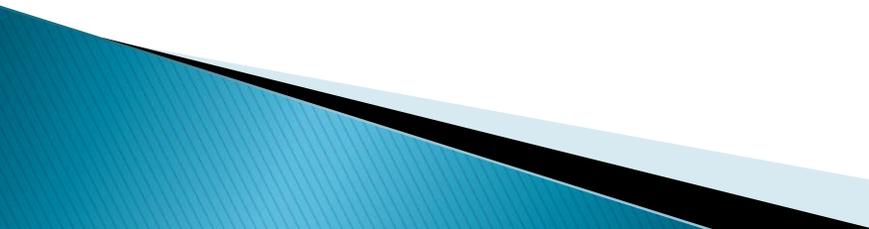
What happens at the IEP Meeting?

- ▶ After reports are discussed, eligibility for special education determined.
 - ▶ Once eligibility is determined, the meeting becomes an official IEP meeting and the IEP is generated.
 - ▶ They often come to the meeting with a “draft” of the goals and objectives – it’s just a draft and things can be changed or added.
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What happens at the IEP Meeting?

- ▶ The IEP is the plan that determines the services your child will receive and helps to identify the appropriate placement.
 - ▶ In reality, in EC, your choices are limited and everyone has a good sense of where they will be placed; but it's at this time in the meeting that placement becomes formalized.
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What happens at the IEP meeting?

- ▶ The IEP will include goals and objectives/benchmarks for each area of need.
 - ▶ Your IEP should also address, in writing, all additional needs such as transportation, equipment and other accommodations.
 - ▶ It will have the number of minutes your child will receive for PT/OT & ST and social work if identified as an area of need.
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What happens at the IEP meeting?

- ▶ Keep in mind you have 10 days to sign for placement. You have the right to take the document home and read it to make sure everything you talked about it is included.
 - ▶ Some people say never waive your ten days, but if you are in total agreement, sign.
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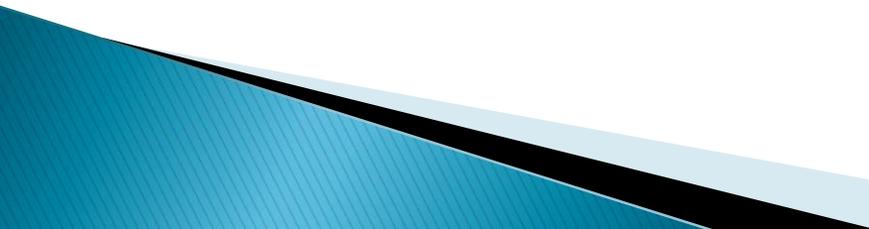
Next Steps

- ▶ To make your child's transition to preschool a successful one, everyone needs to work together.
 - ▶ Talk to your child about school; take him/her to the school's playground and play long before school starts.
 - ▶ Ask the teacher if you can arrange a visit to the classroom with your child. Some schools even take pictures of the building, room and people who your child will interact with.
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Next Steps

- ▶ The BUS... If your child and/or you 😊 are apprehensive about the bus, driving your child to school and have the bus bring them home; in no time your child will be going to school on the bus with a smile on their face.
- ▶ Transitions are often harder on the parents than it is for the child. Let your team know you want to be involved.

Monitoring the IEP

- ▶ Every year you will attend an *annual review* . At this staffing, your child's progress will be discussed and new IEP goals and objectives will be written. This is in addition to the typical parent-teacher conference.
 - ▶ *The IEP is NOT written in stone....if you have serious concerns about goals or placement you can call a meeting at anytime.*
 - ▶ Every 3 years a new *case study evaluation* will be done.
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Optional Placement

- ▶ The team will be looking for the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for your child.
 - ▶ Meaning, your child will be educated in the most appropriate setting that will enable him/her to be as independent and functional as possible.
 - ▶ Along side his/her non-handicapped peers is the ideal and most districts have blended programs.
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Optional Placements

- ▶ You can sit through the whole meeting and wonder is this what is best for my child?
 - ▶ You always... always have options.
 - ▶ You can choose a regular private preschool (paid for by you)
 - ▶ Private pre-school with related services provided by the district at the public school
 - ▶ A thank you but no thank you is also an option.
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