What Parents tell us about Their Best IEP Meetings!

- Listening
- Exceptional
- Supportive
- Creative
- Enlightening
- Teamwork
- Best
- Team
- Facilitated
- Caring
- Uplifting
- Hopeful
- Realistic
- Scary
- Happy
- Relieved
- Awesome
- Stupendous
- Determined
- Inclusive
- Competent
- Collaborative
- Community
- Participative
- Comfortable
- Practical
- Collaborative
- Conference
- Organized
- Collaborative
A note... from Mary LaCorte, ECAC Assistant Director and PTI Director

In this “season” of IEPs, remember that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, IDEA, requires IEP Teams to work together to create an appropriate and individualized education program for each eligible child. Team members include parents, students, educators, administrators and others. The US Congress intended for teams to work collaboratively and come to agreement or consensus, about the IEP. Consensus among team members is not always easy and differences of opinions among team members are not necessarily a ‘bad’ thing. In fact, differing ideas can be a good thing, sometimes leading to even more creative solutions. If needed, there are informal and formal steps you can take to resolve disagreements.

The cover of this edition of NewsLine is a “wordle” created with words shared with us by parents describing their best IEP meetings. Words shared more than once are larger and more prominent. Look at the cover again. Think about how you would like to describe your next “best IEP meeting” and then plan and prepare for just that! As the federally funded statewide PTI (Parent Training and Information Center), we are here for you. Let us know how we can help and let us know the word you use to describe your child’s next IEP meeting.

Since our beginning in the early 1980’s, ECAC’s staff and the Board of Directors have been committed to “be there” and provide high quality services at no cost to NC parents of children with disabilities, educators, and other professionals. And ECAC being there does make a difference in the lives of children with disabilities and their families. Since September, we have responded to more than 16,000 individual requests for information from parents of children with disabilities and professionals.

Please help us make sure that ECAC can continue to be there for the increasing number of families who contact us each week. Make a secure, tax-deductible donation on our website at:

www.ecac-parentcenter.org

or via mail to:

ECAC
907 Barra Row | Suites 102/103, Davidson, NC  28036
NC DPI conduct Annual Statewide Parent Survey

Each year, as required by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the NC Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children Division, (NC DPI) reports on the status of NC students with disabilities. Using twenty different indicators set by OSEP, the report addresses a variety of areas such as achievement toward academic standards, graduation rates, meeting timelines, transitioning to life after high school, parent participation, etc. An annual Parent Survey is used to collect data on Indicator 8, which addresses parent participation. This is a different survey than was conducted in Fall 2011.

Indicator 8: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

The Parent Survey will be sent at the end of May and in early June to a number of parents of students with disabilities in selected traditional school systems and charter schools asking questions about whether the school encourages parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for their child. The majority of the Parent Surveys will be sent home with students. Be sure to ask your child if he/she was given an envelope to give to you and check book bags.

If you receive the survey, please take the time to answer the questions and return the survey in the addressed envelope provided. Last year there was a notable decrease in survey responses from the parents of high school students and African American students. It is important to have a representative response from all our parents of children with disabilities. The results from the Parent Survey will provide valuable feedback and recommendations will be made to administrators at your local school and to the State Board of Education. Thank you!

Learn more about the OSEP Indicators at: http://nichcy.org/laws/idea/partb/indicators-partb

NC DPI’s Annual Performance Reports can be found at: http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/reports-data/annual-performance-report

Matthew C. Graziadei Achievement Award

The Matthew C. Graziadei Achievement Award is presented annually by ECAC to an outstanding NC high school senior with a disability. Named for a remarkable young man who died at the age of 26, Matt Graziadei exemplified dedication, perseverance, motivation and excellence throughout his life. The award includes a $1000.00 scholarship to be used for any post high school learning experience, training, or any equipment or technology needed for employment.

A note...from our 2004 winner:

“It is still an honor 8 years later to have been chosen for the Graziadei Award. The most important aspect of the award for me was and still is, it’s focus on the whole person, it is not just about overcoming disability. It is about finding and embracing yourself as a person and being recognized for your achievements. One of my favorite quotes is by playwright Neil Markus “Disability is not a ‘brave struggle’ or ‘courage in the face of adversity.’ Disability is an art...It’s an ingenious way to live.” The Graziadei Award recognized me for my own unique impact on my community and I am grateful for it.”

Maggie E. Heafner

The 2012 Graziadei Award nomination packages have already been mailed to NC Special Education Program Directors, School Guidance Counselors and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Application deadline is March 21, 2012. For more information, please contact ECAC at 1-800-962-6817 or send an email to: MCGaward@ecacmail.org.
The North Carolina State Improvement Project (NC SIP) is an on-going initiative of the Exceptional Children Division of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI). Its overall purpose is to improve the quality of instruction for students with disabilities.

More than ten years ago, with funding from the US Department of Education, NC SIP began researching effective instructional practices in core academic subjects (reading, math, writing), and behavior. The focus was on identifying effective instructional methods, teaching them to teachers at selected NC SIP sites, then supporting teachers to effectively use them in classrooms throughout North Carolina to boost learning outcomes for students with disabilities.

**NC SIP’s goals, with current focus on reading and math, are:**

1. Improve basic skills performance of students with disabilities;
2. Increase the percentage of qualified teachers of students with disabilities;
3. Increase graduation rates and decrease dropout rates of students with disabilities;
4. Improve parent satisfaction and involvement with, and support of, school services for students with disabilities; and
5. Improve the quality of teachers’ instructional competencies.

**Currently, the growing NC SIP network includes:**

- 83 school sites focusing on reading and writing instruction;
- A growing network of sites focusing on Early Literacy;
- 48 sites focusing on mathematics instruction;
- Over 400 schools providing school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS).

In the months ahead, the ECAC/NC SIP partnership will provide:

- updated materials to help families discuss reading and math progress with their children’s teachers;
- updated materials for families on PBIS;
- articles and links for families on literacy, math, behavior; and
- ways that technology can provide effective support for students with disabilities.

Look for updates and additions at [www.ecac-parentcenter.org](http://www.ecac-parentcenter.org) and [www.ncsip.org](http://www.ncsip.org). ECAC will also be partnering with NC SIP sites to promote more effective family engagement at the school and district level. For more details on current NC SIP locations, visit [www.ncsip.org](http://www.ncsip.org). Click on LEA Partners under Reading and Math buttons for a listing of NC SIP contacts by county.

For more information about NC SIP personnel development opportunities, contact:
Angie Cloninger, Lead Literacy Consultant ([angie.cloninger@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:angie.cloninger@dpi.nc.gov)) and
Paula Crawford, Lead Math Consultant ([paula.crawford@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:paula.crawford@dpi.nc.gov))

“We have demonstrated that with appropriate instructional strategies and quality trained and supported teachers, students with disabilities can make significant yearly progress in academic performance.”

Mary Watson, Exceptional Children Director, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Spotlight on ECAC’s NC Family to Family Health Information Center

We have written many times about the important role school nurses may play in support of your child with special health care needs at school. Your school nurse can be another one of your child’s allies and an effective professional partner. The following is a list of specific ways the school nurse might help in delivering related services or developing an appropriate educational plan for your child:

- Screen for vision, either as a routine screening or as follow-up if requested by a physician;
- Conduct a health assessment to determine if your child's health has improved;
- Assist other team members to better understand the possible impact of the health condition on your child's academic and functional skill development;
- Look for clues in symptoms or behavior that may indicate a hidden health problem;
- Write an Emergency Action Plan for situations such as:
  - Sudden change in your child’s health condition
  - Needs for rapid evacuation of a building
  - Needs for emergency lock-down of a building, perhaps for hours
- Write an Individualized Health Plan (separate from the nursing services provided in the IEP/504 plan);
- Monitor the skills of the person taking care of your child's health in the classroom (tube feedings, medications, diapering, inhalants or nebulizers);
  - The school nurse must be the one who trains and evaluates the skills of the staff member who is providing direct care to the child in school.
- Suggest changes in the medical protocol for you to share with your child’s doctor, such as adjustments in medication dosages or change in nutrition.

Your child’s IEP or Individualized Health Plan should be reviewed and revised as your child’s health status or educational needs change. And remember, based on your child’s individual health care needs, school nurses may be an important part of the assessment team and/or a related service provider for your child.

CONTACT:
Yolanda Black, Program Coordinator,
NC Family to Family Health Information Center
yblack@ecacmail.org or 1-800-962-6817 | www.ecac-parentcenter.org

New Program:
NC Family Voices

ECAC is proud to announce that it is now the official North Carolina affiliate of the national Family Voices network. Sounds great but what does that really mean? It means that ECAC continues to deepen its commitment to NC families of children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHC). The partnership between NC and national Family Voices offers families support and mentoring to improve health care systems and promotes the needs of families among local, state and national stakeholders to shape policy and programs. North Carolina Family Voices (NCFV) has increased its monitoring link with federal health care policy, enhanced partnerships with other advocacy groups that advise families of CYSHC on the impact of policies and programs, and strengthened connections for families to share their perspectives with other stakeholders.

Raising children and youth with special health care needs can sometimes overwhelm us. As parents we want to do all we can to assure the best for our children, but occasionally we get distracted by the latest health crisis and do not manage to focus on the basics of sound health. NC Family Voices is partnering with the Project IMPACT, a national health and wellness project from Family Voices, to bring current best practices information to families about the importance of good nutrition, regular physical activity and optimal oral health. We will feature information about these topics throughout the year in hopes that you can use some of the offered tips to improve your family’s health.

Please join the NC FV network and receive IMPACT updates by contacting Marlyn Wells, NC Family Voices Program Coordinator at: mwells@ecacmail.org.
IEP Checklist: Prepare and Participate!

Some things just never change. Ducks still waddle, the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, mosquitoes always seem to find me...well you get the picture. But your child changes every year and your child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) MUST change every year, or more often if needed!

Federal and state laws require that IEP Teams meet at least annually to review and revise IEPs. As a parent, your participation in the IEP Process is not only critical, but it is your right - and participation is much, much more than an annual meeting and your signature. Creating meaningful, effective and yes, great IEPs, requires adequate preparation by all team members. Your involvement in developing an effective and appropriate IEP for your child is essential to your child’s success and preparation begins long before your arrive at the meeting.

ECAC’s IEP Checklist: Prepare and Participate! (pages 7-10) includes steps to take before, during and after the IEP meeting. The steps are designed to help you get ready early, actively participate and stay connected throughout the year. Remember, while IEPs typically cover a 12-month period they also help to create the foundation for your child’s future. Be a full and contributing member of your child’s IEP Team!

For more information or individual assistance with your child’s IEP, call an ECAC Parent Educator at 1-800-962-6817. The IEP Checklist: Prepare and Participate! is available to download at www.ecac-parentcenter.org.

Get familiar with the forms, including the IEP

Completing “paperwork” is part of the IEP process and IEP meetings can be challenging even when everyone is in agreement about the content of the IEP. Misunderstandings about how to complete the document(s) or what to include in the IEP can be barriers to creating an effective and appropriate IEP for your daughter or son.

The NC Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children Division provides model forms for Teams to use, including the IEP form. While your local school district can develop their own forms - and many do - they MUST include and address all of the components required by both federal and state law. Many schools no longer use paper forms and complete the IEP on a computer.

When preparing for your child’s IEP meeting, take time to review and become familiar with each form the IEP Team will use. While it is not your responsibility to complete or fill out the form(s) you need to know the sections or components of the IEP and the order in which each will be discussed. The order is critical. For example:

- your child’s current academic and functional performance in a given area must be discussed BEFORE new goals can be identified
- your child’s goals must be identified BEFORE you can determine whether related services (such as speech or physical therapy) are needed in order to achieve the goal

All of the forms and the directions for each one are available online in English and Spanish at http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/forms/statewide-forms. If you don’t have access to online documents, please call us at 1-800-962-6817.
IEP Checklist: Prepare and Participate

Your involvement...
in developing an effective and appropriate Individualized Education Program or IEP for your child is essential to your child’s success.

While IEPs typically cover a 12-month period, they help to create the foundation for your child’s future. Think of the adult your child will become. When planning, think well beyond just one year.

STEP ONE: Before The IEP Meeting:

Review! The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires schools to give parents of students with disabilities adequate notice to participate in the IEP meeting. This notice is called Invitation to Conference/Prior Notice. The NC Department of Public Instruction considers “adequate” notice to be 7-10 calendar days. The notice must be given to you in writing and in your native language.

Carefully review the invitation/notice and consider the following:

- Is the purpose of the meeting clearly stated?
- Is my child 14 years old or turning 14 during the next 12 months? If so, did he/she receive their own written invitation to the IEP meeting as required when planning for their transition to adulthood?
- Who is attending? What are their roles in the meeting?
- Are there any team member excusal requests attached to invitation?
- Is the Date/Time/Location convenient for your schedule?

Respond! Read, sign and return the Invitation to Conference/Prior Notice as soon as possible and keep a copy for your records. Include in writing any of the following that apply:

- Suggestions for alternative meeting dates or times, if necessary
- A request to participate by conference call or other way if you are unable to participate in person
- A list of whom you are inviting, if anyone
  - consider inviting a friend, relative, outside professional or note taker
- A list of concerns or issues that you wish to discuss: this is your agenda
- A request for a copy of any proposed IEP draft, well in advance of the meeting
- Your approval or disapproval of any team member excusal request
- A note, if you plan to audio record the meeting

Be sure enough time has been scheduled for the meeting to discuss:

- Items listed on the Invitation to Conference
- Concerns or issues on your agenda
Carefully organize your child’s records/files in an order that works well for you. If you notice that you are missing an important document, ask your child’s school for a copy.

Your child’s records/files should include (as appropriate for your child):

- Current and past IEPs
- Report cards
- Work samples
- Evaluation/assessment results
- Progress reports on academics and IEP goals
- Notes/email/phone call logs of communication about your child
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- Other documents, such as Person-Centered Plan, tutor reports, behavior logs/reports, discipline referrals, medical records, therapy/treatment reports, etc.

As you prepare for the IEP meeting, review your child’s records/files and consider the following:

1. **What has been accomplished?**
2. **What has worked well?**
3. **What needs more work?**
4. **What are my concerns? What are my child’s concerns?**

- Visit ECAC’s web site, [www.ecac-parentcenter.org](http://www.ecac-parentcenter.org), to download or review the following tools:
  - Positive Student Profile
  - Blank IEP documents and other worksheets or forms
  - NC Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities
  - NC Procedural Safeguards: Handbook on Parents’ Rights
  - Select the [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) icon and watch ECAC’s IEP videos
- Write down and prioritize a list of any questions, concerns or requests that you have.
- Create a vision statement for your child’s life both now and for the future.
- Make copies or ask the school to make copies of your agenda (those topics or issues that you want to discuss and address).
- Gather supporting documents such as private evaluations, therapist notes, research-based fact sheets, records of past trials, etc.
- Ask your child about how things are going. What is working or not working?
- Prepare your child to participate in the meeting, if they are attending.
- Consider bringing pictures or a short video of your child to the meeting.
- Give or send a reminder note to anyone you have invited to the meeting.
- Ask the teacher(s) about your child’s progress and any specific concerns or ideas they have for the upcoming year.
The following steps will help you to effectively participate in the IEP meeting:

- Remember to bring your notes, records and any other information you need for the meeting. Don’t forget a pencil/pen/paper and remember to bring your child’s pictures or video if desired.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes before the meeting’s start time.
- Connect with any person(s) that you invited before entering meeting.
- Request introductions, if necessary, and clarify everyone’s role at the meeting.
- Ask who is responsible for taking the meeting notes or minutes. Review notes periodically during the meeting to ensure that they are clear, accurate and have adequate detail.
- Review the IEP meeting agenda.
- Give copies of your agenda (if you made one) to each team member.
- Share your ideas, opinions and feelings throughout the meeting.
- Listen carefully to what is being said.
- If something is not clear, ask questions as needed to be sure you fully understand before moving forward.
- Request a brief break if you need one.

**Remember that YOU are the expert on your child!**

Fifteen minutes before the meeting ends:

- Review the meeting minutes and the Prior Written Notice for accuracy. (form DEC 5)
- Check to see if all your concerns have been addressed.
- Make sure that the wording throughout the IEP is clear and specific enough to be understood by anyone – even if they were not present at the meeting!!
- Schedule another IEP meeting if there is an unresolved issue or if you ran out of time.
- Identify who is responsible for each part of the IEP and any follow-up activity.
- Sign the IEP. Your signature documents your attendance and participation in developing the IEP.
- If you disagree with any part of the IEP, state your concern(s) in writing on the IEP form next to your signature or in the margin.
- Thank the other team members for their participation, efforts and ideas for your child.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** You are entitled to a copy of your child’s completed IEP. If it is not offered to you, ask for a copy before leaving. Be sure to take it with you even if a cleaned up copy will be sent.

You will also receive copies of other special education related documents at the end of the meeting. Once home and while the meeting is still fresh in your memory, take time to review everything. Contact the school in writing if any clarifications or corrections are needed. As always, keep these documents with your child’s other records! 
Congratulations, you have completed an important step in your child’s education. This is a great time to reflect on your IEP meeting experience and to make some notes about how to improve this process for the next meeting.

- Write “Thank You” notes or letters to those you invited and other team members.
- Write letters of clarification to address any concerns, questions, overlooked areas, etc., if needed.
- Consider sharing a copy of the IEP with other professionals working with your child.
- Ensure ALL of your child’s teachers are aware that the IEP has been updated.

After The IEP Meeting:

Step Three: The end of the IEP meeting is the beginning of an appropriate education for your child. Stay connected throughout the year:

- **Monitor** your child’s education to ensure proper implementation of the IEP and to ensure that your child is making adequate progress.
- **Communicate** with your child’s teachers and others. Share successes and address any issues as they arise.
- **Make Time** to review the IEP periodically and request an IEP meeting to discuss changes if needed.
- **Contact** ecac at 1-800-962-6817 or visit www.ecac-parentcenter.org

**Remember...**

ecac is home to North Carolina’s Statewide Parent Training and Information Center (PTI)
All services are provided at no cost to parents, students and families.
1-800-962-6817 | www.ecac-parentcenter.org
More than ever before, educators are expected to make decisions that guarantee quality instruction. IEPs must include “a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child...”. This means that the programs or methods being used to teach your child must be proven to be effective and that parents and teachers must understand the unique strengths and needs of the child when selecting programs.

As knowledge emerges, so do philosophies and opinions about definitions of instructional excellence. Policy makers, classroom teachers, educators and parents need ways to separate misinformation from genuine knowledge.

While most parents and teacher are not scientists, the high standards set by IDEA and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) make it necessary for all of us to understand the importance and value of selecting and using programs, curricula, and practices based on “scientifically-based research” “to the extent practicable.” This means that whenever possible, the educational interventions being used must be strongly supported by evidence from well-conducted research studies. Educational research may be said to be scientific when it:

- Uses a sound research design. The outcomes of students receiving a tested teaching strategy or intervention are compared to similar students who do not receive the intervention.
- Is based on high quality data analysis. Researchers must be sure to carefully collect, store, and examine the data.
- Involves other researchers to review the results. The study should be reported in a journal so other researchers can review the methods used and repeat the research in other settings.

The term research-based appears in connection with many practices and programs. The questions that have to be asked about these research-based claims are, first, “Are they really based on scientific principles?” and second, “How well were the studies done?”

The benefit of selecting educational programs based on proven research is that they can deliver what is promised if they are implemented as intended. These research-based educational programs are like the medicine your doctor prescribes. Improvement in the medical condition requires that the medicine be taken as prescribed. Research-based educational programs are those that have been tested, have produced desirable results, and then have been retested to make sure the same results happen again.

As you are working on your child’s IEP, ask your child’s teachers:
- What research-based programs are being used or will be used with my child and why?
- What evidence do you have to show that the method selected will be effective for my child’s unique needs?
- How will his or her progress be measured?
- How will I be kept informed?

The following are research-based internet resources for parents and teachers to consider when developing the IEP.

Research and Evidence-Based Resources:


The Center for Evidence-Based Practices: http://www.evidencebasedpractices.org

Research Basics: http://www.nichcy.org/Research/Based/Pages/Default.aspx

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)

Some students with disabilities have difficulty reading textbooks and other learning materials. For example, a student who is blind may not be able to see the book. A student who has a physical disability may not be able to hold the book. To succeed in school these students and others like them need learning materials in specialized formats called “accessible instructional materials” or “AIM.” Examples of types of accessible instructional materials include Braille, large print, audio, and digital text. IDEA requires schools to provide AIM to students with disabilities who need them.

How do I know if my child needs accessible instructional materials?

Students with disabilities may need accessible instructional materials for a variety of reasons. A general indicator that a student needs accessible instructional materials is if the student understands information that is presented in a book or other material but cannot read or use the material on his or her own. For example, your daughter may understand the content of a science book if it is read to her, but her disability prevents her from reading the book by herself.

What is the difference between accessible instructional materials and alternative materials?

**Accessible instructional materials** present exactly the same content as a printed textbook or other type of instructional material. For example, if a student used an audio format of a book, the text read aloud would be the same as the text printed in the book. The only difference is the way the information is presented.

**Alternative materials** contain content that addresses the same topic but is modified in some manner so that it can be understood by the student. For example, a student with an intellectual disability may need the content of a textbook modified so that the information is presented in a simpler way than the standard version.

Consider your child’s vision, hearing, physical abilities, reading abilities, evaluation results and grades when considering AIM. Following are examples of questions to consider:

- Can my child see the material well enough to read the information?
- Can my child hold a book and turn the pages independently?
- Can my child read a typical assignment in a textbook without getting tired?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions, you and other members of your child’s IEP team should determine if your child needs exactly the same content in one or more specialized formats or if your child needs modified content or alternative materials.

What supports will my child need to use accessible instructional materials effectively?

The process does not end when it is decided that a child needs accessible instructional materials and the materials that the child needs are acquired. Your child, your family and the professionals working with your child may need additional supports to ensure the accessible instructional materials are used most effectively. These might include the use of technology, training, accommodations and support services. All supports should be listed in writing on the IEP, including who is responsible for providing them and when they will be provided. If your child is just beginning to use accessible instructional materials, the team may wish to include a trial period for certain supports (such as a technology) and schedule an IEP meeting in a few months to discuss how the supports are working.

Accessible instructional materials (AIM) can help students with disabilities succeed in school. It is important that families know that schools are required to provide specialized formats to students who need them. The IEP team should work together to determine whether AIM are needed and how they can be provided to best support the student’s learning and classroom participation.

If you think your child needs accessible instructional materials, discuss it with the other members of your child’s IEP team. More information can be found at http://aim.cast.org/learn/aim4families.


Download the booklet from ECAC’s website: www.ecac-parentcenter.org
Questions to Use in Conversations and Meetings About Your Child

“aka” Talk Tools

“It’s better to ask some of the questions than to know all the answers.”
--James Thurber, American artist and humorist, 1894-1961

The following questions are ‘talk tools’ that ECAC Parent Educators often use with families and professionals. They provide effective ways to request clarification in any situation—at school, at home or in the community and they work well when discussing any topic relating to student performance or learning environments. We use them in conversations about behavior(s), accommodations, modifications, support strategies, classroom situations, teaching methods, or a child’s response to any of these. Asking for more information is also a great way to help you maintain your focus and cool!

Instructions for use:
1. Select the questions that best relate to your child’s current situation.
2. If needed, adapt the wording so that it feels comfortable for you.
3. Have a copy on hand for phone conversations and meetings.

Questions for clarification:
• What are you (we) hoping to learn or accomplish by doing this?
• What does that (skill, behavior, activity, etc.) sound like and look like?
• How is this functional/useful for my child?
• How did you come to think that way?
• What evidence (data) do you (we) have to support that?

Questions for problem solving:
• What has already been tried? What hasn’t been tried?
  o In what specific circumstances or environment did (will) you try this?
  o How long did (will) you try this?
• What are (were) the results? What has been learned by trying this?
  o Will you review the information (data) with me?
• Why are you trying (did you try) this specific strategy for my child? Is it research-based?
• What will you (we) see and hear that let’s us know this is working?
• What are the other options?
• Who else can help us with this?
• What do we need to do next?

Question to begin a new conversation:
• Would you be willing to help me think about ways to help my child _____________?

Meet tension with relaxation.
– Yoga instructor

“The next time I feel tense about a planning meeting, I will remember that if I fight or flee, it may harm my child. I will back off from my fear or anxiety and meet it with relaxation, studying how I can stay in the process and still be comfortable.”
– Barbara Gill
ECAC's combined libraries have more than several thousand titles available to lend to NC parents and families, young children and students, and educators and other professionals in a variety of formats – print, VHS, CD and DVD. Some of our titles are brand new, some are "oldies but goodies" and we add new titles throughout the year.

Borrowing from our libraries is easy and free! Just call the ECAC Librarian, Shandra Umazar at 1-800-962-6817, ext. 313 or check the Resource Section of our website at www.ecac-parentcenter.org. If you don’t see something you want, please ask and we will see if we can get it for you.

Katie Clark Children’s Library

• “Pedro’s Whale”, by Paula Kluth & Patrick Schwarz, Illustrated by Justin Canha

Main Library

ADD/ADHD:

• The ADHD Workbook for Teens - Activities to Help you Gain Motivation and Confidence, by Lara Honos-Webb, Ph.D.
• The ADHD Workbook for Kids - Helping Children Gain Self-Confidence, Social Skills & Self-Control, by Lawrence E Sharpio, Ph.D.
• Assessing Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, by Arthur D. Anastopoulos and Terri L. Shelton

AUTISM:

• Seeing Is Believing - Video Self-Modeling for people with Autism and other Developmental disabilities, by Tom Buggey, Ph.D.
• A Cup of Comfort for Parents of Children with Autism - Stories of Hope and Everyday Success, by Colleen Sell
• Ready Set, Potty! - Toilet Training for Children with Autism and Other Developmental Disorders, by Brenda Batts
• School Success for Kids with Asperger’s Syndrome, by Stephan M. Silverman, Ph.D., and Rich Weinfeld
• Asperger’s in Pink - A Mother and Daughter Guidebook, by Julie Clark
• APPS for Autism, An Essential Guide to over 200 Effective Apps for Improving Communication, Behavior, Social Skills and More!, by Lois Jean Brady, M.A., CCC-SLP

MENTAL HEALTH:

• The Bipolar Workbook for Teens-Skills to Help You Control Mood Swings, by Sheri Van Dijk, MSW, Karma Guindon, MSW

• Teaching Kids with Mental Health & Learning Disorders in the Regular Classroom: How to Recognize, Understand, and Help Challenged and Challenging Students Succeed, by Miles L. Cooley

EDUCATION/TEACHING:

• 40 Reading Intervention Strategies for K-6 Students, Research-based Support for RTI, by Elaine K. McEwan-Adkins
• Improving The Academic Achievement of African American Students, A Practical Guide for Principals, Teachers, Students and Parents”, by Sandra Pierce Mathis, Ed.D
• Deciding What to Teach and How to Teach It - Connecting Students Through Curriculum and Instruction, 2nd edition by Elizabeth Castagnera, Douglas Fisher, Karen Rodifer, Caren Sax and Nancy Frey (replacement)

FAITH AND RELIGION:

• Special Needs - Special Ministry for children’s ministry”, by Jim Pierson, Louise Tucker Jones, Pat Verbal, foreword by Joni Eareckson Tada
• Same Lake Different Boat, Coming Alongside People Touched by Disability, Stephanie O. Hubach, Foreword by Joni Eareckson Tada

INCLUSION:

• The Short Bus, A Journey Beyond Normal, by Jonathan Mooney
• From Disability to Possibility - The Power of Inclusive classrooms, by Patrick Schwarz

PARENTING:

• My Baby Rides The Short Bus, The unabashedly human experience of raising kids with disabilities, Edited by Yantra Bertelli, Jennifer Silverman, and Sarah Talbot
• Parenting from the Inside Out, How a Deeper Self-understanding Can Help You Raise Children Who Thrive, by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D., and Mary Hartzell, M.Ed.
• Playing in the Unified Field, Raising & Becoming Conscious, Creative Human Beings, by Carla Hannaford, Foreword by William A. Tiller
• The KAZDIN Method for parenting the Defiant Child-with No Pills, no Therapy, no Contest of Wills, by Alan E Kazdin, Ph.D. (includes DVD)
TRANSITION:
• Preparing Students with Disabilities for College Success, A Practical Guide to Transition Planning”, by Stan F. Shaw, Joseph W. Madaus, Lyman L. Dukes, III, Foreword by Gary M. Clark

SENSORY:
• Just Take A Bite-Easy, Effective Answers to Food Aversions and Eating Challenges, by Lori Ernsperger, Ph.D., Tania Stegen-Hanson, OTR/L foreword by Dr. Temple Grandin
• Insights into Sensory Issues for Professionals - Answers to Sensory Challenges, by Kathleen Morris, MS, CCC/SLP

Lessons from the Geese

No matter what your role is at the IEP meeting, consider the geese. When you see geese flying along in “V” formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way.

FACT: As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in “V” formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

FACT: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone — and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

FACT: When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into formation and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on one another’s skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

FACT: Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one’s heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek. We need to make sure our honking is encouraging and not discouraging. What messages do we give when we honk from behind?

FACT: Finally — and this is important — when a goose gets sick or is wounded by gunshot, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies, and only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that.

— Lessons from the Geese is attributed to numerous authors

Collaboration Mount Everest is so huge, it takes a whole group to climb it.
— Sam, age 7, whose sister is medically fragile
Our mission

ecac, the exceptional children’s assistance center, is a private non-profit parent organization committed to improving the lives and education of ALL children through a special emphasis on children with disabilities.

ecac affirms the right of all individuals, from all backgrounds and cultures, with or without disabilities, to an appropriate education and other needed services. We seek to make that right a reality by providing information, education, outreach, and support to and for families with children across the state of North Carolina.

Stay Connected and Be Informed!

NC Public Schools - Exceptional Children Division
http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/
The mission of the Exceptional Children Division is to ensure that students with disabilities develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, and vocationally through the provision of an appropriate individualized education program in the least restrictive environment. Check out their website for the most current news, special education forms and more.

Be Early! - North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program
www.bearly.nc.gov
The North Carolina Early Intervention Branch (NCEI) is a part of the N.C. Division of Public Health and is the lead agency for the N.C. Infant-Toddler Program (ITP). The Infant-Toddler Program provides supports and services for families and their children, birth to three who have special needs. Research shows that this time period is critical and beginning services early helps to make a positive difference in how a child develops and learns. Eighteen Children’s Developmental Services Agencies (CDSAs) across North Carolina work with local service providers to help families help their children succeed.

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
www.nichcy.org
NICHCY serves the nation as a central source of information on disabilities in infants, toddlers, children, and youth and offers you a wealth of information on disabilities. Here, you’ll also find easy-to-read information on IDEA, the law authorizing early intervention services and special education.

Assistive Technology (AT) Works!
www.fctd.info
Learn about AT and the Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD). Funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs, the FCTD provides a wide range of resources on assistive technology, including introductory fact sheets and training materials and in-depth discussions of best practices and emerging research. Set some time aside each day to review an FCTD resource. Before you know it, you’ll know a lot more about assistive technology and the ways in which it can improve the life of your child or your student.

Help us save time, money and the planet!

In an effort to more effectively utilize ECAC’s resources AND help our planet, we encourage readers to subscribe and receive NewsLine electronically. In addition to NewsLine, readers can receive ECACOnline, our monthly electronic publication, and other timely notifications from us via email. You may subscribe/unsubscribe on our website at www.ecac-parentcenter.org. If you have questions or concerns, call Cheryl at 1-800-962-6817, ext. 314.

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