



SCHOOL INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Parent Toolkit



Kids deserve the best.



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BATTLING BACK-TO-SCHOOL BUTTERFLIES

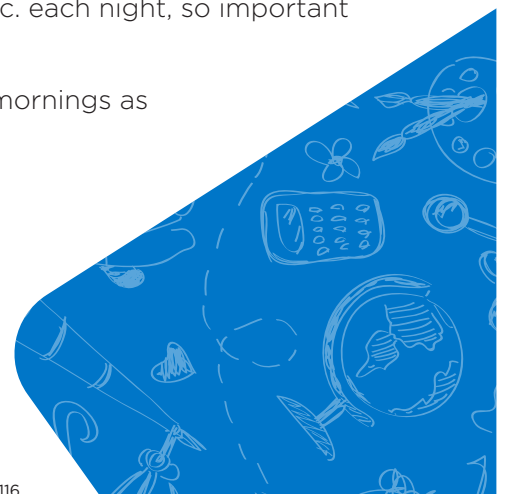
Like any new situation, the first day of school can cause some anxiety. Remember this is normal and expect your child to take some time to adjust. Here are some other helpful tips to try as your child transitions to a new classroom or school for the first time:

Emphasize all of the positive and exciting things a new classroom or school can bring.

- Seeing their friends and meeting some new ones
 - Exploring a new classroom...new books, new desks, new activities
 - Buying new school supplies (who doesn't love shopping for new folders or spirals that are decked out with their favorite characters?!)
 - Learning new subjects or taking new classes
 - Joining school sports teams or clubs
- ... This list could go on and on!

Begin getting into a routine slowly, ideally several days before the first day of school.

- Establish a reasonable bedtime. Being well-rested is strongly connected to the ability to learn and retain information.
- Eat a healthy breakfast to start the day off feeling alert
- Write down important information (locker combination, class schedule, important phone numbers, etc.) and tuck it in a safe place that's easily accessible
- Use a calendar, agenda or planner to keep track of assignments, tests, practices, appointments, etc. Many schools issue agendas to be filled out at the end of each day. The agenda is always a good reference point when asking that dreaded question, "Have you finished all of your homework?"
- Organize and pack up materials such as papers, books, folders, etc. each night, so important things aren't forgotten in the morning rush
- Choose and lay out clothing each night. This will help keep early mornings as stress-free as possible





BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to help transition your child back to school, or to school for the first time.

Clothing/attire

- ☐ Check the school's dress code and be aware of what is allowed or not allowed (including footwear).
- ☐ Pack a change of clothes for possible accidents, and find out if you need to send anything for special classes like P.E., art class, etc.
- ☐ Check to make sure your child's backpack can fit all of his/her supplies and materials. Make sure the backpack is comfortable to wear even when full or heavy.
- ☐ Talk to your child about being responsible in carrying only necessary materials to and from school.

Nutrition

- ☐ Find out when, where and how much time your child will have for lunch.
- ☐ If hot lunch is offered, find out where to get the menu, how lunch is paid for and how much it costs.
- ☐ If packing a cold lunch, ask how it will be stored and pack accordingly (e.g. brown bag, reusable bag, ice packs, etc).
- ☐ Find out if beverages are provided at school or if you need to pack a drink.
- ☐ Ask if water bottles are allowed at school or how your child can stay hydrated during the school day.


Medical

- ☐ Check to make sure your child has all required immunizations.
- ☐ Work with the school to ensure others in his/her class have been immunized (this is specifically for medically fragile children).
- ☐ Review all necessary forms, emergency contacts and emergency/health care plans for accuracy and completion.
- ☐ Notify school staff (school nurse, office administrators, teachers) of any medical conditions your child has, particularly allergies, asthma, diabetes or any other conditions that may need to be managed during the day.
- ☐ Complete any necessary paperwork for medication administration or care.
- ☐ Talk to your child's teacher(s) about how your child's condition may impact his/her ability to learn or function in the classroom.
- ☐ Put a plan in place to ensure all necessary information is shared with any substitute teachers, coaches or volunteers who may take over leading the classroom while my child is present.





Transportation and safety

- ☐ Find out when the school day starts and ends, and print a copy of the school calendar for easy reference.
 - ☐ Plan for a reliable way for your child to get to and from school every day.
 - **Bus** - If your child is riding the bus, find out the scheduled pick-up and drop-off times, save the bus company's contact information, and make sure the bus driver/bus company has emergency contact information and is aware of any medical conditions your child has.
 - **Car** - If getting picked up and dropped off, be sure to understand the school's policies.
 - **Walk** - If your child is walking to school, go over a safe, direct walking route with your child and find out if there are crossing guards directing traffic. Go over safety with your child, including looking both ways before crossing and never accepting rides from strangers.
 - **Bike** - If your child is riding a bike, check the policies for biking to school and locate a place to lock and store the bike on school grounds.
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PLANNING FOR STUDENT ABSENCES

Proactive Planning for Necessary Absences

School attendance plays a huge role in your child's school success! Children who frequently miss school are often at risk for academic failure and poor social-emotional functioning due to missing out on important instructions and/or having disconnected peer relationships. It is understood that children with complex health needs will require necessary medical appointments that may interfere with the school day. It is also commonly understood that these students may be kept home if they are exhibiting even mild signs of illness and/or if classroom peers are exhibiting signs of illness. When absences are unavoidable, you can help your student continue to thrive by having some proactive plans in place.

Excused absences

An excused absence is a valid reason for a child to miss school. They generally include illness or injury requiring treatment or rest, or medical, dental, counseling appointments that cannot be scheduled before or after school. The definition of an excused absence may differ by school district. Please refer to your school or district handbook to understand the specific criteria for your child's school. It is important to note that some schools have a limit on parent-excused absences. In this case, be prepared to submit a verification letter from your child's health care provider. Always request that this letter be kept on file.

When an absence is necessary and unavoidable...

- Begin the school year with open communication about your child's needs with an explanation that they may have necessary, possibly extended, absences.
- Clearly express your interest in setting up a proactive plan for your child to receive assignments and materials before their absence, or to catch up on lessons and schoolwork immediately following their absence (this could include picking up daily work/having work delivered by a classmate, assigning a classroom note taker, having lessons recorded with an audio or audio-visual device, utilizing a tutor, etc.).
- Promptly communicate when the child will be missing school by calling the main office or appropriate contact number and stating your child's name, grade, homeroom teacher, the reason for their absence, and when you anticipate your child will return to school (remember to submit proper documentation when necessary).
- In the event of frequent or extended absences, check in with your child's teacher on a regular basis to ensure they are keeping up with their peers, and request that the teacher let you know immediately if they have any concerns about your child's ability to do so.





VACCINATION INFORMATION



Vaccination Basics

- A vaccine is a product that produces immunity from a disease and can be administered through needle injections, by mouth, or by aerosol.
- A vaccination is the injection of a killed or weakened organism that produces immunity in the body against that organism.
- An immunization is the process by which a person or animal becomes protected from a disease. Vaccines cause immunization, and there are also some diseases that cause immunization after an individual recovers from the disease.

Where can I get vaccinated?

If you do not currently have a regular source of care, federally-funded health centers provide a number of health care services even if you don't have health insurance. You pay what you can afford, based on your income. Federally-funded health centers provide:

- Immunizations and checkups for your children
- Preventive checkups when you're well
- Treatment when you're sick
- Complete care when you're pregnant
- Dental care and prescription drugs for your family
- Mental health and substance abuse care if you need it

Click on the link or use the web address below and enter your zip code. HealthMap Vaccine Finder will provide a list of local clinic options, address of clinic, hours of operation and vaccines offered.

<http://www.vaccines.gov/getting/where/index.html>

All vaccine information gathered from [vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov).

Visit **<http://www.vaccines.gov>** for more information.



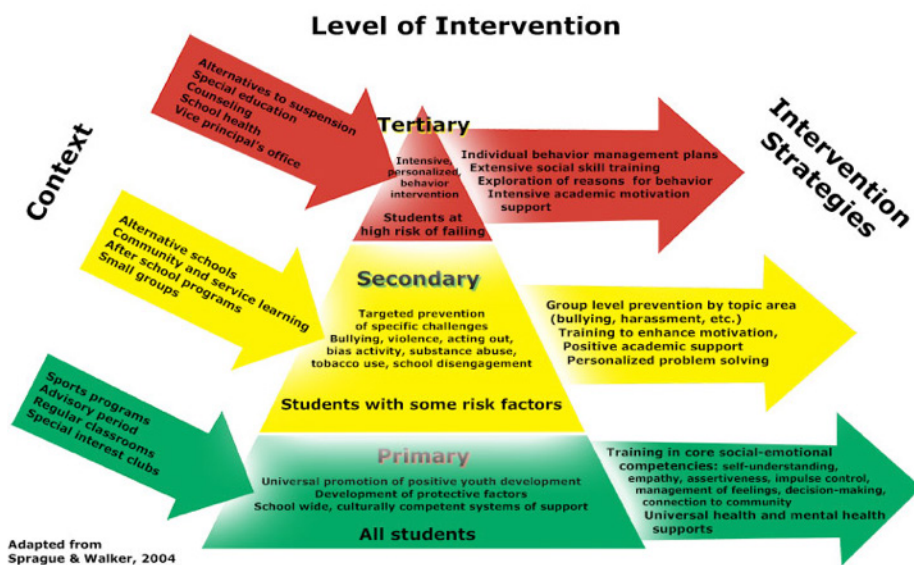


RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

What is RTI?

Response to Intervention (RTI) is an educational technique, supported by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), that seeks to improve the quality of general instruction that all children receive. The main function of RTI is to catch a struggling student early and intervene with tailored instruction that supports the child's weaknesses in order to avoid the need to refer the child for special education services. RTI is a tiered process, offering different levels of scaffolding and instruction depending on the child's individualized needs. There are no specific guidelines on who qualifies for this type of education support, or for how long or how frequently the services are offered.

Many schools believe that the RTI process must be in place for a pre-determined amount of time before a child can be referred for any additional special education services. However, some individuals believe that this prolongs the qualification process and delays appropriate services for those who have significant learning disabilities. In more recent years, there have been laws put in place to ensure that utilizing the RTI process will not delay or deny special education evaluation. Additionally, there are laws ensuring that a RTI will never replace any part of a comprehensive qualification evaluation.





SECTION 504 PLANS



How do I request a 504 plan at my child's school?

Section 504 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A Section 504 is a collaborative plan or “blueprint” that outlines special education services that are tailored to the qualifying child’s specific educational needs. Section 504 plans are usually used to accommodate a child who has special educational needs or receives informal support services due to a condition or disability that would otherwise limit them in a regular education classroom.

1. Referral or request is submitted by someone who works closely with the child – usually a parent or school professional.

- a. This request may be written or verbal.
- b. Parents must be given notice before their child is evaluated or placed under Section 504.

2. Child is evaluated.

- a. Formal testing is not necessary – 504 team members will review the child’s grades, teachers’ reports, medical records, and any additional information or reports provided by family members or school/medical staff.
- b. Parents/guardians have the option to pay for an outside evaluation if they prefer (schools are not required to cover this cost).

3. Eligibility is decided.

- a. A group meeting is held with educational professionals and parents/guardians (parents/guardians have the right to invite outside specialists such as private therapists).
- b. The group discusses the child’s academic, behavioral, and social strengths and weaknesses, individual team members’ concerns, and possible accommodations or support devices.
- c. Mediation services may be utilized if a consensus cannot be determined.

* A parent/guardian request for evaluation **MUST** be followed. Providing the school with a formal, dated letter of request tends to ensure the request is taken seriously. Schools may not delay this request for any reason (including “it’s too late in the school year,” or “the child will not qualify,” etc.).

The requirements for the Section 504 evaluation and qualification process are far less detailed than that of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The Section 504 plan will not include annual goals. However, schools must reevaluate at least every three years and notify the family of any “significant changes.” Specific rules and regulations vary by state.



INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

How do I request an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) evaluation at my child's school?

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a formal, legally binding document that outlines special education services that are tailored to the qualifying child's specific educational needs.

1. Referral or request is submitted by someone who works closely with the child, usually a parent or school professional.

- a. The request may be written or verbal.
- b. Parent/guardian consent is needed.
- c. Mandatory evaluation timeframe.

2. Child is evaluated.

- a. Observation is conducted in the classroom with peers.
- b. Individual testing and skills evaluation.
- c. If the parent/guardian disagrees with evaluation process, they may request an Independent Education Evaluation (IEE) from a third party (you can request that the school pays for this evaluation).

3. Eligibility is decided.

- a. A group meeting is held with educational professionals and parents/guardians (parents/guardians have the right to invite outside specialists such as private therapists)
- b. Eligibility is discussed together as a team utilizing IDEA guidelines to decide if this child formally qualifies as a "child with a disability"
- c. Parents/guardians may request a hearing to challenge eligibility decision

4. If child is found eligible ...

- a. Generally a second meeting is scheduled to create the IEP guidelines, accommodations and modifications
- b. This must be done with the IEP complete within 30 calendar days from the eligibility meeting
- c. Before any services begin the parent/guardian must give consent

*A parent/guardian request for evaluation MUST be followed. Providing the school with a formal, dated letter of request tends to ensure the request is taken seriously. Schools may not delay this request for any reason (including "it's too late in the school year," or "the child will not qualify," etc.).

**Parents have the right to disagree with the IEP and services offered. Mediation may be offered in order to come to an agreement. If that does not result in an acceptable resolution, the parent/guardian may file a formal complaint with the state education agency to request a due process hearing.

The school's role: To ensure IEP services are being carried out exactly as written — this is the law. Schools will report progress and measure progress towards goals. Schools are mandated to review a child's IEP annually and, if necessary, revise it. The child must be reevaluated at least every three years, or if parents/guardians or teachers request a reevaluation at any time.

