

KY-SPIN, Inc. Information Sheet Series

Record Keeping

Once your child enters special education or early intervention, the paperwork can quickly seem overwhelming. What do you do with medical and educational reports, teacher evaluations, individualized education programs, communication between home and school?

The first question to ask yourself is: "Do I really need this paperwork?" The answer is 'YES!'

The more information you have that is well organized, the better prepared you will be for yearly Individualized Education Programs (IEP's) or Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) meetings. It is at these meetings that your child's program is designed.

Get A File

To begin a filing system, first consider what type of person you are. If you are highly organized, get a big three-ring binder and a hole punch. If your socks are not all matched and organized in your drawers, buy a huge folder with at least five pockets. Whether you use the folder or the three-ring binder, the instructions are the same—designate five sections of your system and label them *IEP or IFSP Meetings and Outcomes, Professional Evaluations, Research, Teacher Evaluations and Correspondence , and Test and Homework Samples*.

What to Put in Each Section

IEP or IFSP Meetings and Outcomes — This section has more in it than just yearly IEP's or IFSP's that you receive. It should also include notifications of these meetings from the school and your meeting minutes.

Minutes you have tape recorded or notes you have written, along with the school version of the minutes belong in this section. As with other sections, be sure to highlight times, dates, and other pertinent information. It is helpful to file things in chronological order. Put dated requests for meetings in this section, too.

Professional Evaluations — This includes all medical, psychological, and psychiatric reports. This might also include something like the written comments a school nurse might make to you, in the event your child is showing signs of stress or other medical problems. Once again, highlight dates of evaluations and important findings and place them in chronological order, with the most recent in front.

Research — Be your child's best advocate by keeping current with his or her disability and putting reprints of relevant articles, seminar handouts, and other data in your file. Many organizations also have information on disabilities and are good resources.

Teacher Evaluations and Correspondence — This section should include interim reports, report cards, notes to and from your child's teacher, disciplinary notices, and notes from phone calls. Be sure your notes on phone calls include the date, content, and the person to whom you talked to on the phone.

Test and Homework Samples — This section is pretty self-explanatory. You can gauge your child's progress by including examples of his or her work from the beginning and end of the school year. You will want to keep examples of both weak and strong areas of his or her work.



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