

How to be Your Child's Best Advocate?



www.PPMD.org

Presenter



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Objectives for today:

- Share information about PPMD
- Understand the importance of parental input
- Discover ways to advocate for your child



PPMD Mission

Our mission is to empower families as advocates and partners in improving education and health outcomes for children with disabilities and special healthcare needs with a commitment to diversity and equity.



Who is PPMD?

- Maryland's Special Education & Health Information Center
- Established in 1990
- Governed by parents
- Our team is made up of 100% parents of children with disabilities and special health care needs



Part D. The final section of IDEA, part D, describes **national activities to be undertaken to improve the education of children with disabilities**. These activities include grants to improve the education and transitional services provided to students with disabilities.

PPMD Services

- One-on-one assistance to families
- Resource sharing
- Leadership Training
- Military Outreach



PPMD helps families...

- Better understand their children's disabilities, education, and health care needs
- Communicate more effectively with schools, doctors, related professionals, and agencies
- Understand their rights & responsibilities under special education law and regulations
- Understand their rights & benefits in health care systems
- Obtain appropriate services for their children
- Resolve disagreements with the school or other agencies
- Connect with other community resources



The Purpose of I.D.E.A

“Ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free, appropriate public education (**FAPE**) that is designed to meet their UNIQUE needs and prepare them for post-secondary education, employment, and independent living”

[§ 300.1(a)]





You are the Expert....

“You are her mom you know her best”

You Are HIGHLY QUALIFIED

As a parent, you are included at every step because:

- The law gives you this right.
- Only you have an in-depth, long-term, daily relationship with your child.
- You are the only permanent member of the special education team.
- Research and experience show that special education is more effective when parents are involved.



The Role of Parents in Special Education

Parental rights of participation can be summarized as follows:

- Parents have the right to participate in meetings related to the evaluation, identification, and educational placement of their child.
- Parents have the right to participate in meetings related to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to their child.
- Parents are entitled to be members of any group that decides whether their child is a “child with a disability” and meets eligibility criteria for special education and related services.

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/qa2/>

The Role of Parents in Special Education

- Parents are entitled to be members of the team that develops, reviews, and revises the individualized education program (IEP) for their child.
- If neither parent can attend the IEP meeting, the school must use other methods to ensure their participation, including individual or conference calls.
- Parents are entitled to be members of any group that makes placement decisions for their child.
- If neither parent can attend the meeting where placement is decided, the school must use other methods to ensure their participation, including individual or conference calls, or video conferencing.

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/qa2/>

Advocating Tips



Key Advocacy Tips

1. I don't understand.
2. What does this look like in the classroom?
3. What are we going to do differently?
4. How are we going to measure progress?
5. What is the expectation?



Tips and Strategies

- “Why?”
- Help me understand?
- “Don’t take no for an answer”
- “Show me where it is written”



More Tips and Strategies

Document!

Document!

Document!

Resources

- <https://www.ppmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Data-Collection-TIES-SPED-3.2021.pdf>
- <https://www.ppmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Alphabet-Soup-SPED-1.2021-1.pdf>
- <https://www.understood.org/articles/en/how-to-organize-your-childs-iep-binder>



The Parents' Place of Maryland



PPMD Esp



The Parents' Place of Maryland



Check us out!

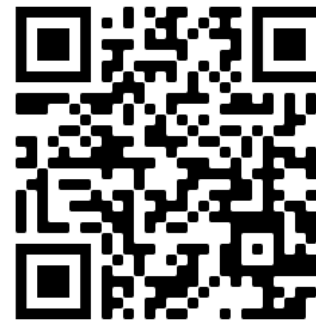
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Thank you!

