

Eight Must-Have Components of an IEP

When the members of a child's IEP team sit down together and consider how the child will be involved in and participate in school life, they must be sure that the resulting IEP contains the specific information required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), our nation's special education law. Here's a brief list of what IDEA requires:

- A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the child's disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general education curriculum;
- A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals;
- A description of how the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured, and when periodic progress reports will be provided to the parent(s);
- A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child;
- A statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the child to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and to be educated and participate with other children with and without disabilities;
- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the general education class and in extracurricular and nonacademic activities;
- A statement of any individual accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on State and districtwide assessments; and,
- The projected date for the beginning of the services, modifications, and accommodations, including the frequency, location, and duration.

Taken from "Contents of the IEP." Center for Parent Information and Resources, <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/iepcontents>

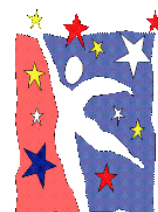
Ocho Componentes Imprescindibles de un IEP

En cada Estado o distrito escolar el impreso del IEP (el programa educativo individualizado) puede parecer diferente. Como hemos dicho en otras páginas en nuestro sitio Web, el IEP debe incluir cada uno de los siguientes componentes. Cada uno de éstos se discute aquí en detalle.

- Los niveles actuales del logro escolar y rendimiento funcional de su hijo
- Metas anuales para su hijo
- Cómo se medirá el progreso de su hijo
- Los servicios y apoyos (la educación especial, los servicios relacionados, y los auxilios y servicios suplementarios) que deben proveerse a su hijo o en apoyo de su hijo, incluyendo modificaciones del programa o apoyos al personal de la escuela
- Una explicación del alcance (si hay alguno) hasta el cual su hijo no participará con los niños sin discapacidades
- Cualquier modificación que su hijo necesite cuando haga exámenes Estatales o del distrito
- La duración y ubicación de los servicios (las fechas en que los servicios empezarán y terminarán, la cantidad de servicios y dónde tendrán lugar)
- Cómo se le informará del progreso de su hijo

Education Advocate Update: 10 Things You Should Do

The school year is well underway! Welcome to all of our new Education Advocates, and a continued thank you to those of you who have been serving for a while now. Our students greatly benefit from your time and efforts! As we head into the winter break, here's a quick refresher of things you as an advocate can and should be doing.



1. Contact the school and ask for copies of the student's IEP, progress and evaluation reports.
2. Introduce yourself to the student, the teacher(s) and resource parents. Explain your role.
3. Inquire about the current needs and the strengths of the student.
4. Contact the case manager or family support worker to get some background and history.
5. Attend school meetings!
 - You have the right to have IEP meetings scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time.
 - You have the right to have a 10 day prior written notice of an IEP meeting.
6. Figure out ways to stay engaged throughout the school year.
7. Contact Families Together - Topeka Center when the student:
 - moves
 - is legally adopted
 - is appointed a legal guardian
 - is signed out of special education services
 - graduates or leaves public school
 - does not qualify following an evaluation
8. Consider observing the student at school or attending a school program.
9. Contact Families Together for an individual consultation about your student's educational program.
10. Enjoy your experience!

We value your hard work and dedication. Please call Families Together, if you have any questions or concerns.

What Exactly is EPSDT?

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) is a part of the Medicaid program that covers all Medicaid beneficiaries under the age of 21. EPSDT mandates that the Kansas Medicaid program must cover any medically necessary service, whether the service is a mandatory or an optional service under the Medicaid Act, and whether or not Kansas covers the same service for adults.

Federal Medicaid law recognizes the unique needs of children by requiring the delivery of comprehensive pediatric healthcare services to all Medicaid-enrolled children and youth under the age of 21 through provisions in the law known as EPSDT. Coverage requirements for children under Medicaid are more robust than those that apply to Medicaid-enrolled adults. With a particular focus on prevention and early detection as well as a broad mandate related to treatment, the objective—and legal requirement—is for children to get the healthcare they need when they need it: the right child at the right time in the right setting. The scope of services offered to children under Medicaid is important for all children's health, but particularly for children with special healthcare needs, whose needs are substantial.

Children with special healthcare needs are those who have, or are at increased risk of having, a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that usually required by children. About 13.3 million children in the United States have special healthcare needs. Medicaid plays an outsize role for this group of particularly vulnerable children, covering about half of all children in the United States with special healthcare needs. These children use both inpatient and outpatient medical services at much higher rates than the general pediatric population does, and their health-related needs can be significant. The EPSDT guarantee for all children enrolled in Medicaid has had a substantial positive impact on children with special healthcare needs, helping millions of children receive critically important care and services. At the same time, children with complex health needs and their families can also face challenges when seeking to access services. Not being able to receive services to which children are entitled can have a detrimental impact on their physical and behavioral health, and their opportunity to grow and develop to their full potential. Service delays and denials also create unnecessary challenges for their families.

IEP Q & A

Q. Can the IEP team develop a draft before the official team meeting?

A. Yes. The IEP team may develop a draft IEP before any meeting. However, parent participation is key to the development of the IEP, and therefore the IEP is not considered complete until the IEP team meeting has been held.

Team members can share evaluation findings, and come prepared with proposed recommendations for components of the IEP, but should clearly communicate that parent input is required for any final decisions.

If personnel bring draft components to the IEP meeting, there must be a full discussion with the IEP team, including parents, regarding content, the student's needs, and the proposed services to be provided to meet those needs.

Parents have the right to bring questions, concerns, and recommendations to the meeting as well.

Taken from the Kansas Special Education Services Process Handbook

Workshops

Our workshops, trainings and conferences are offered to parents, education advocates, general educators, special educators, para-professionals, administrators, service providers, and other individuals who care for and about children/youth who have disabilities. For more information and to register, visit famielstogetherinc.org/events/.

Transition

Family Employment Awareness Training

A two-day training designed for families, their young adults who have significant support needs, and the professionals who support them.

The goals of FEAT are to increase expectations for competitive employment of the young adult with a disability and increase knowledge of state and federal resources to support the employment of the young adult.

- [Garden City](#)
January 25 & 31, 2020
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- [Lawrence](#)
February 1 & 7, 2020
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- [Wichita](#)
February 29 & March 6, 2020
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

You must attend Part 1 to attend Part 2.

More information about upcoming events

<https://famielstogetherinc.org/events/>

Contact Us

Topeka Center

topeka@famielstogetherinc.org

785-233-4777

1-800-264-6343

Wichita Center

wichita@famielstogetherinc.org

316-945-7747

1-888-815-6364

Garden City Center

gardencity@famielstogetherinc.org

620-276-6364

1-888-820-6364

[FamiliesTogetherInc.org](https://famielstogetherinc.org)

A Family Story



As I have spoken about my life as a parent of a young man with special needs, I often compare it to playing a game of MONOPOLY with special instructions. The game began when my son, Skylar, was born with mild cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder. At that time I was given a token: the SHOE. The token felt so heavy to me, and I felt there was no way to push it. As I sat and waited, I noticed other families pushing past me, so I gave it a test shove and landed on BALTIC AVE. I enrolled my son in an early childhood school where he was safe and secure. When he turned 5 years old they said it was time to move to the public school. I panicked. I told them my token was too heavy to push and asked them when I would get a lighter one. When will my son's disability go away? When will he be "normal"? They explained his special needs would always be a part of who he is and he would always need supports. I gave my token a hard shove and landed on VERMONT AVE.

After a year in school I again asked for a lighter token. He had not outgrown his disability yet, and I did not want to play this game. They explained I could never quit the game and that my token was mine to take care of and keep by my side to nurture and love. After many tears, I accepted my token with a meek smile and landed on NEW YORK AVE. Grade School went well and I began to feel much better about the game. I bought NEW YORK AVE. and moved to FREE PARKING to rest for a while. I had to move off of FREE PARKING when Skylar needed surgery and changed grade schools. I had met other parents of children with special needs who were also playing the game, so I no longer felt alone. I gave another shove and landed on KENTUCKY AVE. After a short time I noticed the CHANCE drawing cards. I decided to draw a CHANCE card and became involved with Families Together, Inc. as a parent support specialist. I then met even more parents. I noticed along the way that many parents had tokens that were larger than mine. Sometimes I would stop and help them push their tokens when they seemed discouraged and overwhelmed. I stopped along the way and bought B&O RAILROAD when I organized a baseball team for children with disabilities.

I looked ahead, however, and noticed I was getting closer to the GO TO JAIL spot. Skylar was ready for junior high. Suddenly my token seemed so heavy again. I looked ahead in the game and I noticed other parents had already landed on BOARDWALK. They were almost done with the game. They assured me their experiences were similar to mine, and that their journey was full of love, joy, and adventure. This encouraged me so I gave a push and landed on GO TO JAIL. I knew it was only a small set back and I was moving forward again. I shoved hard and landed on MARVIN GARDENS. Skylar started junior high. My token seemed to move along more smoothly now. I looked over and noticed my son was next to me pushing as hard as me. Instead of the stern look I had on my face, he wore a large smile. He was so excited about his future.

As high school preparations approached us my emotions began to rise. However, my son quickly took control of our token and said, "We are going to do this together this time." He navigated our token with ease and was not deterred when we had to move back to PACIFIC AVE. when he had a seizure at school. He never took his eyes off of BOARDWALK with his vision of a driver's license guiding his path. I began to let him take the token by himself a few times when he went to prom and started his first job. I tied a small string through the lace of the token shoe just in case he got lost. He graduated from high school with honors, then shared his dream of living on his own and being an advocate for himself and others. I knew the token was his now to navigate with his own dreams and visions. I took the string out of his token shoe, and smiled as he passed BOARDWALK, got his driver's license, and passed on to other adventures. He planned to buy property with houses and hotels.

I have my own token now, much smaller than the one I had started with. I chose the thimble, as I trailed along behind Skylar fixing the loose strings that often fell from his shoe. He has been around the board several times. He has even landed on GO TO JAIL, but he always comes out much stronger than before. He has learned to love himself and to not allow the perceptions and judgment of others about his disability change his focus. He carefully sets hotels on his property and waits for people to land there, so he can educate them on seeing him as a person. His brothers and sisters have joined him in the game with their own unique tokens. They support him in his daily life and educate others about individuals with special needs. If they pass him in the game, they always slow down and allow him to catch up. As I look back to when I first started the game, I smile at the memories that I have as a unique mom of a young man with special needs; I feel blessed for the adventure! I have learned to cherish and celebrate even the smallest of milestones. I know without my MONOPOLY game, I would not be the loving, compassionate mother I am today. I know I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I have ended up right where I need to be.

Tami Allen

Staff Spotlight

Please join us in congratulating two members of our staff on their upcoming retirements! We will miss them greatly! Here, Teresa and Terri share a bit about their plans, and some parting advice for families.



Teresa Beaudry

How long have you been with Families Together?

I have been with Families Together for 26 years.

What are your plans for retirement?

I plan on spending time with my six children and eight grandchildren, traveling, and working on my family genealogy.

What has been your favorite part about your time here at Families Together?

I have enjoyed working most with the families. Empowering them to be advocates for their children and others is one of the best feelings!

What advice would you like to leave families with?

The one piece of advice I would give to families is never be afraid to ask questions. Ask for help, ask for clarification, ask those hard questions. It is your right as a parent to know the answers and one way to get those answers is by asking. There are no stupid questions!

How long have you been with Families Together?

I've been on staff since 1994, but was volunteering even before that. I met a Families Together staff member back in 1992 at a training she did. We struck up a good conversation and she asked me if I would be interested in being part of Assistive Technology Coalition of SC Kansas with her. She wanted to get another parent involved in advocating for children's services and saw that I wanted to be involved. This led me to Families Together.

What are your plans for retirement?

With all the changes that have happened in my life within the last few years, I am planning to take some time off for me and enjoy life. Traveling and getting more involved in the Military Transitional Housing Program and spending time doing activities that will honor my daughter will keep me busy.

Tell us about your family

My children were my life and I wanted to make it a better place for Jennifer. My life changed when she was born; the path I thought I was on took a turn I did not expect. Through all of her disabilities and special health care needs, she helped me see the beauty in the smallest accomplishments and celebrate them. Chris, Jen's brother, saw that and she affected him the same way. He wanted to make a difference and he did by serving our country as a United States Marine Corps pilot. It wasn't until his passing that I saw the beauty of the support in the community that he created.

What has been your favorite part about your time here at Families Together?

Being able to help others and making a difference in the lives of the families I have touched. The support and friendship of not just staff but also the relationships I have built up over the years working with different parents and professionals.

What advice would you like to leave families with?

Learn as much as you can about your child's needs, be open to listening to others who can help you, develop the relationships that will support your dreams for your child and communicate them to your team. Relationships come from trusting one another, being honest with yourself, getting involved in ways that will help support you and your child and challenging our kids to be the best version of themselves.



Terri Norgren

Welcome to the Families Together, Inc. Fall Newsletter

Families Together, Inc. provides assistance and guidance to help parents and youth become partners in decision-making. Our non-profit is the Parent Training and Information Center as well as the Family-to-Family Health Information Center for Kansas.



What's Inside?

In this edition of our newsletter, we explore some of the basics of the IEP. We look at health care options, and how Families Together, Inc. can help. You'll also find information about our upcoming Family Employment Awareness Trainings. If you have a transition age youth, be sure to check it out!

Nosotros hablamos español 1.800.499.9443

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