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A Guide for Grandparents

Exceptional Student
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Supporting Grandchildren with Disabilities: Understanding IEPs

Hernando County School District

Introduction

Goals for Today

- To empower grandparents with the knowledge about disabilities and Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- To provide resources and support strategies.



Understanding Disabilities

Overview

- The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) groups disabilities (cognitive physical, emotional) into 13 categories. Some of the more common disabilities include Speech Impaired, Language Impaired, Autism Spectrum, and Specific Learning Disability.

Statistics

- 15% of all students receive services under IDEA
- The most common category is Specific Learning Disability (32%)
- Graduation rate for SWD: Hernando 85.13%, Florida 87.51%, U.S. 71%

What Is an IEP?

Definition of an IEP

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a legal document that lays out the services and supports needed for a student with a disability to be successful in school. An IEP is developed by a team, including the parent, general education teacher, ESE teacher, therapist(s), and anyone else who may be relevant to the student.

Who needs an IEP?

- A student needs an IEP if they are eligible for special education services through one of the 13 categories in IDEA.
- Their disability negatively impacts their education.

The IEP Process

Steps to Requesting the School Consider an IEP

- Referral: A referral is generated when a parent signs permission to evaluate. This is often after the school has provided intervention. A parent can also request an evaluation.
- Evaluation: An evaluation assesses the student's academic, behavioral, and any other areas related to their suspected disability.
- IEP Process: The evaluation team, including the parent, discusses the findings at a formal meeting where eligibility is determined. If the student is found eligible, an initial IEP meeting can be held, identifying services, supports, placement, and implementation.

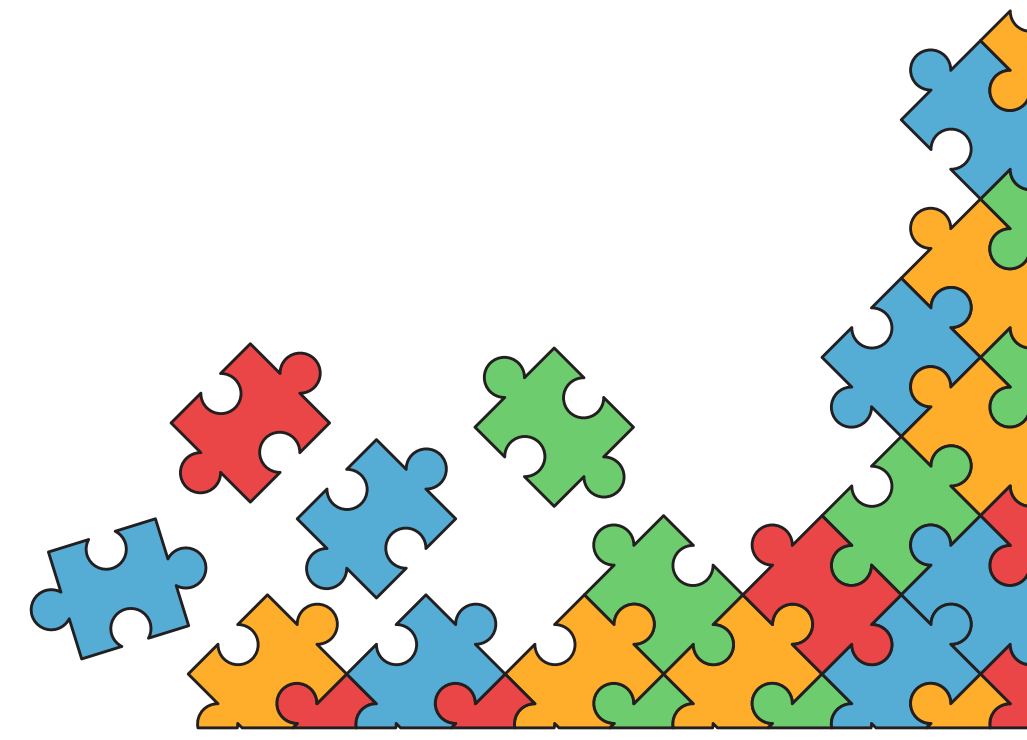


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Key Components of an IEP

- **Goals and Objectives** - A present level is based on recent assessments and is the basis for measurable annual goals, as well as short-term objectives.
- **Accommodations and Modifications** - Adjustments, based on data, made to teaching methods or environments. Modifications are only for students on Access standards.
- **Services Provided** - Instruction, therapy, medical, counseling





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Advocacy and Involvement

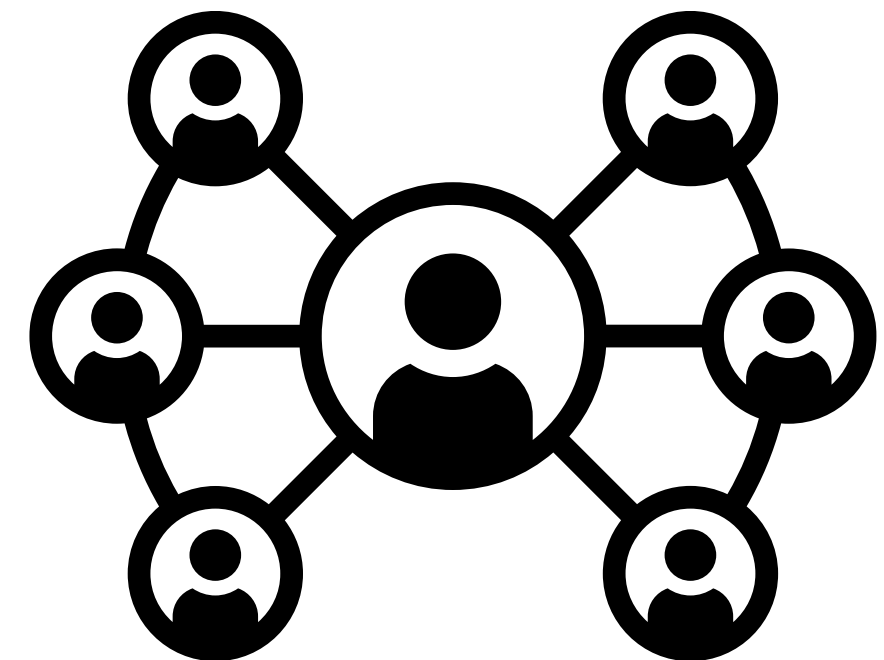
The Role of Grandparents

How to be an advocate for your grandchild

- Actively participate and stay informed about their needs
- Collaborate with the IEP team, ask questions, and share relevant information

Building Relationships

- Collaborating with teachers and school staff
- Support at home and school



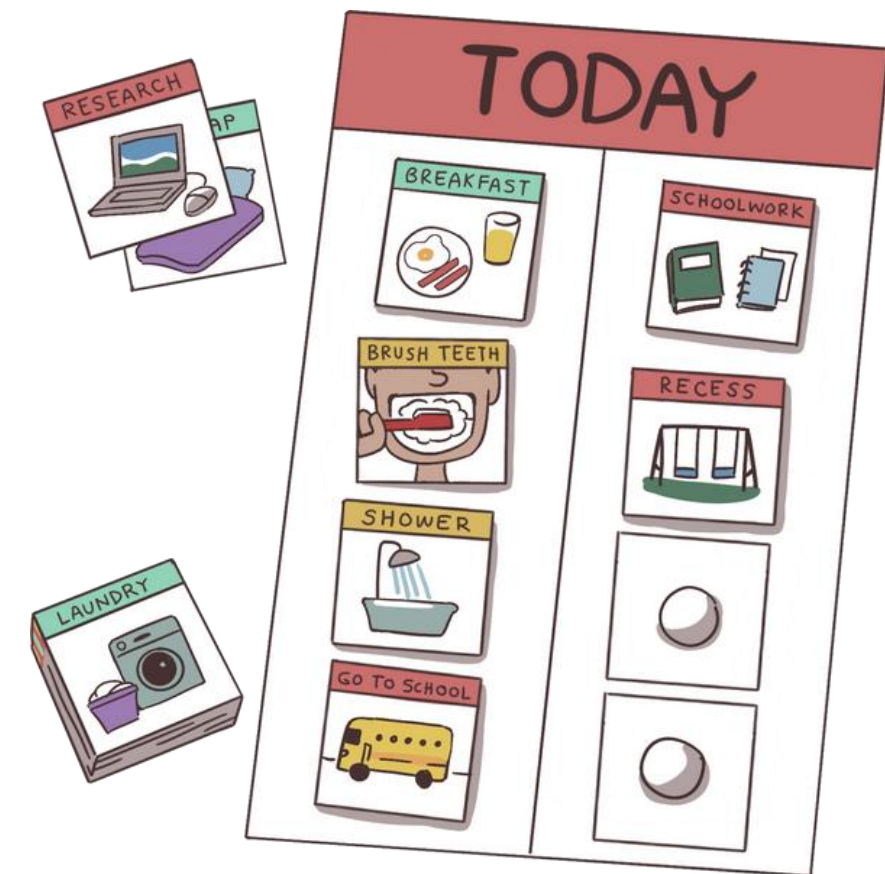
Resources for Support

- Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) - Parent and Family Services (727) 331-5101
- Early Learning Coalition (ELC) - elcph.org (727)233-8291
- Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) - Family Support Groups - card.ufl.edu
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - namihernando.org - (352)684-0004
- The Arc Nature Coast - thearc-naturecoast.org
- The Multi-agency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET) - Sarah Adams, Coordinator Region 13, adams-a@hcsb.k12.fl.us
- Hernando County Parent Liaison - Janice Campbell, 352-797-7022

Tips for Daily Support

Creating a Supportive Home Environment

- Establish a consistent routine
- Create a Structured, Organized Environment
- Implement Clear and Simple Communication
- Focus on Positive Reinforcement
- Maintain Flexibility
- Collaborate with the School and Support Team
- Promote Social and Emotional Development
- Be a Calm and Consistent Presence



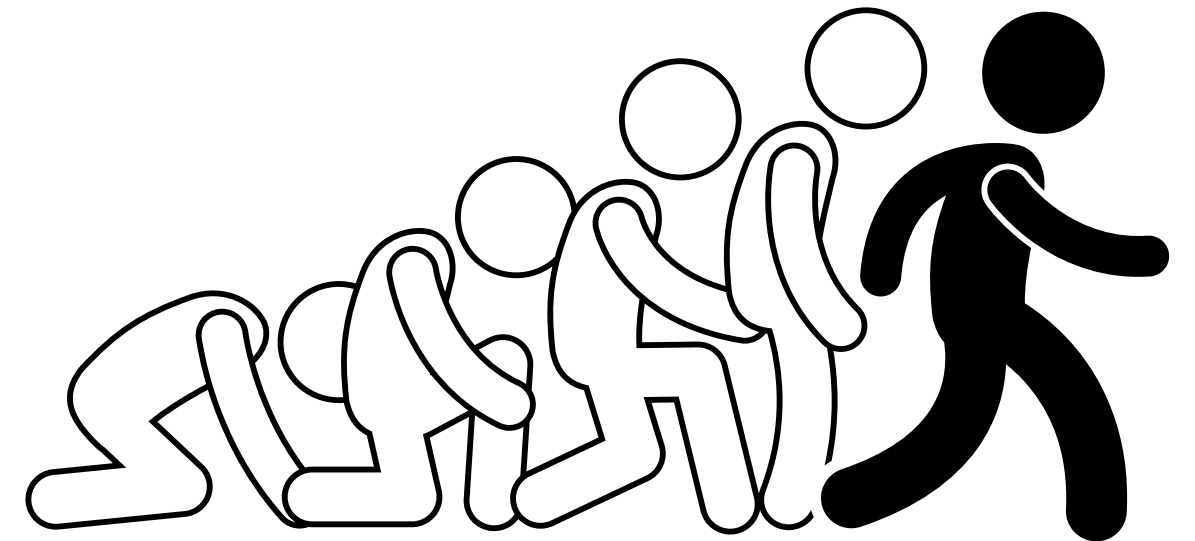


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Tips for Daily Support

Promote Independence with Support

- Encourage Self-Help Skills
- Offer Choices
- Allow your child to struggle - it can help them develop important skills and habits of mind, such as:
 - Resilience
 - Problem Solving
 - Confidence
 - Perseverance
 - Critical Thinking
 - Flexible Thinking
 - Active Learning





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Thank you for your time and attention.

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